

# State Expected To Address Crime Problem With a Super Max

One of the main proposals expected to be revealed in February by Governor Edgar's appointed Illinois Task Force on Crime and Corrections dealing with incarceration options for the Department of Corrections is the construction of a "Control Unit" prison.

Control Units are modeled on federal prisons, like the facility in Marion County which, instead of using isolation units simply for punitive measures, keeps all of the inmates confined. They dine alone and only are allowed 1 hour of recreation. Even when they receive their recreational hour, they are led from their cells by guards and are shackled.

The Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML) charges that in addition to being ineffective in modifying the behavior of so called troublesome prisoners, Super-Max prisons generally degrade prisoners and violate their constitutional rights.

A Super-Max would be an expensive remedy for crime for Illinois residents. The CEML says that although the Governor's Task Force estimates the cost of such an institute at \$50 million dollars, the CEML places the cost closer to \$100 million. This includes the cost of litigation, which Erica Thompson of CEML says is guaranteed to ensue.

Ms. Thompson also says that not enough attention is being paid to alternative measures. She points out that since the governor didn't want any of the proposals to include the

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**Edgar's task force on crime and corrections solution is to "lock 'em up and throw away the key."**

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building of new prisons or additional cells, why is the Task Force even discussing a Super-Max facility--not to mention closing an all black school in East St. Louis in order to build it.

In answer to charges that the Illinois Task Force on Crime and Correction prevented CEML from attending meetings, Kevin Morison of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority stated that the Task Force meetings are not used as a public forum.

In reference to allegations that the times of the meetings were in conflict with most of the members' schedules, he said CEML were the first people to complain about the timing of meetings. Morison also said "any time you assemble a group of people, you have to expect some absenteeism and that documents are provided for absent members."

The Task Force is a 29 member group of professionals (lawyers, professors, etc.) appointed by Gov. Edgar with Anton Valukas, former

U.S. attorney for the 1st district of Illinois and presently senior partner in a law firm, as the Task Force chairman.

Morison further stated that even though condemnations about current control units from human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch were taken into consideration, except for a few individuals the general consensus was pro Super-Max.

Morison also said further discussions will take place before the complete report is delivered to Governor Edgar.

Details about the interim report are not being disclosed by the Task Force until it is completed and finalized in late February or early March. Any one who is interested in voicing his or her opinion can write to the Task Force at:

The Office of Criminal Justice Information Authority  
120 S. Riverside Plaza  
Chicago, Illinois 60606.

## Clinton

By Tara Stamps

WASHINGTON, D.C.--Although President Clinton reneged several major campaign promises before he took his oath of office January 20th, many people still hold out hope for his reign as president.

"I believe Clinton wants to do a good job, and he wants to make change in our country," said a Chicago woman who attended the inaugural festivities and the party hosted by Midwestern Democrats.

"Clinton can only do as good a job as Congress lets him, and I think he wants to do a good job," said another Chicago woman.

People from all points west, north, east and south came out to participate in the inaugural festivities. This was the best attended inauguration in the history of inaugurations, having nearly 1 million out-

## Unity Strong Faces Lunch

By Tara Stamps

WASHINGTON D.C.--Two of the faces present at the inaugural festivities this week belonged to Charles Rack and Leon Gullet, former rival gang members and cousins by marriage.

Charles and Leon once belonged to the Bloods and Crips, the two largest street organizations in Los Angeles. These former street organization members were invited to the inaugural festivities by President Bill Clinton and President Al Gore. Clinton and Gore are the two young men in Los Angeles at the Maxine Waters Training Center.