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Editor's Note
By Lenard Hall

The Latin phrase, *facta non verba*, literally means "deeds not words". This is something I look for before supporting any organization. Rittenhouse is an organization of action and I am privileged to have been able to contribute, in some small way, to their mission.

As a federal inmate it is refreshing to be given the opportunity to contribute in some meaningful way to the community.

Thank you Rittenhouse for transforming, not only the justice system, but also attitudes and actions.

ICOPA IX
May 10-13, 2000

ICOPA IX Ninth International Conference on Penal Abolition

A CALL TO TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

"New Questions & New Answers"

OUT OF THE VOID: ICOPA IX TAKES SHAPE!

Ruth Morris, Fall 1999

Years ago, my staff and I got up at 5 a.m. to create a huge multicultural festival on the two large plaza parking lots at Jane-Finch. Looking at the emptiness before us, and seeing what it was like by 7 a.m., as tents, displays, chairs, and life in all shapes emerged, I began to understand what Creation must have felt like for God. Out of the Void, we created a festival with colour, sound, art, crafts, dance, attracting several thousand people from over 100 countries.

In the same way, a small brave band of us are creating ICOPA IX out of the void of the times. *Challenging the corporate agenda *Challenging the vast prison industry *Challenging the myths of the corporate media, we dare to hold up a new vision of transformative justice! We call for new questions, with new answers, and we will bring together experts from all over the world who will link the struggle against corporate rule with the struggle against the chains of our retributive justice system. These chains are just as cruel for chaining victims to unhealed grief and anger as for the physical chains and bars that humiliate the prisoners. We will demonstrate that the penal system is the final brute force holding the dysfunctional economic system in place. With 80-90% of us losing big from corporate rule, something has to persuade most people to accept it. Our brutal justice system is the ultimate harsh enforcer.

ICOPA IX will bring together people working at both ends of this challenge. Like a child digging a sand tunnel, the hands digging from both ends will meet triumphantly in the middle, and touch, making a complete tunnel under the forces keeping both these abusive systems in place.

Speakers on penal issues include brilliant European criminologists and penal abolitionists like Louk Hulsman and Thomas Mathieson. Rick Sauve, Bob Gaucher, Kim Pate and Trish Monture-Angus will describe the racism, classism, sexism and other evils of our penal system from a Canadian perspective. Prof. Dianne Martin, Jim Brophy (WORKPLACE ROULETTE), Frank Pearce (TOXIC CAPITALISM), and Laureen Snider will remind us that CORPORATE CRIME IS THE BIGGEST CRIME.

David Korten, John McMurtry, Michelle Cuossudovsky, and Canada's United Church Moderator Bill Phipps, all of who draw hundreds to presentations about corporate rule, will bring us to a new level of awareness of the "corporate agenda". They will draw hundreds more to an understanding of the *links between penal abolition and liberation from corporate rule*. Speakers like Angela Davis, Ursula Franklin and Ruth Morris will give presentations that bring it all together.

But ICOPA IX isn't just a series of brilliant plenary presentations linking these two vital issues. ICOPA IX includes workshops, an open microphone time, a demon-

stration, fun and fellowship, and networking with like-minded people around the world. Come and take part in a major event toward the building of a healthier, more compassionate, *transformed 21st century!*



Corporate Criminality **By Harry Glasbeek**

ICOPA (IX) has put corporate criminality on its agenda.

It may seem peculiar that a conference devoted to the abolition of the penal system is setting out to identify more criminals and more criminality. Does ICOPA want to find more people to punish? No. ICOPA's purpose is to reveal how determinably biased the criminal justice system is; despite its claim that it reflects universally shared views and goals. Once this systemic bias is understood, the case – ICOPA's case – of those who want to get rid of the existing penal system will be much stronger. They will be able to show that, not only is, as is well known, the system ineffective in that it neither rehabilitates, nor deters, and in that the system cares little about the victims of anti-social behaviour, but also they will be able to show that the system is capricious and that it ignores the greatest criminals amongst us. Evidence of such arbitrariness may help to hammer the final nail into the coffin of the ugly criminal justice system.

For these reasons, ICOPA is setting out to: (i) provide evidence of the enormous amount of unlawful behaviour engaged in by the huge corporations that command the heights of our economies. The fact is that, if the notorious and evil “three strikes and you will be imprisoned for life” were applied to the likes of Hoffman-LaRoche, Exxon, Du Pont and Inco, they would have disappeared from our landscape. Large

publicly traded corporations are amongst our most egregious recidivist criminals; (ii) provide evidence of the enormous amount of damage done by the unlawful behaviour of these corporate behemoths. They take money to which they are not entitled, they eat up our environment as if there is to be no tomorrow; they inflict serious physical harm and many deaths upon workers, farmers and consumers. The harmful impact of corporate deviance exceeds by many, many multiplicands the harm done by the human “criminals” we callously jail; (iii) provide evidence of the fact that, not only are these large corporations recidivists of the worst order, but also that the laws which they breach impose very low standards on corporate behaviour. This is so because governments rely on these large corporations to produce welfare and are hesitant to inhibit them very much. These corporations' repeated failure to abide by even minimal standards make their deviant, harmful behaviour far more immoral than that of most people we put in jail because we adjudge their conduct to be antisocial, even when, all too often, such antisocial behaviour arose out of a combination of poverty, poor education and corporate-inspired feelings of despair; (iv) provide evidence of the fact that, despite the incontrovertible record of massive wrongdoing, the criminal justice system – even if it wanted to prosecute corporate actors vigorously, which it does not – cannot enforce the law effectively against corporate actors. This is so because criminal law is based on holding individuals accountable for their personal actions. The legal structure of the corporation, however, is such that directors, managers and shareholders – the real decision-makers inside these large corporations – are legally insulated (not completely, but effectively) from personal responsibility. Unlike all the so-called criminals in jails – on whom they frequently pour scorn – these powerful economic actors have won limited liability for their activities.

These are some of the reasons why ICOPA is setting out to look at corporate criminality. It is a way to show that, not only is the existing penal system brutal and ineffective, but also that it is grossly unfair.



ICOPA Website:

Please visit our website (<http://www.interlog.com/~ritten>) for lots more information on the Ninth International Conference on Penal Abolition, this May 10th – 13th, 2000 at Ryerson and Metropolitan United Church, Toronto. Should you not have a computer personally, access is available at various community centers and libraries. Please feel free to download/print the various forms, bits of information, etc., available there.

We have recently reorganized our ICOPA Local Committee into a number of subcommittees: Program, Finance, Administrative, Publicity & Communications, and International/ICOPA X. Although these subcommittees meet locally here in Toronto, we can all use assistance, and some tasks can be done from afar! Hence, any volunteer interest from Regional members is most welcome! Contact us!

PLEASE also, if you have an email address, send it along to us, so we can enhance communication, save on snail mail postage (about a dollar a letter!), and speed up communications with you. Email us at ritten@interlog.com!

Call for Volunteers

By Giselle Dias & Joan Ruzsa

As the planning of ICOPA moves along, we are beginning to see the immensity of the project we have undertaken. We have a number of committed volunteers in for the long haul. As the plans and pro-

grams come together we can't help but become overwhelmingly excited.

It is the first ICOPA to challenge the corporate agenda while making a direct connection to the penal system. We have a number of exciting speakers who will speak on abolition and corporate crime as well as racism, classism and sexism within the criminal (in) justice system. We have speakers to outline how the system is failing, why we maintain it and where we can go from here to change it. We will outline and explain transformative justice as a true alternative.

With all of this said, we still need your help. Outreach is essential, so please start to spread the word, advertising where you can – newsletters, internet, mailouts and by word of mouth. We want to gather as many people together as possible to educate one another, discuss issues, create coalitions and most of all make a commitment to abolition. For those local to Toronto we need your assistance on smaller committees, (financial, program, administration, publicity and communication) or the local/regional committee. We need volunteers at the conference, help with local billeting, translation, entertainment, etc. the list appears to be endless.

We are overwhelmed with excitement and work. Please get involved. You can contact the office at:

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More Studies while People Die

By Pat Sanagan, Drug Education and Training Consultant, member of the Local Planning Team, ICOPA IX, Toronto, September 1999.

HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C have become "emergency" issues in Canadian prisons with recent surveys revealing the number of known cases of HIV/AIDS in federal pris-

ons rising by 46% between April 1994 and March 1996, and the incidence of Hepatitis C present in up to 40% of prisoners. Over represented in these surveys are people from aboriginal communities. Most of this is related to injection drug use, sexual activity and tattooing in jails.

The Canadian Aboriginal Aids Network (CAAN), in their harm reduction manual "Joining the Circle: An Aboriginal Health Model", has laid the need and the needed response in an articulate and compassionate call for reform. (1) They reiterate the often said statement that, "a three month sentence should not become a death sentence".

Corrections Services Canada has been expertly informed about the problem of HIV in prisons and the impact on the people affected themselves as well as their communities to which they will return upon release.

In 1994, ECAP released a "Final Report" which called for prisoners' unequivocal right to protect themselves against HIV infection and the Government of Canada's obligation to help inmates in this regard. A Harm Reduction program was recommended with condoms, dental dams, water-based lubricants and bleach kits being made available as well as methadone maintenance programs. A further recommendation for a pilot needle exchange program to be held in one federal prison in order to assess the issues was highlighted. The report also specifically identified the unique needs of aboriginal people and HIV in prisons and called for Aboriginal specific education, counselling and support programs. (2)

CSC was reluctant to implement the recommendations, fearful that the government would be seen as "soft on drugs" or worse, sanctioning drug use. An ill-advised attempt to "clamp down" on illegal drug use was ineffective. In 1996, the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network and the Canadian AIDS Society released a criticism of this re-

luctance and again recommended "a more pragmatic approach to drug use, acknowledging the idea that a drug free prison is no more realistic than the idea of a drug free society and that because of HIV/AIDS, they cannot afford to continue focussing on the reduction of drug use as the primary objective of drug policy – reduction of the spread of HIV and other infections is more important (3). The result was adoption of a national policy that bleach kits, condoms, lubricants and dental dams are made available to all inmates. Methadone maintenance programs and a pilot needle exchange are still very "hot" issues, although their worth in reducing infection rates and in helping to provide more stability in people's lives has been demonstrated again and again. With regard to the specific needs of the aboriginal community, in 1998, CSC met with Aboriginal HIV/AIDS experts and Aboriginal stakeholders on prison issues and a holistic Aboriginal peer health model was developed. Recently, CSC has called together the key players in Aboriginal HIV/AIDS issues to develop a 5 year plan for an Aboriginal Harm reduction program in federal prisons.

More studies while people die.

The right to health care for drug users generally, not to mention prisoners, has been a cause for debate with politicians and the general public for years (notwithstanding that the most popular Canadian drug of choice is nicotine and the right to health care for these users is never debated with the same passion that is given to a discussion of cocaine or heroin users). Sometimes, only the cost effectiveness of harm reduction programs will convince people. In a recent study of the Edmonton needle exchange, "Streetworks", a survey found that a savings of \$9,500 occurred for every HIV infection delayed for one year because of access to needle exchange programs (4).

Yet, cost efficiency is such a cold rationale for reducing human misery. Have we not reached the

stage where we want to provide health care for all Canadians, not just because it is cost efficient, not just because they are vectors of disease and we want to save our own hides, but because as fellow citizens, they have the right to access programs which will reduce harm and promote health?

References:

1. "Joining the Circle: An Aboriginal Harm Reduction Model, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, Watershed Writing and Research, June 1998. (see also website for the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network: www.caan.ca)

2. "HIV/AIDS in prisons: Final Report of the Expert Committee on Aids and Prisons (Ottawa: Correctional Services Canada, 1994) 118

3. "HIV/AIDS in Prisons: Final Report, Joint Project On Legal and Ethical Issues (Montreal: Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Canadian AIDS Society, 1996(IV))

4. Jacobs P et al, *Cost Effectiveness of Streetworks: Needle Exchange Program of Edmonton*, Canadian Journal of Public Health, May-June 1999, Volume 90, No. 3, 168-171.

Guest Speaker

"...the conventional development practice...is a leading cause – not the solution to – a rapidly accelerating and potentially fatal human crisis of global proportion."

"The continued quest for economic growth as the organizing principle of public policy is accelerating the breakdown of the ecosystem's regenerative capacities and the social fabric that sustains human community; at the same time, it is intensifying the competition for resources between rich and poor – a competition that the poor invariably lose."

"The problem is not business or the market per se, but a badly corrupted global economic system that is gyrating far beyond human control. The dynamics of this system have become so powerful and perverse that it is becoming increasingly difficult for corporate managers to manage in the public interest, no matter how strong their moral values and commitment."

Hear David C. Korten;
author of
When Corporations Rule the World.



Mission Statement

Founded in 1990, Rittenhouse is an agency dedicated to bringing transformative justice instead of retributive justice to our criminal justice system. Transformative Justice simply means *making the basic goal of a criminal justice system healing, not revenge*. We believe crime can become an opportunity to bring transformation into the lives of victims, offenders and their families.

Yes! I would like to make a donation to Rittenhouse!
Yes! I would like to make a donation to ICOPA IX!

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(Please make cheques payable to Rittenhouse or ICOPA IX)

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