

To my fellow prisoners, and those contemplating a trip to prison –

# HOW ARE YOU BEING SCREWED

IAN FRAZER

(Based on a book by Angela Davis 'If They Come In The Morning'.  
Using quotes and concepts from that book but given relevance to  
Australian conditions by the author.)

Officially there are not prisons or penitentiaries, but correctional centres, complexes and training centres. In 1970 we had the farce of the change of name from Prisons Dept. to Dept. of Corrective Services. It amounted to stationary changes at best. There are not "prisoners" only inmates, and most certainly no political prisoner only those who perpetrate criminal violence. The following is the latest terminology, which no doubt makes every thing just a little bit nicer for the convicted felon: Prisons/Training Centre or Correctional Facility; Guard or Warder/Custodial or Correctional Officer; Initial Lock Up/Reception; Solitary Confinement or pound/Cellular Confinement ..... ETC.

The semantic somersaults of bureaucracy serve an avowed and calculated ideological function – that is in simplistic terms to con the public that the powers "that are" are liberal in the true sense of the word; that is they have progressive enlightened aims. It's part of the propaganda that the public is subjected to in order to assist in stifling public outcry for a thorough investigation into allegations of prison brutality. Bureaucracy seeks to engender or inculcate a disbelief of all prisoner allegations. In fact prison officials are now counselled to cultivate media contacts in case of disturbance so that the administrations version of any prison disturbances will be accepted. Previously it was prison policy to ignore media but as stated in the confidential document "Manual of General Information – Custodial Division", page 48 "an air of secrecy leads credence to irresponsible inmate allegations", therefore prison administrators now quickly pick up their phones and advise the press of trouble. The department's public relations bull shit artist now goes to work – and his work often rivals Hans Christian Andersons epics of crap. The logical conclusion to be drawn, because of the department's "enlightened aims" is that their statements are to be believed or accepted. After Bathurst our Minister of Justice publicly stated that there were no floggings. This was not true and I don't believe the public was convinced. The Minister of Injustice was attempting to convince the public that it just couldn't occur under the "enlightened" aims of this Dept. and they were not to believe the hundreds of people who were stating a different version. Who is the public to believe? If they asked themselves why are the jails closed to the public scrutiny it would seem obvious why – to hide the rampant corruption and violence. Both of which are the indictments of the Government of today and of prior years.

Why are we here? More importantly, why am I here? The dominant theoretical assumptions of the social scientists of this country are that the existing social order is functionally stable and fundamentally "JUST". This is a fallacy. The existing social order is not "JUST" and I personally hope it will prove to be unstable. However, it follows that if this basic premise is accepted it must be assumed that the prisoner is morally depraved. There can be no other logical explanation for his incarceration. You are morally depraved then if you refuse to be drafted to kill innocent people in Vietnam or because you are hungry and you steal ..... etc. Are you morally depraved? Morals or morality bring to mind the question as to what are the appropriate values of our society or community. The values of our sick society are warped — when the 'buck' is more valuable than the welfare of man. This is the sign of the death knell of modern western civilisation. The most appropriate example of these warped social values is the crime against property is currently drawing heavier sentences (on average, i.e.) than crime against the person. Than Nixon got turfed out of office over a burglary when he is also guilty of genocide (Vietnam) or when I stole a car at gun point in which no-one was hurt I got twelve years or when you rob a bank and no-one is hurt you are likely to get 10 to 15 years; on the other hand if we had raped and/or based someone we would have been unlucky to get 7 years. Surely this is a sign of warped values. YOU CAN BASH 'EM, BUT DON'T ROB 'EM. . . . In our society it is morally correct to adopt the social (anti social really) ethic of "get what you can, anyway you can," whilst adopting the "Up you Jack, I'm alright" attitude. This shouldn't be so. People no longer care about the welfare of the fellow man. To accumulate capital and exploit people by employing them — to get what you can from them, that is to rob within the legal rule, is O.K. Is it fundamentally fair for a worker to make \$1,000 worth of goods in a week to be paid only a hundred dollars?

His boss is the accumulator of capital by sitting on his arse doing buggler all, is receiving \$900 that is justly his workers earnings. This is robbery within the legal rules, however, you and I, (workers) are not in the position to rob within the legal rules, as we don't have the necessary means — capital, money, land, the means of production, etc. We are on the wrong side of the class barrier.

How does this robbery occur? What's the secret? Who robs?

The accumulator of capital robs. If you were able to investigate the financial background of Australia's rich (or any other industrialist) you would find that they gained this money via inheritance and theft. Digressing a moment, a further point in relation to the rich is the political associations of the present generation and prior generations were all tied with money. It is the descendants of earlier politicians and moneyed families that still rule. This is no accident. That money and politics go hand in hand, and is illustrated by the fact that the one time Premier of NSW, Lewis, is the brother of Essington Lewis the

chariman of BHP. If you study the names of the political figures in power in the '30's and those of the present era you will coincide, e.g. Drake-Brockman. The great puzzle to many people is how can I say the worker is being robbed? How does this exploitation operate? The owner of the money buys labor power at its value, which like the value of every other commodity is determined by the socially necessary labor time requisite for its production (i.e. the cost of maintaining the worker and his family.) Having bought labor power, the owner of the money is entitled to use it, that is, to set off work for the whole day – twelve hours, let us suppose. Yet in the course of six hours (“Necessary labour time”) the labourer creates products sufficient to cover the cost of his own maintenance; and in the course of the next six hours (“Surplus labor time”) he creates surplus products, or surplus value for which the capitalist (boss) does not pay. Now if the worker outside is being screwed when he is payed \$100 per week just imagine how much you are being screwed when the department forces you to work for 10 cents a day. Think about it. Your theiving was only the result of your adherence to capitalism's greatest virute – which is to get rich quick. You are fetted and decorated for such, e.g. Sir Paul St— r: – a land developer thief. But as I stated previously you and I are not in the position to rob within the legal rules – we do not have the means. Why should you and I be forced to work 8 to 12 hours a day to earn a living whilst our working is supporting some bludging parasite in Vaucluse who is doing S.F.A. Ask yourself what would our society be like if we put all the non-productive workers and non workers to work and for all the production to be shared equally. In a country as rich in resources as Australia we would all own a house, car and enjoy a standard of living as the highest in the world. We would possibly work 30 hours a week and such parasites as company directors, judges (do I hear a cheer in the crowd), public servants (the screws – too frightened to steal, too lazy to work; would have to earn a living), advertising agents, salesmen, debt collectors, real estate agents would be sharing the load. Frankly it's no wonder you and I steal, when we do we are subject to justice that the people that have the means to rob legally have formulated. Who does this justice work for? You all know that a “sling” is the accepted means of beating the rap. Obviously justice is only for those who pay.

At one time or another in our criminal careers we have been lucky enough to have had the cash for a sling, therefore beating the rap. Anatole France summed up the situation very succinctly “with equal impartiality the law forbids both the rich and poor alike to steal food and sleep under bridges”. If you have the cash you only buy temporary justice – the rich run the whole system.

No doubt you had a good chuckle over the ministers statement, that there is no corruption in the NSW Police force. I bet you remembered the times that the cops asked you if you wanted to do business and not the other way around. That is the complete summation of our legal system – hopelessly corrupt. Just as our society.

Theft is obviously by degree. Where our theft of \$1000 earns a jail sentence our stock exchange thieves are knighted. Thus our moral depravities are revealed before our JUST social order. Criminology texts like to advance the idea that prisoners are mentally defective (or moral degenerates) and this is why our enlightened bureaucracy has numerous Psychiatrists, Psychologists, and other such pill-pushers and bludgers in its employ. The first goal of a prison is to isolate those people (mental defectives) that the community doesn't want at large. Safe confinement is the goal. Now the bleeding heart liberals rush to the rescue with the old humanitarian concept: we must reform we must rehabilitate our misguided offender. As one 'humanitarian' (Liberal) fascist parliamentarian put it on the record (Hansard 25-2-70 Page 3609, NSW Legislative Assembly Prisons Amendment Bill 1970) ('the name changer') "we will take it out of their hides. That must be our attitude". And to the comment, "Revenge is sweet", he replied, "It is not revenge at all. At the same time we will teach him in the British sense to take his punishment like a man, and after we have knocked him down we will pick him again." We all know what the British did when they first came to this country - the flogged everyone they had hegemony over. Frankly I'm tired of being knocked down and flogged. That is why the riots of 1970 and 1974 occurred; and because of the floggings after both of these riots and the continued attitude that a prisoner was an animal to be flogged. It is expected that another riot will occur unless there are changes in the administration and staffing of prisons. I point out that I am not advocating riots because I know that the prisoner cannot win - if we use a big stick they will use a bigger one; if we use a petrol bomb they will use a shot gun, etc. We cannot win because they can use a greater violence than it is possible for the prisoner to muster.

Being adequately housed and confined (not that we are; especially when housed in cells 13ft by 7ft with three to a cell) the prisoner is to be treated (he's graded and degraded). He must undergo treatment programs in order to be rehabilitated. This consists of folding lottery tickets, sweeping yards of polishing locks. After being graded and degraded our emotional psychological maladies are laid bare to have to be treated by the universal panacea - DOPE .... Valium Largactyl, Tryptomol, Methadone, etc. This way the authorities have hundreds of doped zombies, ipso facto, they will create no trouble. They will accept being screwed and the rotten conditions in which they have to live. They are controllable.

Not so long ago prisoners regarded the use of dope as a weakness - this ethic should once again be promoted. Ninety per cent of the present users do not need this garbage that is ruining their minds and bodies. Next time you go past the clinic in the morning just have a look at the 80 or 90 guys lined up for their dope and ask yourself if whether you think that the guys that you personally know in the line really need the shit being given out. What are they doing? Escaping reality by blocking their mind from the rotten conditions and violence? When the psychology reveals that we have alledged criminal character-

istics this is done with the purpose of creating self doubt within the individual so that he will readily accept the treatment and programmes suggested to him. If he appears to be not fully compliant with the suggestions put to him that he often finds that it is imperative that he be taking dope to ease his worries – worries that he didn't have until it was suggested that some past personal conflict was the cause of his worries and/or criminal behaviour. Prisoners are always able to come up with a reason why they are in jail – it is never their fault is their reasoning. The Psychologists conceded and agree with the prisoner's excuse and usually add some other reason that it wasn't the prisoners fault. By this means the psychologists manifest this idea and use it to their own benefit to manipulate you. Part of the psychological bullshit is the jargon that is used – used as a form of social control (in addition to dope). To quote a trained friend who commented on some of this jargon used in my file, he said 'Psychiatric jargon such as 'low frustration tolerance' which means you get angry when someone oppresses you, is pure crap. Psychology social work and the behavioural sciences use this garbage as agents of social control – serving capitalism by classifying people who won't accept being screwed down as 'misfits' It attempts to convince people that the problem is in themselves and not in the rotten conditions in which they have to live. It is understandable that you cannot accept the rotten conditions under which we live but do not fall into the administrations trap of being coned that you need dope. Don't try to hide from reality. Understand and resist this manipulation. The above example of low frustration tolerance they are telling you that your perseverance and patience is short and it will (if you accept it) become a self fulfilling prophecy – if you are sick you will become so. By inculcating this heilef that the problem is within yourself they are attempting to create a sense of inadequacy in our mind so that you will accept the programmes (lottery ticket folding) ideas, (capitalist values) beliefs (christianity), directions (to go to jails where you can't get visits), orders, etc. that they feel inclined to give. They are playing "mind games" with complete disregard for your welfare, and this is all in the name of case administration. They don't give a fuck whether or not you have any problems, their whole aim is to keep you quiet. To get you to accept being screwed. The purported psychological characteristics of criminal behaviour must be treated by education and there are two means of educating (brainwashing) prisoners – they are subject to alternating sequences of either reward or punishment. Reward can be anything from a cream job to voerlooking minor breaches of the regulations. Punishments consists of either "loading up" a prisoner with false charges against prison discipline or just plain harrasment, e.g. searches. Haven't you ever wondered why it is that some screw whom you have never offended starts riding you? Anything to upset the prisoners equilibrium. This is to decoy you away from the rotten conditions -- whilst you're worrying about the harrassment you won't be worrying about the rotten conditions.

The prison operates with the idea that when it has the prisoners body it has his entire being – since the whole cannot be greater than its parts. They put the body in a cell and seem to get some relief and security

from the fact. The idea of a prison victory then, is that when the person in jail begins to act, think and believe the way they want him to, then they have won the battle and the person is "rehabilitated". It's all a facade immediately dropped upon release,

Such is the big con with the parole office – both you and he are aware of the truth, but if you are willing to become a yes man, conform to his ideals and pamper to his interests (he may be a football fan so you discuss football) he will be willing to CONCEDE some merit to helping you "rehabilitate" you. At heart he is a do-gooder so while your "success" is boosting his ego you are also helping him with his career – so many successes so few failures. In reality there are no success in getting a prisoner to adhere to the rules of a socially and morally corrupt society. The prison victory mentality is inherently obvious with that old swan song "I'll lock you up" crap. But where is the victory? To analyse whether there is a victory or not we must come back to the type of prisoner and his motivations and goals.

I only create these divisions in relation to the schools of thought so that it can be readily explained: not to grade anyone at all. There are three types of prisoner. The first is a very small minority of individuals that are apathetic. They are disillusioned and seeing no future in society or its change or non-thinking morons who just accept things as they find them because it is beyond their comprehension that society can and does change. We will ignore this type of prisoner as he is of little importance.

The second type of prisoner is the most numerous who accept and believe in the legitimacy of the assumptions upon which our society is based their aims or goals are the same as everybody else, money, power, greed, conspicuous consumption (mansions, yachts, Rolls Royces, etc) They are of the belief that it is possible in our society for them to rise above their 'peers' and make it – make it across to the North Shore and drive big cars etc. They wish to acquire the same goals as everybody else, but they adopt methods and techniques that the bourgeoisie society has defined as illegal, i.e. illegitimate. These people are put in jail when detected. We may call them illegitimate capitalists since their aims are to acquire everything that our capitalistic society defines as legitimate, money, power, greed, etc.

The third type of prisoner is one who does not accept the assumptions on which society is based. He regards our society as illegitimate because he recognises the fact that if he plays the game the prison wants him to play he will have his time reduced and be released to continue his activities. Therefore, he is willing to go through the prison programs and to do the things the prison authorities desire. The prison presumes he is "rehabilitated" and ready for society. The prisoner has really played the prison game so that he can be released to resume pursuit of his capitalistic goals. There is no victory for the prisoner from the start accepted the idea of the society, i.e. it is right that some be exploited for the benefit of the few. He pretends to accept the idea of

the prison as part of the game he has always played. Ask yourself why do you see the same guys returning to jail? It is because they accept that jail is part of their occupation and just a hazard in that type of work.

The remarkable thing is that the prisoner often reveals that he is in jail because he broke the law or rules - rules that he was ineligible to observe because of his economic and social status: an impoverished worker. He lacked the means to rob legally, i.e. money, land, means of production, etc.

The prison cannot gain a victory over the political prisoner because he has nothing to rehabilitate from or to. He refuses to accept the legitimacy of the system and refuses to participate. For the political activist this is often a mistake as his refusal to work or participate will secure his physical segregation or isolation by the authorities and therefore he will not be able to help the ignorant amongst his peers to understand the forces which control their lives and which must be smashed. To participate, is to admit that the society is legitimate because of its exploitation of the oppressed. This is the idea which the political prisoner does not accept. This is the idea for which he has been imprisoned (if you now believe that your presence in jail is the result of UNJUST society regardless of your "crime" you should adopt the role of a political prisoner) and this is the reason that he cannot co-operate with the system. At the moment a compromise must be reached if the political prisoner desires to raise the consciousness of his peers and he cannot do this if isolated by the authorities.

The compromise is to do the work that does not profit the jail and does not assist the administration. In the first instance, such jobs in places such as the tailor, paint, metal work and carpentry shops where the prisoner is obviously exploited e.g. paid 2 to 5 cents per hour, must be avoided. There is another reason to avoid these jobs and this is because of you being used as slave labour. You are denying someone outside a job. This cheap slave labor is not only the most base exploitation but it serves as a capitalist ethic by creating division of labor where some are paid better than others (in comparison i.e.). This is to promote greed and an acceptance of the state of affairs that some prisoners are better off than others in this supposedly egalitarian society. Outside society is supposedly equal. Why should a guy who works in a tailor shop 5 days a week be paid twice the wages paid to a cook? The cook works 12 hours a day 7 days a week. The reason is because the tailor makes the administration a profit and the cook doesn't.

That money is earned to be spent on (buy ups) supplements to the diet which is condemnation that the diet is insufficient and unbalanced. To prove my statement I point out that the majority of the items on the list are staple foods, e.g. sugar, margarine, butter, fruit, milk, tinned meat and fish, sandwich spreads, cheese and breakfast cereals. These are the necessities of a varied diet. Buy ups should only be for luxury items such as tobacco, cordials, sweet cakes and biscuits.

This division of prisoners is well planned aim of the bureaucracy and a mirrored example of outside society's division in miniature, because they realise to challenge their oppression we must be united. This is the reason that some jails known as "good jails" whilst others are known as being hell holes. If all jails were the same in conditions and amenities all that wrangling and coniving that takes place would not occur. Amenities (and conditions) or lack of amenities (and equality) is one of the means used to divide our society.

It is natural to desire to live in a better environment but it must be understood that it is at the expense of your fellow man. Everyone desires better food and amenities. By manipulating these amenities, e.g. allowing \$3.00 buy ups (if you can earn that much which is unlikely) and allowing \$10.00 parcels at camps it is natural to expect the prisoner to desire the better form of imprisonment thus occurs the constant scramble by the silver tails, suck arouds and give ups to get on the band wagon for these material benefits.

So much for the equal society. But if everyone is aware of the inimical aims of this bureaucracy they can be frustrated and countered by an attitude of non-cooperation. It must be distinguished that this does not mean disobedience. We are not in the position to be disobedient but if our work is unsatisfactory or if we do not suck around enough we will lose those unwanted jobs. When other people take those jobs, without displaying any hostility talk to them and try to convince them that what they are doing is wrong. Don't ostrasize these people no matter how strong you feel as this Dept. relies on scabls and give ups to sow dissention – they rely on this ill feeling between prisoners to keep the prisoners from turning on the true source of all iniquities and oppression in our society – this Dept. Remember this when the time for action occurs – save some of that ill-feeling for the true enemy. In the second instant of jobs to avoid i.e. jobs that assist the administration are those clerical jobs in the overseers, work shops, stores, etc. You are only doing some screws job – let them earn their own living. We are ruled and as such and sould only obey orders and not assist in the administrative duties. These jobs are another creation for the division of labor aims, as all these jobs have the perks that seek to divide; more money, time out of cell, etc.

This is just another example of the promotion that the capitalist ethic greed and because of it exploitation – instead of giving every prisoner a reasonable standard of living it is cheaper to get a prisoner to trample his fellow man. If you gain you must realise that it is at the cost of your fellow prisoner. This also applies when we return to freedom – freedom to be exploited in our society's rat race for an adequate living.

Adequate, complete and sufficient diet to be norm to be without the need of supplements (buy ups) but as we live in a corrupt social order of which we are the victims of this playing off one prisoner against another is acheiving the result of diverting our anger in our aspirations



for a normal standard of living from those responsible for this criminal state of affairs. In outside society the bosses promote worker against worker battles, e.g. NSW BLF branch versus Federal BLF (financed by the bosses – the Master Builders' Association) for exactly the same reasons. I hope I have been able to expose the mechanisms of our society and how they affect the prisoner. I have been rather critical. Maybe there is something good about jail. What's good about jail? There must be something good about jail even if it is hard to ascertain. The whole concept of jail or imprisonment is the confinement of those society ostracizes. The 'good' of jail is a place where for a while at least the breaker of society's rules (bourgeois society's rules) is prevented from being a capitalist. He can no longer steal. Another good thing about jail is that the destitute alcoholics get a bath and a meal before being kicked out with 60 cents in their hands.

Now surely there must be more that's good about jail. I find myself scratching to discover anything else. If making people better thieves is good, well jails to that well. As amenities are lacking to divert the prisoner the recreation periods are usually filled; with talking about beer, sex, horses and jobs, but not necessarily in that order. Jobs figure very prominently in the conversation with all the new hands picking up hints for the more experienced people.

If causing mental stagnation and inertia and therefore loss of memory disorientation and the ability not to think constructively is good then jail deserves honours in the degree of brainwashing. If making normally industrious people slavish or idle workers is good, then jail should open up a place 'to get away from it' (work that is). To sit on your arse for a few years is normal and when the time arrives for you to once again be intergrated into the workforce it cannot be done without the greatest difficulty. To actually work 8 to 12 hours per day after years of doing nothing is very hard – the prisoner is then very indolent. It is far easier to steal.

If teaching obedience is good, jail does this well. When you have been flogged consistently you learn obedience.

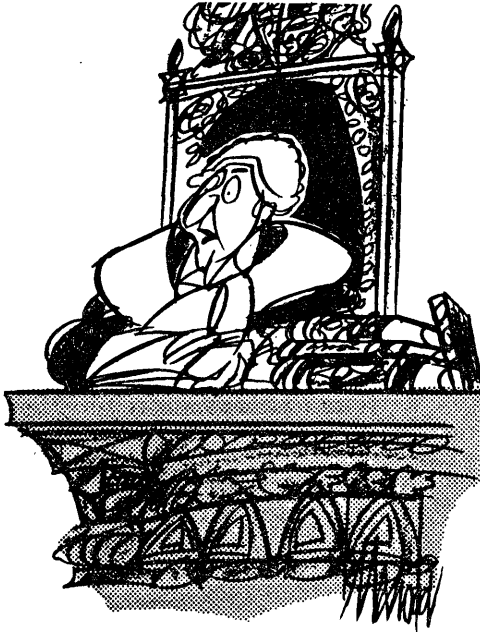
Jail also teaches you to appreciate good food – you could even become a connoisseur. After eating shit for a couple of years I guess it is normal to appreciate good food. If you really do desire to work, jail will no doubt cure you of this ill – if you are a butcher you will become a bricklayer, a clerk a cook, a cook a clerk etc. If you are a bum, have no fear you will remain one.

Now if you are one of those really strange people who dig education, be prepared – for obstruction, lies, evasions, "Don't know" answers to your questions, lack of equipment, being told what courses you must do (the one you won't be allowed) but do remember "jail is rehabilitative" and education is one of its means, therefore jail is good.

If deteriorating health is your problem, do not come to jail, as you

can expect the best incompetent medical services in the western world. But there are good aspects to this medical service — you help society by being guinea pigs or the first victims of our budding surgeons. Remember you must pay society for your misdeeds. This is not to say there has never been any good medical staff however, all the good medical staff leave when their professional integrity is impugned by the Dept. ignoring their advice. The ones that stay become rubber stamp bureaucrats protecting the Dept. by covering up the results of the violence that occurs within the walls.

There is nothing about jail that is bad if you decide to conform with the rehabilitave programs — remember, to conform is what the authorities desire, so no matter how tedious the lottery ticket folding and lock polishing get, stick with it and be reformed. The day will come when as a ‘reformed’ and “rehabilitated” person you will walk out those gates into the beckoning world; the dole queue beckons (your record prevents a job), the usurer, the old crim mate, the check book, the pawn broker, the fence .... will beckon . . . the police will beckon .... degradation awaits all.



*“I’m undecided whether to give you a long sentence and teach you a lesson or let you loose on society and teach them a lesson!”*