HEARING THREE

COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND ABUSE

IN AMERICA’S PRISONS

DATE: November 1, 2005
TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 3:37 p.m.
PLACE: Washington University School of Law
Anheuser-Busch Hall, Room 310
St. Louis, Missouri 63130

Corrections Officers – An Overview
of the Workforce and Profession
Pages 67-131
MS. ROBINSON: We're ready to start our second panel, and I'd like to welcome our witnesses to the second panel. If everyone could take their seats. Good morning. Our second panel is going to be addressing the issue of the work force and profession, and I'm very pleased to welcome our three witnesses, Theodis Beck, James Marquart, and Lance Corcoran, who are going to be providing an overview of corrections work force as well as issues relating to staffing generally of prisons and jails.

This panel is going to be providing what I think will be relevant and very useful information that can serve as backgrounds for a number of the panels that are going to follow over the next day and a half. We know that recent years have brought very dramatic changes in the corrections work force as prison populations have grown substantially.

And that in many instances that's created a situation where a work force with less training and less experience has been confronted with very great challenges, and in part the difficulties in recruiting, training, and retaining professional staff
have also faced challenges such as budget constraints, the increasing use of incarceration, and a number of other factors. This panel is going to be discussing these issues, including looking at the differences between jails and state prisons.

Theodis Beck has worked in corrections since 1975, and is currently secretary of the North Carolina Department of Corrections, a post he's held since 1999. Mr. Marquart is a professor of criminal justice at the University of Texas at Dallas and worked previously as a corrections officer early in his career. Mr. Corcoran is executive vice president of the California Correctional Peace Officers Association, and we're very pleased all of them are here today.

For the introductory foundation which they'll build for us, we're very appreciative for their traveling here, and Secretary Beck, we'd like to start off with you.

MR. BECK: Thank you, and good morning. Mr. Chairman, members of the commission, I've held my current position for six and a half years. I've worked for two governors. I have over thirty years of state employment, 28 of those years being with the Department of Corrections. What I will tell you is
that I have never held a position of a correctional
officer, but I have learned quite a bit about the role
of that position serving as secretary and prior to
this position as deputy secretary. So my comments are
from the administrator’s perspective, and I thank you
for this opportunity.

When all is said and done, the buck stops
with the correctional officer. When we talk about
prisons, it is the face of the correction officer that
we see. Not only do we ask a lot of the people who
perform this job, we demand it and the public expects
nothing less. Within the criminal justice profession,
the correctional officer position is that tireless,
that endless, that often thankless job that has to be
done.

Again, the face of prisons is the
correctional officer. As administrators we strive
very hard to change negative perception and the
stereotypes associated with that position. Today's
correctional officer is more professional than ever
before. I can think of no jurisdiction that does not
have standards, require training requirements and high
expectations of the men and women who fill the
correctional officer position, and many of those
jurisdictions have accredited staffs.
This position was once traditionally reserved for white males, but today these ranks are more diverse than ever before. In North Carolina we would be unable to man all of the required posts in our male facilities if it were not for female correctional officers. Not only do we think this diversity is good, it is also necessary. This has led to increased cross-gender issues that must be appropriately addressed with training, monitoring, and supervision. Diversity and cultural differences within the correctional officer ranks serves the profession and our system well. Cultural diversity training is essential to ensure that boundaries are well-defined, well known, and cultural differences are recognized, respected, and understood. A diverse correctional officer work force contributes to the safe and orderly operation of correctional facilities. This aspect of the job goes well beyond turning keys, conducting searches, and escorting inmates. Every correctional administrator is concerned about safety. Safety is a high priority in all that we do, and as a leader we must, to the extent possible, ensure staff and inmate safety. We have a duty to protect those assigned to our custody and
control, and we take that duty seriously. We require correctional officers to show great restraint when those they are there to supervise, monitor, and protect would even wish them harm.

For all that we ask them to do, the correctional officer is underpaid, underrecognized, and often underappreciated. They are the final line of defense between dangerous chaos and safe communities. However, they are the front line of defense in our prisons when we hear there's a gun in the facility. There's a disturbance in the facility. There's a large sum of cash or drugs in the facility. Lock the unit down, shake the unit down, restrict all movement, these are the alerts that give administrators pause, and correctional officers are always there and always outnumbered.

Although most people don't think about it, our communities are safer because correctional officers are on the job 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Seemingly we take that for granted. Professionally we have come a long way, from prison guard to correctional officer. Our correctional officers are much better trained, more diverse, more professional, believe in their work, take their job seriously, come to work in spite of personal
1 circumstance and natural disasters, and due good
2 business for the taxpayer.
3 The vast majority of correctional officers
4 are good, dependable, hard-working employees, but
5 occasionally an employee may fall short of the mark.
6 We don't try to sweep it under the rug, hide it, or
7 deny it. If we know it, we deal with it, and deal
8 with it appropriately. Correctional officers are,
9 after all, human beings who work in often stressful
10 and dangerous environments.
11 Recruitment and retention of correctional
12 officers continues to be a challenge for every
13 correctional administrator. As the inmate population
14 continues to grow, it will require more bed capacity
15 and that requires more staff. It is my belief that
16 our prisons can be as safe as our citizens demand, and
17 there is a direct correlation between safety in our
18 nation's prisons and appropriate resources.
19 It appears that when it comes to the
20 prisons, the loud voice of a constituency is silent.
21 We must be vigilant because failure to recruit and
22 retain good, qualified staff could be the making of
23 the perfect storm where we see a meeting of the
24 experienced inmate population versus an inexperienced
25 correctional officer staff. Thank you.
MS. ROBINSON: Secretary Beck, thank you very much. I think we're going to hold all questions until we've heard from the entire panel. Professor Marquart?

MR. MARQUART: Good morning. I do appreciate the opportunity to come and speak to the commission. When I look out at the landscape in terms of the American correctional officer, I think one word to me sums it up, and that's the word pressure. The environment to make diamonds or any other precious substance require tons of grinding pressure on an hourly, daily, and a monthly basis for years on end. And there can be no respite from that kind of pressure if you want to produce a precious commodity. I think that's a good metaphor to what goes on in American prisons today.

I've worked as a correctional officer. It's good to come back to Missouri. I worked at Jeff City for four months while I was working on my master's degree, and I worked in the Texas prison system for two years. I visited many prisons throughout the United States, and the working environment for the average American prison officer today is just laden with pressure.

They're constantly working under strain and
I think the strain is growing, and I think that's what Theodis talked about is that it is growing in degree and in complexity. I think that's an issue that we might want to talk about later.

Staff are pressured to admit new prisoners, find them appropriate housing, find them a job, find them clothes, find them programming when it was available, provide them food, showers, recreation activities, medication, and human interaction. As the correctional officers talked about in the previous panel, on a daily or an hourly basis.

The prison officers are also under pressure to accomplish these daily tasks within a clean and safe living environment. Providing a secure living environment means that fortunately to some, unfortunately to others that malcontents must be removed and managed. And these offenders must also be cared for adding to the strain of the workday. More food, more housing, more things.

And oftentimes the basic institutional tasks must be accomplished in the face of massive organizational change as a result of lawsuits, and I'm not going to say whether that's good or bad. It's reality. It's like my mother used to say, "Face it, that's just the way it is."
Security officers in California, for example, are faced with accomplishing racial integration within the reception centers and on the main line institutions. They have to accomplish all of those daily things, and at the same time bring on these other mandates, and that's a tremendous amount of pressure that they have to do. And I might add they're doing so in a confident and professional manner within a specified timetable.

In football there's a penalty called piling on. In the department of corrections, the officer has been piled on. And as a result of a massive surge recently in prison admissions, everything in prison must be accomplished faster, faster. Like the typical American school day, our typical American lifestyle, every year more is squeezed into that 24-hour period.

I guess the other knowledge would be what's going on in public education. More must be squeezed into an eight-hour day. There's only so many minutes of the day you can accomplish things. These issues have severely strained the American prison organization's ability to recruit competent officers, train them properly, keep them on track and out of trouble, avoiding boundary relations and develop a loyal work force.
And the issue is to retain them over a lengthy career because the veterans are the ones that are going to be able to train the next generation and bring them forward. Indeed, the best officers are veteran officers, and rather than pass on the kernels of wisdom that they have acquired over the years to help the newer generation of employees -- and I think somebody in the previous panel, the director from Missouri pointed out that veterans often seek to move on as fast as they can. We're losing that critical information about how to manage these institutions.

Like most things in American society today, bigger and faster does not always translate into better. The expectations for the American correctional officer I think are at an all-time high, especially when the issue of public safety is there. Officers feel pressure from below or from the inmates to go easy or to be a good Jane or to be a good Joe.

And they're also pressured from above, from the administrators to be firm, aloof, and professional, and also to watch out and to keep your distance. You know, you're expected to do many things. Something has to give. But the constant pressure associated with the ordinary workday will not go away.
The security staff in any institution in America today, in my belief, is the most precious commodity in the organization, and everything must be done to prepare these employees to face and successfully endure the pressure of working in that kind of environment. The costs associated with failure are too large to contemplate.

So in conclusion, I just want to thank the commission for allowing me to come before them and speak about correctional officers at this important juncture in the history of our country and in the history of the American prison.

MS. ROBINSON: Thank you very much.

Mr. Corcoran?

MR. CORCORAN: Thank you very much. It's my great honor to be before the commission. My name is Lance Corcoran. I'm currently the Chief of Government Affairs for the California Peace Officers Association. I began my career as a correctional officer in 1986 at the California Correctional Center in Susanville, which houses about 4,000 medium security to minimum security inmates. The yard that I worked was predominantly known as Sierra yard, a facility that held 1,500 inmates.

On my tier I had seven dorms, 32 men per
dorm, 224 men in total for my responsibility. These
dorms were designed to hold twelve inmates. They had
two commodes, two urinals, three sinks, and two shower
heads. Dormitory with bunk beds and then a day room
that had a television. I recognized very quickly that
I was outnumbered 224 to one and that force or size or
being intimidating was not an option. I had to
communicate.

Luckily in my background I came from the
food service industry. I was a waiter. I was a
bartender. I also worked in theater. And when I came
in at 23 years old I had this chip on my shoulder that
I thought that I had to be the baddest guy in the
valley. And I recognized really quickly that that
only made things more difficult as a correctional
officer, that the most important tool we have is the
ability to communicate.

Throughout my career I was able to work
with as a use of force instructor -- instructor,
bridge safety officer. I got involved in negotiations
management team, which was our hostage negotiation
team, and eventually became the primarily negotiator
for the team.

The institution I went to was built in
1963. It was in a small community of 6,800 people.
Pretty much everyone knew each other or was related in some way. I was part of an activation of 1,000-bed unit there, and so I was an outsider. It took about three years to even get people to say good morning. I find now in my travels throughout California in the newer facilities that culture no longer exists.

There's been such great turnover and growth that oftentimes in newer facilities newer staff are welcomed much more quickly than in the past. And I think that leads to this notion that there is, you know, of course the code of silence or this need to belong to a clique, and certainly that is an element correctional facilities and management must be aware of and I know that they are aware of and must realize as quickly as possible because it can lead to inappropriate activities. I've seen it in my representation of correctional officers.

Specific to recruitment, if we are going to recruit the best quality candidate, the folks that may go to the deputy sheriff's department, the highway patrol, or the troopers, we must allow corrections to be competitive in both pay and benefits, and that is something that is sometimes not talked about.

However, I can tell you I attend every academy in California. I talk to the cadets within
their first week and I ask them all the same question on career day: Was it your lifelong dream to be a correctional officer? And I get one or two hands out of 600 candidates. I ask them if they're there for the pay and benefits, and I get 598 hands. The reality is that's why I came, but at the same time later on I found opportunities within corrections that gave me some job satisfaction because there's not just the recruitment. There is the retaining of qualified correctional officers, and you have to have opportunities for personal growth in the correctional system for both staff and inmates.

That leads me to my third R of recruitment, retention, and retirement. After a lifetime, 35 years working, you look back on your life's work and it's very difficult to take pride in what you've done. Society or the newspapers or whatever has told you that this is an awful profession and that you're a prison guard, and it can be very difficult to take any measure of pride.

I think that the one product that we have as correctional officers is safety. If we provide a safe living environment for inmates, if we provide a safe working environment for our peers, then we've done a very good job. I have got lots more to say,
but my time is up. Thank you.

MS. ROBINSON: Let me start the questioning by zeroing in and asking each of you starting with Secretary Beck, if you were writing the recommendations in our final report, what would be the top two recommendations that you would urge us to include relating to this subject?

MR. BECK: Yes. From my perspective, I believe the recommendation would be that have compensating the line staff appropriately for the job we expect them to do. You know, you've heard earlier this morning how a day in the life of a correctional officer goes.

That is the only profession I know of where when you go to work and you report for your tour of duty, you have to raise to a level of intensity, and you have to remain there for the duration. It's not as easy as saying I'm going to go and take a break. You have to be relieved to go to the rest room. You can't leave post because one failure, a small failure can be very detrimental.

And we are asking more and more of these correctional officers. I think you heard what's been said thus far. It's something coming at you all the time. Direct supervision is one of those areas where
correctional officers are often just bombarded because they are there right in the middle of all of those inmates, and the vast majority of our beds in the prison systems across this nation are dormitory style. Dormitory style. So we have correctional officers sitting in the eye of the storm all of the time, and it requires recognition of the sacrifices that they make.

MS. ROBINSON: So you want to just stick with the pay and benefits?

MR. BECK: I'm going to stick with pay and benefits, and I want the recognition.

MS. ROBINSON: And recognition.

MR. BECK: And the recognition that should go with that station.

MS. ROBINSON: Great. Professor Marquart?

MR. MARQUART: Well, I too echo the recognition and the creature comforts and all of those things to make a worthy occupation in our society, but another critical issue that I look for is that the correctional officers are like teachers. Those are the front line people, and who know more about people than teachers. It's not the administrators. Sorry. It's the front line people, and I think the correctional officers, to me, are the stakeholders,
and those are the people that need to be brought to
the table and listened to and heeded and understood
and to hear what they have to say about training,
recruitment, and all those other things. Get them to
have a buy into this as to what's going to happen.

MS. ROBINSON: Right. Mr. Corcoran?

MR. CORCORAN: I think only eight
jurisdictions currently I believe have, quote, peace
officer status for their corrections officers. I
think if you're going to elevate the profession, if
you're going to elevate the expectation of the
profession, I think it needs peace officer status.

I think that it comes with a different
standard of behavior of expectation. As a peace
officer, if you're convicted of domestic violence, you
can no longer carry a firearm. You can no longer be a
peace officer. It's a different standard. If you're
going to raise the bar, I think you have to start

there.

Secondarily, I think there needs to be
honesty in recruitment. I see far too many times
recruitment teams out -- for instance, in one
particular incident they were talking about
transportation jobs. Well, there's 31,000
correctional officers in California with respect to
all classifications. There are about 150
transportation officers. They talked about K-9
patrol. There are only two K-9 officers in the entire
state of California.

So if you're going to put that carrot out
there, those things have to be available to them.
Otherwise, you're lying to individuals, and as I tell
the guys at the academy and the females there as well,
I can't negotiate a pay and benefit package great
enough to compensate you if you hate your job. And if
individuals hate their jobs, that manifests themselves
in negative behavior as well.

MS. ROBINSON: Thank you.
MR. LUTTRELL: The last two panels we've
talked about the stresses of correction work, the
various ways to address that. We talked about in the
profession increased pay and benefits enhancing the
profession. We talked about better leadership, better
supervision. I'd like you to shift the focus just a
little bit and let's look at the correctional officer.

What can a correctional officer do to
better manage his or her life so that they feel better
about their work, they feel more professional? What
can the individual officer do to contribute to this
sense of professionalism and fighting this stress? I
ask it to all of you.

MR. CORCORAN: I'll speak to that. In my written remarks I talked about the term low morale. In my entire career every year I hear this constantly: Morale has never been lower. Now, I don't know how low morale can go, but when low morale becomes a rallying point, that's problematic.

The other thing is I think that -- and I stated this in my remarks. I think we're looking to the wrong source. We keep looking to management to increase morale. I don't think management has sole responsibility for my individual morale. I think that you bring a zeal or a zest to the workplace, and you have to like your job, if you will. And I think you can find those opportunities.

As an individual correctional officer, I recognize that out of 224 men I didn't have great guys in every aspect, but there were individuals there that were trying to change their lives and, you know, as an individual correctional officer I was able to feed sometimes on their success to feel better about what I was doing. I don't know that everyone does that, and I don't know that the department reinforces that.

Additionally, some managers will look you in your eye and say your morale is in your paycheck.
It's not. Your morale is not in your paycheck. Your morale comes from some type of job satisfaction. We have to reinforce and even sell back to officers that they're providing a service, that they're doing something that is good, that is providing a service to the taxpayers.

MR. MARQUART: I would agree with that. I talked about providing an avenue for correctional officers to be stakeholders, and they are. I think it's just absolutely essential that they become that, and I agree with what he says is that morale comes from inside. I think that was shared by a correctional officer that was talking earlier today.

MR. LUTTRELL: Can you elaborate on that?

MR. MARQUART: We can train them all day long, but in the end it's the passion and zeal that the person brings to the job. And we can pay them, you know, hundreds of thousands of dollars and they're still going to quit. But it's having an interest in what you do. It's having a passion in what you do. It's hard for me to preach about what they ought to do. That's what they're going to have to bring to the table and do that.

MR. BECK: One of the things is that this work is not for everybody, and only the individual can
sort that out for themselves. Some remain in denial much longer than others, and that is tough. And I think all of the data suggests that pay is probably not the leading reason for turnover. It is certainly a large contributing factor.

But at the end of the day I think it comes from within, and the belief that you have made a significant contribution to society, that your work is meaningful, that it's valued, and that you are doing your part to keep the community safe.

MR. MARQUART: I'd like to add something about the external environment and its impact on correctional officers. I come from the state of Texas. There's 27,000 correctional officers, and Lance said there's 31,000. That's 50,000 employees. To give a pay raise to correctional officers in the state of Texas, how -- that's a political issue. You know, so how are you going to do that? I don't know because you're talking about tens of millions of dollars that it's going to cost the state to give those people a pay raise. It's just not going to happen. Maybe once in a while, but in terms of compensating what -- police officers or troopers, that's just not going to happen. So it's going to have to come from within that they're doing
the job that they feel is a valued public service.

MS. ROBINSON: Dr. Dudley?

DR. DUDLEY: You're all alluding to something that I would like to address more explicitly, and that is you appear to be saying that there's something about the role of responsibility or something that's a part of the definition of what is a good corrections officer or what the job is about, something about the concept of the profession of being a corrections officer that would make the job more meaningful and allow corrections officers to engage in a different sort of way. I'm wondering if any of you want to comment on what you think that should be.

MR. CORCORAN: I think that unfortunately correction officers -- when I was in the academy they used to shave our heads, and so it looked like you were in the military, and I got liberty one Saturday and I went to a video store and a friend of mine that I had known from high school was working there, and he asked me if I was in the military. And I said, "No, I'm becoming a correctional officer."

He said, "No, you mean a prison guard."

I said, "No." That was taboo. You never said PG, I'm telling you.

So I said, "No, it's correctional officer."
He said, "What is that like, the difference between a garbage man and sanitation engineer?"

And unfortunately we have not been able as a profession to change the terminology, and it may be semantical, but you never hear the term stewardess anymore. You never see it in an editorial. They're flight attendants. They're safety personnel. Now, they're still serving cocktails just as they were when they were stewardesses, but they no longer -- that term is no longer used.

How can I get folks to change just the vernacular of what we do from prison guard and all of the negative connotations that come with that to correctional officer, and we've got polling data to show that "prison guard" is viewed negatively. Correctional officer used in the same poll, numbers go up. If we can change the way we think about people and hold people to that expectation, then I think that you'll get correctional officers as opposed to prison guards.

MR. BECK: Let me speak just a minute to this issue of the external environment and the impact on the correctional officer. I think we at best send a mixed message to correctional officers. You know, most platforms in recent memory have been related to
get tough on crime. Punishment, punitive, lock them
up, throw the key away.

And then we flip the switch and we say now
we want you to rehabilitate. We want you to help
prepare them for transition. We send mixed messages
as a society to the people we ask to do these
dangerous jobs. And it's not like stopping on a dime
and turning and going in a different direction. We
have molded a generation or generations of
correctional officers into a mind set of what
prisoners ought to be.

There's oftentimes these comments about get
the weights out of prisons, shouldn't be TV, no
recreation, hard time. So it's like turning a big
steamship, you know. You can't just do a ninety
degree turn. You got to swing out and it takes time
to turn. But what you're asking is for a cultural
change, but that cultural change can only be brought
about by the expectations of the external environment
being clearly articulated to the correctional officer
ranks as to what we as a public expect them to do with
the people we send who have by and large and in many
cases been everybody else's failures.

MS. ROBINSON: Gary Maynard?

MR. MAYNARD: You've all alluded to the
fact that the majority, the vast majority of correctional officers do a good job under difficult situations, but we all know there's one out of 100 or one out of 200 that abuses people and takes advantage of the authority they have. How do we -- what do we do to identify and get those people out of the system?

Anybody?

MR. MARQUART: Good question. I did some work with the Texas prison system on inappropriate relationships. It's a big problem. It's probably the number one issue, management issue in corrections today, inappropriate relationships. I was asked to take a look at that and study it and then provide recommendations back to the prison system.

You take the data and then you turn that into training, and I think that's the key. It's training, it's training, it's training, and you keep doing it. You know, I need to go back and see whether or not it's working, but the idea of blending the two, of taking the research and evaluation and the recognition that, hey, there is a problem, we need to do something about it, and bring training.

I believe in providing that kind of training to stop that, you're never going to eliminate it. It's just -- it's in policing. It's in every
occupation, doctors, priests. It's everywhere. But in terms of correctional officers, I'm a firm believer in constant training.

MR. CORCORAN: I think consistent application of discipline at all levels. As a correction officer I should know that if I bring a complaint against a supervisor, that I will not later be targeted by individuals, and if I am targeted, I will be protected. We have a system now wherein I know at the rank and file level we have a great distrust of some of our management teams with respect to bringing forward issues for fear of retaliation.

I work for an organization that has been accused of fostering the code of silence. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our individuals are out there calling individuals to task over things that we don't agree with on a daily basis, and sometimes they are retaliated against.

I've got two individuals right now who serve as chapter presidents who have been terminated because of their bringing forward issues that were unpopular. Until we get a -- to a point where you can -- you trust the enforcement and the investigation of complaints, I think we're going to continue to have problems in corrections, particularly in terms of
MR. BECK: I believe that we have to work on that issue internally as well, and we have to have the correctional officers understand that safety is number one priority. Every time you have one of these failures so to speak, some degree of security is compromised. And whenever security is compromised by crossing the boundaries or bringing in contraband or anything along those lines, you compromise your safety and everybody else's safety that works in that institution. And I think that we have to hold a light of security high as it relates to those who would do things that are inappropriate.

MR. CORCORAN: I talked a great deal about the testimony of the former deputy this morning, and it showed great courage in coming forward. I thought as a young correction officer how I would have handled that situation. I know as -- in the position I am now -- you know, I swore an oath. I swore an oath to protect people from bullies, to protect individual's rights.

If I saw a situation that I didn't agree with, it's a bright line for me and I have an obligation as a peace officer to stop it. Not just...
report it, but to stop it from evening happening. But I can see as a young correctional officer wanting to go fit in, where without good leadership, without veterans who can say, "No, you're not going to do that."

Quick story. We were swerving chili and there was an inmate that raw jawed me every time I went by the cell. I didn't like him and he didn't like me. I was about 24 years old and I knew where he was at all times. They were serving chili and we were self-served. And I had ice cream. And I took the ice cream and I put it in his chili. There was a senior officer there and he said, "Oh, no, no, no. You're not going to do that because you know who he is and where he's at and he doesn't like you and you don't like him. But you know who's going to wear this chili, it's going to be some innocent officer."

If it wasn't for that intervention by a senior officer, I would have made a dumb rookie cop mistake because I was angry. That's the type of leadership that's necessary. You have to intervene. You can't just stop and report.

MS. ROBINSON: Gary, did you want to follow up at all? Okay. Margo Schlanger.

MS. SCHLANGER: I'm interested in something
that Mr. Corcoran said in your initial testimony. You said you went in and you wanted to be the biggest, baddest guy there.

MR. CORCORAN: Well, yes, okay.

MS. SCHLANGER: I gather from what I've seen and what I've heard on this commission that that's not an uncommon initial approach to the job of correctional officer. And you talked about a transformation that happened in your relationship with your job, and you attributed that to some of your background.

So what I'm interested in is what do we do for the folks that don't have that background? How do we help them to make the transformation you talked about? How do we train people into -- how do we train people out of what is a very natural approach to what that job is and into something that maybe is a little more productive? What does that training look like?

MR. CORCORAN: I think it starts in the academy. One component in correctional academies I think is sort of lacking is a historical perspective on penitentiaries, on what models have been used, from the Auburn model to Pennsylvania model and the brutality never worked, and that the purpose of a correctional facility is to house an individual in a
safe environment, but provide them opportunities so that less victims are created, and that cannot be done in a system where you have individuals who are solely there because they want power over other people's lives, and I think that needs to be hammered in from day one.

MR. MARQUART: That's an interesting question because it gets at a cultural change where there has to be -- a cultural shift has to take place. I know that in Texas years ago prior to intervention, that physical force, physical dominance was the way in which these institutions -- or that's the way they were led and that's the way the inmates were managed.

But as a result of intervention from the outside, there has been a generational change. Those people who were the carriers of that kind of a mindset were moved out and replaced with other -- with other -- with another tradition. Yeah, you hear about it, but it's not to the same extent that it used to be.

I think it's going to take time before the biggest baddest wolf on the block, that kind of mentality -- I think it's been reduced. I know it's been reduced in Texas because of a generational shift and change within that subculture. It's going to have
to take a change within the subculture to make that
kind of thing happen, but it can be done.

MR. BECK: As we continue to --

MR. MARQUART: It cannot be rewarded.

There you go.

MS. SCHLANGER: The other kind of behavior?

MR. MARQUART: The staff cannot be
rewarded, the biggest, baddest on the block.

MR. BECK: As I mentioned earlier, you
know, most jurisdictions have mandatory training
requirements. As part of that training we continue to
see more and more emphasis put on interpersonal
communication skills. We are teaching staff how to
communicate more effectively and better. And that it
will serve you better in the long run because those
big bodies, even the big bodies will wear down over
time if you think you have to be physical with every
situation.

MS. ROBINSON: Fred Schwartz.

MR. SCHWARTZ: I'm going to try to tie the
last question and your answers to the earlier ones
about job satisfaction at the correction officers.
Now, most people in prison get out eventually, and
society is clearly interested in how they do when they
get out, whether they do well or badly. Atmosphere
within the prison can affect what happens when they
get out. Within the prison.

So if prisons were concentrated more on
helping to make -- as part of their job, helping to
make prisoners who get out do better as opposed to
doing worse, would that change or that increase in
emphasis affect the job satisfaction of correction
officers?

MR. CORCORAN: There's a study out of UC
San Diego by a professor by the name of Emil Kostenoff
[phonetic]. And he did an analysis of staff who works
in what's known as a 270 level three housing unit.
Open dorms and the access to the officers, and it's
cacophony all the time and it's pretty stressful. He
did -- and he did basically surveys, focus groups
between that working environment and officers at the
same prison who were working in a drug treatment
facility that -- where there was a carpet.

The housing units were more pods, you know,
smaller units. There was a little bit of separation
between the living area and the recreational area, and
what he found was that the officers working in the
drug treatment facility had a better mental
self-image. They had less sick leave usage. They had
less disciplinary problems, less discipline problems
with the inmates, less assaults.

And so certainly there is a correlation between prison design and job satisfaction because working in a unit where 250 men have access to you at all times, as has been testified to by a number of witnesses, is extremely stressful. You're responsible for their wants, needs, desires, and making sure that those don't interfere with other people's wants, needs, and desires. So it can be an extremely stressful situation. I think that the -- for my next magic trick. There is definitely a correlation between prison design and job satisfaction.

MS. ROBINSON: Steve Bright.

MR. BRIGHT: I want to make a quick comment about the discussion a moment ago about correctional officers and guards. I wonder if you wouldn't think that if you had with what the secretary talked about this tough on crime, one state here that changed the names of all the correctional facilities to prisons. Went around to every single one of them, tore correctional facility down, put prisons up. It seems to me much harder -- it's much easier I guess to call people correctional officers when they work at a correctional facility than when they work in a prison.

MR. CORCORAN: It's prison officers and
it's departments of prisons. We did an interesting thing in California in our youth correctional facilities. They used to be called schools. There was tough on crime late eighties, nineties. Changed them to youth correctional facilities and they're no longer called schools. The problem is -- and it's well documented, and you see what's happening in California youth authority. Jurisdictions lost faith. We had allegations and documented cases of abuse. The communities no longer have faith in the mission of the department.

So a name change can mean a great deal. I think that it may be semantical, but I think it's important.

MR. BRIGHT: Here's the question I had. That was just sort of a comment. You talked about one person for 224 inmates, Mr. Corcoran, and we haven't really talked about it to what extent. The problems and the pressure we talked about as a result of understaffing, that there are not enough correctional officers to staff a facility and therefore there's more pressure put on ones that are there.

And the second related question, when you have a correctional system that does not have adequate staff and then require those officers that are working
to work overtime, to what extent should that ever be
allowed or what extent it is a problem? Someone
suggested in the earlier panel that people that have
particularly high stress jobs might ought to get more
time off because they're dealing with the stress and
they're sort of like in battle, and therefore they
might get an extra day off or something like that.
What's your reaction to that?

MR. CORCORAN: Well, in California we
actually have about 21,000 rank and file correctional
officers working tiers. The night staff ratio is
about eight inmates to every officer. That's just
taking the total number and dividing it. It doesn't
take into account shift work.

In New York they have about 72,000 inmates
that have about 22,000 correctional officers. Their
staff ratio is about 3.7 inmates to every officer. If
you look at their assault rates from inmate to
officers, they're one-third what we have in
California. We had 6,000 inmate-on-inmate assaults
last year. I think they had about around 1,500. We
had 3,000 staff assaults. I think they had like 600
documented staff assaults.

In California in particular all we're doing
is reacting. We're not correcting anything. We don't
have enough people when you've got numbers of 200 to one. You're reacting, you're responding, but you're certainly not correcting.

And then when you mentioned overtime, we have a new phrase in California called evidence-based recidivism reduction programs. That's wonderful and I love it. It sounds great, but when you've got an officer who is working sixteen hours a day up to three shifts a week on an involuntary situation, they don't care anything about evidence-based recidivism reduction programs. They just want to go home.

They know that, you know what, if they go to work and it's their kid's birthday, they're going to miss it. If it's a holiday they're damn sure going to miss it. And so if you've got a disgruntled staff that's overstressed, overcharged, if you will, the programs are doomed on their face because if the staff don't buy in, they don't translate it to the inmates and the inmates know that.

MS. ROBINSON: Can I follow up on that, Mr. Corcoran, and just ask you are there solutions that are there by better management, or is this simply a question of dollars and cents? Is it that the state simply is struggling to do the best it can with the resources it has?
MR. CORCORAN: Mr. Beck nailed it. It is a dollars and cents argument in many cases. You've got an electorate and a citizenry that on one hand put people one away, but don't want them mollycoddled. Well, that's a matter of perspective.

You've got John Q. Taxpayer who's paying to send his kid to a trade school, but you've also got a convict who is getting an opportunity to go to a trade school, and they don't like their tax dollars to be spent that way. We have to educate the taxpayers.

Wait, for an investment of three thousand dollars into this individual that may provide him an opportunity to not recidivate you're spending thirty thousand dollars to house them currently.

That's just bad economics. And so until people have the political will to step forward and say if you want a better person at the end, you've got to invest in that person, we're spinning our wheels.

MS. ROBINSON: Right. You're also telling us the impact it has on the individual officer, and it --

MR. CORCORAN: Absolutely.

MS. ROBINSON: And on him or her and their family?

MR. CORCORAN: Uh-huh.
MR. MARQUART: Similar situation pertains in my own state. We have over 150,000 people that are incarcerated, twenty some thousand correctional officers. And then we argue we have exhausted the space, prison space.

We're at that critical juncture in our state. Are we going to build more? We're one to two thousand correctional officers short. I believe we've exhausted the labor pool for competent staff. We're in competition with Wal-Mart and these other big retailers. That's where they're finding many of their staff because the labor pool -- I mean, we're at the point now of what are we going to do.

Are we going to build more the way we did in the 1980s because if you build another institution that houses 2,000, 3,000 people, you're going to have to find 1,000 staff to work in that place. There we go again into that vicious cycle. So I'd like to leave it that the wolf is at the door once again.

MS. ROBINSON: Right. Saul Green.

MR. GREEN: To a certain extent the last two comments really went toward the question I wanted to ask. I mean, we've talked about a situation that isn't working well at times. It's irrational.
comments public expectations and the stereotypes that we have to fight. I think this commission sees as a major challenge how we communicate afterwards to the public in a way that we get some kind of reaction that addresses all these issues.

I'm trying to figure out how we communicate these concerns in a way to make the public understand that this matters. And I don't know if within the system you work in there's ways that you try to reach out to the public where we ought to try to reach out to the public within the corrections system to say take a look or to have them experience or understand what is going on?

MR. BECK: Well, it is my hope that that is one of the outcomes of the work of this commission. You know, as administrators and those of us who work in corrections, it is difficult oftentimes to get the kind of exposure that would serve all of us well. Generally the stories that come out on corrections are when there are failures or when things go wrong. Oftentimes you don't hear about all of the good things that we do and the value that Lance spoke to. If we can cut down on recidivism, but our work -- it ends when the inmate walks out.

But we are held responsible for what
doesn't happen once they are out. It's like we can put them through all kinds of educational programs, all kinds of vocational programs. But if there is no one to offer them a job or no one to provide affordable housing or provide the substance abuse treatment they may need to continue with, that's a failure on us as a profession because that person ultimately returns to prison.

This is not a corrections problem. This is a community problem, and we've got to get folks involved and active on resolution. The biggest challenge I think that we face is how to articulate that message, how to get folks' attention, and how to enlist their support of the work that we're trying to do. I don't have an answer for you. I'm sorry, commissioner.

MS. ROBINSON: Did either one of you want to address that?

MR. CORCORAN: I think we can focus more on our positives. It's very difficult. I've taken numerous media tours, legislative tours through California prisons, and they -- we have a wonderful program in Folsom State Prison called Folsom State Project for the Vision Impaired. It is run by lifers and it is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit operating within the
walls of Folsom State Prison. They do closed captioning for the hearing impaired for the Department of Rehabilitation.

They feel invested in the program because they feel it's a disenfranchised element of society that they're helping another disenfranchised part of society. They have the best computers in the state of California. They have two inmates that do nothing but write grants, not only for their own program, but for the Lions Club International. They write for nonprofits in Sacramento area. Not one column yet has been written on this program. Not one program has ever been done on this program, and unfortunately, no one seems to care.

One thing, I've been meeting with a group called Books Not Bars there in California. They're an anti-youth authority, but as we were dialoguing, I got a blinding flash of the obvious. We produce as an organization a million tapes that we send out to our members. It's marketing, talking about our profession, but we only seize on the incidents because that's what people want to know about generally.

It's my mother-in-law, what was the worst thing that happened to you? And in doing that we are demonizing, if you will, the inmate population. So in
response what are the folks on the other side to do?

Seize on the anomalies that are bad actors within the correctional profession and help to demonize the correctional peace officers.

As an organization we need to stop that.

We need to recognize you know what, there are bad people in prison. They're painfully obvious. Their cases, they speak for themselves. We don't need to focus only on those. We need to focus not only on the successes of pro correctional programs, but the successes of individuals who have gone through the system as well.


MR. NOLAN: Hi, Mr. Corcoran. On Thursday I will be testifying in Congress on the Second Chance Act aimed at trying to assist the states and the federal government prepare inmates for release. And Mr. Beck, you said that you need the cooperation of the community, and one of the points I'm going to make is that the community needs to own reentry. A judge once said to me, "I can pitch all the souls I want at the community, but if there's nobody there to catch them, they'll fall through the cracks."

We really need to gauge the community. One
of the ways what Mr. Corcoran just said, we need to
humanize inmates. These are people that we need to
care about. One of the difficulties I'd like your
comment on, one of the difficulties is relationships
are what inmates need even better than programs.
Somebody that cares about them, help them change
through the system.

Most prison systems have nonfraternization
rules, so a religious person that comes into the
prison to help them is prohibited from being in
contact with them after they leave. The Federal
Bureau of Prisons has that and most states do. And
that really runs contrary to common sense, that -- and
it's based on the idea that no relationship made in
prison could ever be good, and anyway, I'd like your
reactions to that because inherent in -- because if
the relationship with a mentor only starts at the
prison gate, most of the inmates are going to breeze
right past this person.

I can't tell you the number of instances,
but if they hadn't known their mentor ahead of time
and a few systems allow that, they would have seen
this person standing there that they figure, "What
angle are they trying to get up on me? They're
standing between me and freedom" and blow right past
But inherent in that is allowing more volunteers inside and them to continue the relations. I would like your reaction in your systems whether, number one, do you have a nonfraternization rule, and number two, what do you think the impact would be of changing that?

MR. BECK: Well, in North Carolina we are quite involved with mentors in our transition initiatives. We encourage that involvement and that meeting and that relationship building before it's time for the inmate to leave the system. What we have found is that some of our better successes have come as a result of those relationships because those are the people who can kind of walk with them as they go out into this world and has changed a little bit from the way they left.

We've also worked with the faith community in terms of trying to establish points of contact in all counties where at least we can give an inmate when they leave a point of contact if they run into a situation that they can call someone who may be able to help them over a little situation that has occurred. So I don't --

MR. NOLAN: You don't have a policy that
prohibits a mentor that say continue that relationship on the outside?

MR. BECK: No, sir.

MR. NOLAN: That's it. That's great.

MR. CORCORAN: California does have such a policy. We're prohibited as officers from having such a relationship with an inmate, inmate families, business transaction, those type of things. And also parolees, parole is generally three years in California, and I know I sponsored as a staff sponsor the Alcoholics Anonymous and NA program, and there were individuals who I had a genuine care -- I cared about them, and I would have loved to have been able to follow up with them, but there certainly is risk there.

If there was a fraternization policy obviously it would have to be policed like anything else. I don't know that there is necessarily a negative, but certainly there's risks to both offender and to the staff member of manipulation because there are those that are not pure of heart.

MR. NOLAN: Isn't there a risk of cutting off those relationships?

MR. CORCORAN: Certainly. Like I said, I would have loved to have been able to follow up with
some of the guys that were very successful in the program. But three years down the road I may have been able to do that, but I didn't know where they were at that point. Once they're off parole, there's nothing that precludes former offenders from --

MR. NOLAN: And if they they've made it that long, it would be nice to see them successful, but they've already made it.

MR. CORCORAN: Yeah.

MS. ROBINSON: Pat, would it make sense to explore this in some pilot programs or something, or is that being done somewhere?

MR. NOLAN: Or look at the states that do because there are several states that do, and from what I know, what I've never heard anybody in corrections explain is what is the risk of the fraternization. Yes, there's somebody that could take advantage of them, but frankly they can take advantage through correspondence, they can take advantage once they're out of other people. What are the risks that you fear?

MR. CORCORAN: I suppose you'd have to talk to the management of the Department of Corrections in California, but I mean you try, you know, and I've read about the culture change and all these things,
but you're not supposed to get close. You're supposed

to have empathy, but not sympathy. And that's

trained. Unfortunately, I don't know that that's

always appropriate.

MR. NOLAN: You're talking about staff, and

you're right. There's a difference. A staff has to

be an authority. But a mentor that comes in -- but

most states, including California, prohibit that

volunteer that comes in from continuing the

relationship. They may work on a life plan, and when

they walk through the gate that's cut off.

MR. CORCORAN: Actually, California does

have a thing called match two, and what that is is

where business individuals or mentors in the community

can come in and actually visit an inmate, correspond

and have a relationship along those lines. It's just

we have very few volunteers. Your staff are readily

available and often mentor through their actions, but

we as staff are precluded from continuing that

activity.

MR. NOLAN: Yeah. I was talking about

volunteers -- volunteers, because some states do a

tremendous job. In fact, some institutions have a

number of volunteers coming in and others don't. I

think it would be good to look at which ones are
transient and allow the volunteers in and which ones are more restrictive.

MR. CORCORAN: If I can speak to that just briefly, that really comes down to also where you're siting prisons. Obviously you have a great deal of volunteerism in San Quentin versus Susanville. Not going to get a lot of volunteers in Susanville.

MR. LUTTRELL: Secretary Beck, you mentioned something a while ago. You talked about tension. And Mr. Corcoran, you alluded to it as well. It's really something that this commission has struggled with I think from the very first meeting is how do we take these concerns and these issues we discuss and how do we sell this to the public in a way that we can gain support or gain interest or something to stimulate some dialogue on some of these issues we talked about. Now, you have a lot experience sitting at this table here, and this is something we talked about last night. And quite frankly, we're looking for some good advice. We got some real intellects here, so help us.

MR. BECK: I think every opportunity this commission with the standing that it has, the credibility that it brings forward, I think that your work will add value to what we are trying to do. I
think if you -- if you tell the story as it is being outlined and as I'm sure you will drill down on to arrive at your conclusions, I think just stopping and having the opportunity to look at the many issues that surround safety and abuse in our prisons that it will be sort of a natural outcome.

You know, it won't be sweeping change I don't believe, and I don't believe that change will come overnight, but I believe you are on the verge of starting something that will play long-term dividends.

What Mr. Nolan said about the community has to own reentry, that's true. There's only so much we can do for the obvious reasons. They've got to own that.

The public I think understands to some degree what our work is about, but you know, they don't have an opportunity to really see it up close and personal. So they only know the horror stories sometimes that occur, but I'm hopeful that what you produce will be a springboard for the whole profession and the criminal justice system to take another look at this issue. Our prisons can be as safe as they -- as our citizens want them to be. Again, I'll say that, but there's an attendant cost that comes along with that.

MR. MARQUART: I would echo my colleague,
what my colleague is saying. And I look what
happened. This is not new, you know, these
commissions and committees looking at abuse or
violence. It's not new. It's cyclical. You look at
what happened in my own state, and I studied it right
after World War II in Texas.

The Texas prison system was known as the
black hole of Calcutta. It was a violent, dangerous
world. It was corrupt. Everything possible that went
wrong did go wrong. The public was excluded from any
kind of input, but that changed, and it changed as a
result of leadership within the wider community.

Prominent bankers, politicians, school
teachers, university types came in and shone light on
what was going on within that environment. That led
to massive and I think good changes within the prison
system in the 1950s and through the 1960s. I think
there has to be some kind of a buy-in.

We can talk all day long about what's good
and what's bad and how to market the prison system or
how to market a particular program, but we've got to
get people, I think prominent people in our state or
in any particular state to buy in that change is
needed or what direction are we going. It takes that
kind of a buy-in that I think is going to make
something happen. We're at that moment right now
where I think that leadership void is needing somebody
to step in and take --

MR. BRIGHT: Why did that happen in Texas?
Was it just so bad nobody could go on anymore?

MR. MARQUART: That's right. It was so bad
that people finally recognized that it had bottomed
out, and so instead of going left we needed to go
right, and you had some prominent people that stepped
up to the plate, bought into it and said by golly,
this is a hell hole, and we need to do something about
it. That was back then.

Today it's the same issue. We have 160,000
people that are locked up. We bottomed out, you know.
We can't build our way out of this. We need people
that are going to come out and say enough is enough
because it has to change in Austin. It has to change
in Sacramento. Whoops, Raleigh. It has to change in
Raleigh. That's where the change is going to take
place.

MR. BRIGHT: Was there anybody that took
some leadership in putting that group together in
Texas?

MR. MARQUART: Yeah, it was the governor.

MR. BRIGHT: And is it not there today?
MR. MARQUART: It was the governor. At that point in time we needed to go in a different direction and brought in prominent people to make that happen. I think it was the neatest plan that ever happened. You know, you don't hear a heck of a lot about it, but that led to a deep change in the way in which people were going to be treated when they were in prison. And I look back and I look at that, and I think that's a model I think for what ought to be done.

MR. CORCORAN: In terms of changing the public perspective, at every fair in California, whether it be county or state or a children's fair, they've got a CHP cruiser and they've got a car with a dummy in it that rolls over because they don't have their seat belt on. And the kids see this and they get to touch stuff and they feel good about it. They feel good about the highway patrol.

I don't know what we would do as a prison system. Sign up for strip search. I don't know. I mean, yeah, I don't know what we can do at that level. I think since we can't take necessarily the prison into the community, I think we have to open the prisons to the community and allow them access. I think we need a much more transparent system.
Certainly there are security risks and that is nerve-racking to go inside these facilities, but I think the public has to be invested and I think their leadership has to be invested in coming out and touring and seeing what's working versus what's not.

MR. RIPPE: Secretary Beck, do you have anecdotal or empirical data that says in a well-staffed, well-run prison where everybody is treated with dignity and respect and there is good comprehensive rehabilitative programs, that the recidivism rate is much lower?

MR. BECK: I don't have that type of evidence, but what I can tell you is that where we have those kinds of environments, the level of infractions committed by inmates are extremely low.

MS. ROBINSON: So that the violence rates themselves are very low?

MR. BECK: Exactly. Exactly. How that transcends out into the community and what the ultimate impact is, I don't have any evidence about that, and that's one of those areas where it's my belief that we as -- in corrections business claim those things that we can control and we're responsible for.

So what we have found is basically going
through how well those facilities function and the safety and security, the low assaults, the low infraction rates, those are the things that we really measure to determine how successful programs are operating. But you know, we also see that in every convening of the general assembly. There are sometimes hundreds of bills that are introduced, all of which have bed capacity implication, increased criminal penalties. So at some point we do bottom out.

You know, in North Carolina we operate with about anywhere from 700 to 1,000 vacancies in the department all the time. And so, you know, unless there is a -- something has got to change to make this work a little more attractive, more meaningful, and get the public involved I would say because there is no constituency.

MS. ROBINSON: Ray -- Ray Krone.

MR. KRONE: Yeah, a lot of this has been covered in the last hour, this more and more money. For years and years the Department of Corrections have been asking we need more money for this, we need to build more prisons. After 20, 25 years you'd think the money would have caught up to it. Obviously it keeps outgrowing that problem.
As we were talking earlier, I mean about -- is it the time for public scrutiny? Is it time for a different entity other than DOCs within that state to try to correct the problems? It's time for a new look at it, a fresh outlook at it for somebody to come in and say here's where we can -- if we can't get some money, here's where we can save money. And now open it up to more of a public or more as in our case a commission. And will that be receptive do you think in your co-workers in the department of corrections? Can those doors be open? The good as well as the bad be shown and exposed and be willing to change that?

MR. BECK: Well, I think we are very accountable and very open in terms of how we run these departments. Most of the states have gone through extreme budget situations. In 2001, the first act of our current government was declared a budget crisis. The department of corrections was one of the places that budgets were reduced.

In my six years there has not been many years that our budget has not been reduced. I think what we have learned is that we -- we have learned how to be more efficient, and I think we've done a good job in managing the overtime and holding down the meal costs, but here are the drivers. The drivers come
from increased medical costs, where we have an
obligation to provide a community level of care. More
inmates have mental health issues. There are more
inmates with disease. These inmates are coming to us
sick because of unhappy lifestyles or whatever the
case may be.

What I have seen most recently is an
increase in our younger population of inmates who are
borderline diabetics. These costs won't go away, and
as inmates stay longer, they get older and the costs
continues to drive. The things that we can control
is what I'm saying is I think we've done a good job in
getting down the average daily cost for meals.

We are looking at staff ratios. We're
reducing the number of officers to inmates, work
programs are being eliminated, but the costs that are
really driving this train are things that are beyond
our control, but we look for opportunities to partner
with the private sector. Most jurisdictions have some
type of relationship, be it food service, maintenance,
or even providing beds. So I think that we are doing
a pretty good job, and I think we are in the eye of a
lot of folks all the time.

MR. MARQUART: I like his reference to the
train. It is a train that is going downhill without
an engineer in the front. You're alluding to the costs, and it is very expensive, and a lot of this is it far exceeds the costs of sending somebody to school. We've heard that before. It's the political will to change it and is that going to change. I have never heard a legislature say I'm going to vote against X law or Y law. Until that changes, this train is going to continue to go downhill faster and faster and faster.

MR. CORCORAN: I think corrections need to stop being the catch-all for those that society doesn't want to do it. In 1995 Pete Wilson, during the budget crisis, eliminated outpatient mental health clinics. It was a six million dollar decision in a billion, multi-billion dollar budget. We're talking about an accounting error.

Those were guys that were maybe living under a bridge, but they had a clinic where they could go and get their meds. They closed those. So where do they go? The prison system. So instead of spending an investment to provide services to them on the streets, we're now housing them at 30,000 dollars a year. I think we can do far more in a mental health for all society, and it doesn't have to come directly to the prison system, but that's a decision for those
above me.

MS. ROBINSON: Jim Gilligan.

MR. GILLIGAN: Yes. I wanted to follow up on something that you alluded to earlier, Mr. Corcoran. In the European Union and in the United Kingdom there are inspectorates of prisons. In the European Union there's a system where task forces can come into and inspect any prison without any advance notice at any time of day or night. A staff of people from countries other than the nation in which the prison exists.

So these are really independent commissions kind of operating on the notion, I think, that sunshine is the best disinfectant and that transparency and openness are in general one of the best ways to assure that the standards that people think should exist in fact do exist.

Can -- is that the kind of thing that you would think could work in this country or be any reason we should not have such a system, and if it would be a good idea, is it something say the three of you or we as a commission should be advocating for?

MR. CORCORAN: I think as long as we took out cultural differences and looked at operations, cleanliness of facilities, staffing levels, those
types of things, it can definitely be positive. But
the reason I bring up culture, which obviously Europe
has no death penalty. Different jurisdictions here
do. As long as those types of judgments weren't made
and spoke to operations, I think it can be incredibly
positive.

MS. ROBINSON: Tim Ryan.

MR. RYAN: Gentlemen, one of the things I
want to focus on is what we now do. I'll give you a
model of some of the things we now do for officers to
try to do the best we can to get the best officers we
can. It's a long list that I've been making while
we're sitting here.

But in recruiting, my agency recruits one
out of every 43 -- one out of over 43 applicants for
the job. They have a psychiatric test. They have a
polygraph test. They have a test, an oral board. One
out of 43.

On their first week, first day they see a
video which says if you commit six sins in our
operation, lying, cheating, taking drugs, use
discrimination in any fashion, racial terms, you're
going to be fired. They see a videotape and have to
sign for that.

They go to an academy. The academy is
sixteen weeks. The first hour of that academy, the
first four hours of that academy is on what the
expectation is, to tell the truth, be part of what
life is all about in the prison system, and so we have
sixteen weeks of that.

At the end of that they have to graduate.
At that time they take a test, a certification test
for licensing. They have to pass that test in order
to become a licensed correctional officer. During
that first week after they have passed that test
they're required to go into an orientation program.
Part of that orientation program is to go to the
Holocaust museum and show what the issues are between
officers and citizens as to what is important in their
recognition of what it means to wear a uniform.

They have an FTO program. The FTO program
is twelve weeks. The twelfth week they have an
officer who trains and gets you through that first
twelve weeks to tell you what it's like to be an
officer in this department. We have a probationary
period of sixteen months in which they work through
that and they deal with that.

We have annual training of forty hours in
which we deal with the issues of prominent issues and
also the ongoing issues and use-of-force issues. We
have supervision training for their supervisors and
sergeants as to what it is to be a leader and what to
work in them. We have senior officers that if you
have a problem they can go and talk to them.

We have an examination of officers to give
them -- if they've had more than one or two
use-of-force events and we want to just talk about
that. Was it appropriate, what did you do, what was
right on that.

We have quarterly reports where we come out
and we show discipline for officers. One of the
things that you mentioned was fairness and
reasonableness and that and some -- we tell officers
what you get in trouble for. We try to have
consistent discipline. We have employment assistance
programs. If you don't want to talk to us, you can go
to somebody else and talk to them.

We have award ceremonies for not only the
individuals that do well for us in this review, but
also for their families. We have a promotion
ceremony. We have a fitness center, wellness program
in order to be able to get off some of the stress that
you have.

And we videotape every use-of-force event
unless it's one that happens in which it can't be
videotaped. What's missing in the list? What should we be doing that we're not doing today?

MR. CORCORAN: Do you want -- I would love to have you come to California. The vast majority of that list we do the same thing, we have a 16-week academy, we have an annual requirement of 52 weeks of training. Ethics is an enormous portion of their training. We do not have a wellness program, unfortunately. That's called a snack bar. Too many members of take advantage of that.

I mean, that's an incredible list. I can think of only thing. If you had an oversight commission that examined training standards to ensure that they're the most current, that type thing, but other than that, that's a very good list.

MR. RYAN: Thank you.

MR. MARQUART: It sounds very unusual. I mean, I tried to make note of it, but you spoke too fast. I couldn't get everything down. It sounds incredibly intensive to me. What state is this from?

MR. RYAN: It's in Florida right now. I used it in California, but I think what I'm asking of the commission here is we're looking for recommendations as to what should we be doing. What sort of model should be out there? What
recommendations should we be doing if we were to do
anything? What should that be? What do we need to
do?

MR. CORCORAN: Everything on your list is
wonderful, particularly the wellness program.
Oftentimes it's overlooked and poo-pooed by people,
but it's an important component because the stress --
as a corrections officer you're supposed to have a
facade and never crack, not only in front of your
family but in front of your peers, and especially not
in front of the inmates. That's not reality. We're
all human beings and we all have emotions and that can
be problematic.

When we were negotiating use of force in
California and we were negotiating the implications of
the policy, not the policy itself, but I wanted a
requirement by the department that in any deadly force
incident the officer mandatorily attend the employee
assistance program. At least three sessions even if
they sat there twiddling their thumbs mandatorily.

I had to fight my own side and ultimately I
got shot down. Well, I didn't understand that. One
of the guys that was there with me said, "I shot and I
didn't need it." I looked at him and I thought,
"Chuck, you sure did. You still do."
But the reality is unless -- if there's always going to be an onus of weakness, and you know in the jails and prison that term can kill you if you're weak. Well, the reality is, you know, when sometimes you don't even recognize that you need help, and I think that there's nothing wrong with forcing folks to go to an outsider on occasion.

MR. MARQUART: I like the component of the FTO, field training officer. I would advocate that because that senior officer is available and that's experience that can pass on the important information to the -- to that next generation. I think that's really where the rubber meets the road where you take somebody that's been there for many, many years and training somebody and bringing them along.

I think that's what's going to make that whole program successful or not is that officer going to stick with the agency, the organization, because that's what you want is retention. You know, I would say and advocate clearly that it's getting those veterans in touch with new people to bring them along to show them the ups, the downs, what to do and what not to do, use of force, boundary violations, all those kind of things. I mean, I'm a strong believer of that FTO program. I think it's great.
MS. ROBINSON: Secretary Beck, I don't know if Tim Ryan's list scared you off or if you wanted to comment on that.

MR. BECK: Thank you.

MS. ROBINSON: Well, I think the time for our panel has ended. This has just been a terrific panel. I want to thank each one of you on behalf of the commission. You've been terrific. I think we could keep going for another hour or two if we had the time. On behalf of all of us our deep thanks for your being here and for the information that you provided us this morning.