

PAPA

PEOPLE AGAINST
PRISONS AOTEAROA

TAKE NO PRISONERS

ISSUE 7 | JULY 2022



Manaia

By Bruce

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NZ PRISONS

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COVID-19 IN NEW ZEALAND PRISONS

The COVID-19 pandemic has dominated the news cycles since early 2020, but the media has kept largely quiet about experiences of the pandemic inside prison walls.

When Aotearoa implemented the “traffic light” system for the general public, Corrections came up with a separate Covid-19 framework for prisons. At the time of writing, all prisons in New Zealand are operating under the most restrictive setting: Stage 3.

Stage 3 means that Corrections all face-to-face visits have been halted. This means no visits from friends or family, and no people to run programmes or provide services. All face-to-face group programmes have been cancelled, including visits from lawyers and external counsellors. These restrictions have stalled all rehabilitation and re-integrative activities and all Release to Work programmes.

In the early stages of the pandemic, Corrections issued prisoners with free \$5 phone cards (intended to last a week) to compensate for the lack of visits. However, competition for phone time dramatically increased, and technical issues reduced the number of phones available. There is also an apparent disparity in phone access between Corrections-run and SERCO-run prisons, which have phones in their cells. Our advocacy working group have received increasing numbers of requests for support with phone cards. This demand lines up with reduced incomes from paused work programmes and recent reports of, for instance, only one phone available to 80 prisoners at Waikeria. Reduced contact with the outside world has made imprisonment even more isolating for those inside, which is detrimental to their well-being.

Prolonged solitary confinement, considered torture by the United Nations, has been in use in New Zealand prisons since before the COVID-19 pandemic, with rates increasing drastically over the past decade. Corrections has now expanded this practice of “direct segregation” even further, attempting to justify this decision as an attempt to protect prisoners and staff from the disease. Alternative demands by PAPA and prominent scholars, such as Dr Rawiri Keenan, to instead reduce the prison population have gone unheeded.

Staff shortages exacerbated by community outbreaks of COVID-19 have also led to extended lockdowns. News media have reported cases of people being confined to their cells for over 44 hours straight due to Corrections staff needing to isolate. There is simply no justification for staffing issues leading to a clear breach of prisoners' human rights.

Double-bunking, which is against the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, is also prevalent in New Zealand. Corrections say that double-bunking decreased between early 2020 and April 2022. They claim that this was done to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. However, with major understaffing in prisons nationally, it is now likely to rise again. Research has shown that double-bunking is detrimental to prisoners' well-being and is linked to increased violence. Corrections deputy national commissioner Leigh Marsh claims this increase will not negatively impact prisoners as unlock hours increase and in-person visits are reinstated. However, visits can only happen at Stage 1 of Corrections' framework, which is currently only available if the rest of the country is at Green Light with no

cases outside quarantine units. Double-bunking also makes it harder to socially distance—the more crowded an environment, the less COVID-safe it is.

COVID-related delays are rife within the criminal justice system, extending some prisoners' time spent in prison. At the court end, the time to process even basic judge-alone cases has increased by nearly four weeks since 2020. It's even worse for jury cases, with cases dragging out on average two whole months longer. This has primarily been caused by courts pausing in-person hearings during the most restrictive alert levels. In main cities, people in prison have been able to use AVL facilities to attend court. Still, some courts have no or limited AVL availability. For prisoners on remand, this has meant more time in a hostile environment with less access than other prisoners to rehabilitative programmes (if any were running at all). These delays could have been avoided if the state had prioritised upgrading the technology available across all sites. New Zealand had time to implement these changes before Omicron hit, but did not.

Prolonged isolation and limited access to essential services remain health and safety issues and practical barriers to planning for release. The halting of work programmes, in particular, has meant lower incomes at a time when all New Zealanders are facing harsh economic uncertainties. The government has not stepped up to offset this with sufficient financial aid or additional social programmes for people newly released from the prison system.

Corrections has also failed to responsibly manage releases from prison during the pandemic. People were released into lockdown situations with no information about COVID-19 regulations and how to navigate the world during a pandemic. Some people have reported being released during lockdown without anywhere to go, which posed a threat to their health and made it fundamentally impossible to comply with the law.

It has always been crucial that steps are taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in prisons. However, Corrections has selected options that increase punitive restrictions on prisoners without meaningfully compensating for the additional

strain—financial, health or otherwise. They have ignored all calls to reduce the prison population, release low-risk and high-health-risk prisoners early, eliminate double-bunking, and expedite court processes that delay prisoners from release. The state has been unable to keep people safe from COVID-19 because prisons do not keep people safe and are, in fact, antithetical to community safety. By refusing to take non-punitive actions to reduce COVID-19 risk, the government is committing itself to continuing a strategy that does real and lasting harm.

Bre is a People Against Prisons Aotearoa member from Auckland. This piece was written with assistance from Morgan, Rem, Syd and Kerry.



WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT PRISON ABOLITION

How The Prison System Can Be Replaced With Systems Of Care

By Mia Faiumu
(Originally published in Massive Magazine)



“In a truly compassionate society, we should be able to envision something different in relation to all those who do wrong and all those who are hurt by the wrong.”

—Moana Jackson

Prison abolition is a subject that is generally considered utopian or idealistic—something out of reach and unachievable. For this reason, it is usually overlooked and dismissed with a sweep of the hand that implies without prisons, our society would be reduced to anarchy. This is actually far from the truth, and it is becoming ever more essential that Aotearoa divorces itself from its reliance on the prison system.

Prisons are violent, inhumane places that strip those within them of their freedom and safety. We cannot reasonably expect that those who enter these institutions will exit as rehabilitated individuals ready to participate in society. And we cannot expect incarceration to result in public safety when we know of the violence that occurs within prison walls.

We cannot continue to invest in a broken system—we need to strive for change. Prison abolition can offer that change for Aotearoa.

Redirecting Funding Towards Social Wellbeing

The phrase ‘defund the police’ has entered mainstream discourse recently, primarily due to the Black Lives Matter movement following the death of George Floyd in 2020. I’m sure many readers have become familiar with the phrase—but for some it may be unclear what defunding the police would look like in practice within Aotearoa.

In reality, defunding the police refers to only one part of the abolitionist argument. It is not simply about reducing funding to the police force, but rather about reallocating police resources, funding, and responsibility toward community-based models of safety, support, and prevention. Therefore, we would be replacing the police with systems that support human needs like housing, education, and health.

In this essence, Liam Martin, a lecturer of Criminology at Victoria University of Wellington, perceives prison abolition to be about the work of social creation.

When thinking about prison abolition we need to be considering “what kind of society we need to build where we don’t need prisons anymore,” says Martin.

“This is a kind of long-term vision of a society where we become involved in a work of social transformation

that will make it so that we don’t need prisons anymore.”

Prison abolition is therefore not about an immediate closure of prison doors, but rather about making the prison system itself redundant. Incarcerated people statistically come from disadvantaged backgrounds, with histories of mental illness and addiction, while simultaneously being targeted by racist policing and policies. By addressing the causal elements of crime, prisons can be made unnecessary.

A very poignant example of this can be seen through the connection between incarceration and homelessness.

“We have a housing crisis that is intimately linked to the system of hyper-incarceration—where people are shuttling in and out of prison and homelessness. They’re going from living on the street unable to access a house to being incarcerated in a brand-new prison,” says Martin.

From an abolitionist perspective, this begs the question: Why the fuck are we building more prisons in the time of a housing crisis? As pointed out by Martin, there is an obvious misuse of resources occurring when our investments are going towards very dysfunctional institutions like punitive policing and prisons rather than investing in social wellbeing.

In 2017, the cost of keeping an individual prisoner was approximately \$97,000 annually (Buttle, 2017). This results in spending of around \$165 million for remand facilities with another \$590 million being spent on sentenced prisoners. While further investments continue to be made into incarceration, social services are in dire need of funding to provide adequate support to those in need of their services. The high spending of the prison system therefore seems illogical when existing social services could provide the types of support that offenders actually need.

This becomes even more apparent when you have people purposefully getting incarcerated to avoid homelessness, as has been pointed out by Martin.

“These are situations where we’ve done such a poor job of building a social infrastructure that prison actually becomes that social infrastructure.”

Ti Lamusse, the National Secretary of People Against Prisons Aotearoa (PAPA) and a Victoria University of Wellington Criminology lecturer, agrees with this sentiment and notes that after a century and a half of failure, there is no evidence to show that prisons are successful at achieving their goals.

Rather, he sees it as imperative to invest in systems that we know to work such as violence prevention programs and mental health support that can offer meaningful change in people’s lives.

“If we are going to get serious about the safety of our communities, we need to ensure that all people can live with dignity, and we need to make sure that we respond to harm in a way that is restorative and in a way that respects the dignity of all people,” says Lamusse.

In this sense, prison abolition is not only about investing in social wellbeing, but it is also about creating a safer society for us all to live in. If all New Zealanders had access to basic essentials such as housing, education, healthcare, and transport, we would see less social harm occurring.

We need to start looking outside of the box when it comes to alternatives to the prison system. We cannot keep reforming an institution that is rotten at its core. Real, meaningful change can only come from the work of social creation that will enable us to reimagine a society in which prisons are no longer needed.

We need to dig into the roots of societal problems, rather than lazily rely on incarceration as the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. It is time to think bigger and look to alternatives that can actually offer us a world in which we do not need to lock people in cages to feel safe.

It is time to abolish prisons.

CURB— 'CALIFORNIANS UNITED FOR A RESPONSIBLE BUDGET'



What is the project?

CURB (Californians United for a Responsible Budget) is a network of 80 different grassroots abolitionist organisations that gather information on prisons in California from those directly impacted by incarceration, with the goal of closing the prisons.

Their campaigns demonstrate how governments can halt spending on anything that would expand the prison network and reallocate this money to initiatives and policies that help people and communities.

“A budget reveals what we truly value.”

Who is involved?

CURB centres on the voices and lived experiences of prisoners and those directly impacted by incarceration. Prisoners, ex-incarcerated people, incarcerated people's families, and people living in prison towns work together to form roadmaps or strategies to close prisons or reduce prison expansion. The coalition is a group of abolitionist organisations founded by people who are formerly incarcerated and directly impacted by incarceration. Together, they create strategies that draw on this community's "knowledge, wisdom and resolve."

CURB members include groups like Critical Resistance, who have been working to abolish prisons since the 1990s, and Initiate Justice, who formed in 2016 and have 40,000 incarcerated members across the USA, including 166 incarcerated organisers.

“Without the involvement of our currently incarcerated community members, decisions made by the state will continue to prioritize profits over people.”

How will the project close prisons?

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it more apparent than ever that prisons and racism are a public health crisis that endanger lives and discriminate against Indigenous peoples and people of colour. Spending money on prisons and the racist systems that uphold them places lives and health at risk and exacerbates this crisis. Meanwhile, the system creates huge public costs by failing to address the underlying social harms occurring throughout society.

CURB campaigns draw attention to the health hazards, increased risk of death, and intergenerational harm caused by prisons. In doing so, CURB demonstrates the actual cost of prisons: the ongoing and future cost to the healthcare system and the profound social harm to families and communities. Focusing on how the prison system reproduces serious and widespread harm is how CURB convinces governments to stop spending public money on prisons and re-allocate funds elsewhere.

“We must shift spending to investments in community-based safety strategies to protect California's long-term health and ability to thrive.”

What problems do they raise?

- The impact of prisons on people's physical and mental health; the number of conditions

worsened and untreated in prisons, especially for those ill or elderly as result of being exposed to prison environments.

- The many environmentally hazardous and unsafe conditions in and around prisons.
- The embedded racism in the “justice” system, demonstrated by the disproportionate number of Indigenous people and people of colour incarcerated and the longer and harsher sentences they experience.
- Increases in spending by the state towards prisons and law enforcement, combined with decreases in spending on public healthcare.
- The high costs of maintaining prisons, meaning repairs are often avoided or delayed, worsening prison conditions and health risks.
- The risk of COVID-19 infections in prisons, exacerbated by overcrowding and poor conditions, emphasising the urgent need to increase releases.
- The lack of compassionate releases for elders and those suffering from chronic health issues, and how much it costs to deliver basic, necessary healthcare through the prison system;
- Punitive laws that ensure harsh sentencing without parole.

“.... CDCR [California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation] reported a repair backlog of approximately \$1 billion, the actual cost for prison repair projects would actually be closer to \$13 billion.”

What are their goals?

- Withhold all and any prison infrastructure spending.
- Accelerate plans for prison closure to close ten prisons in the next five years.
- Remove funds from the Corrections budget and invest in strategies for the reduction of people in prisons.
- Address all forms of sentences and especially the most severe, in order to meaningfully reduce the prison population.
- Interrupt cycles of harm by expanding services that empower people and provide treatment, support or safety.
- Increase parole hearings and make parole demographic information transparent.
- Keep closed prisons permanently closed, and not repurposed.

“Prison closures must go hand in hand with multiple strategies for mass releases. Releasing 50,000 people from prison is the floor, not the ceiling.”

How does it work?

In 2020, coalition member group Initiate Justice distributed a survey asking about the most important things the state should consider when choosing which prisons to close. The survey confirmed the most important issues with the system, which the coalition uses in its campaign work to demonstrate the harm caused and public money wasted by prisons.

The survey showed that prisons to prioritise for closure were those with highly hazardous prison conditions, overcrowding, inaccessible locations (for visitation) and high health hazard rates. Survey respondents said a key priority was the cost of prisons, which means public money is not directed into healthcare and education or social services where it is needed, impacting future generations' health, safety and wellbeing.

“It is time we end this horrific experiment and reinvest these funds in our communities instead.”

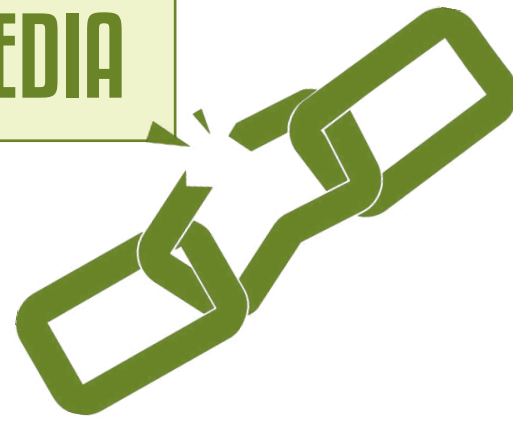
What have they achieved?

CURBs campaign has shown the public the problems created by prisons and the benefits to all when prison populations are reduced, prisons closed and funds redirected. Several policy recommendations to downsize the prison population have encouraged policy-makers to release prisoners and close more prisons. In 2021, one Californian prison was closed, while a recent budget announcement signalled the closure of three more prisons in the next three years, estimated to save 1.5 billion dollars. The Californian government is making changes to the law to enact “good-time” credits that will continue to increase quicker releases.

“...one thing that we have learned is, where life is precious, life is precious.”

—Ruthie Wilson Gilmore, 2021

THE CRIME NARRATIVE IN MEDIA



A recent Reid Research poll found that when asked “Is the current Police Minister too soft on crime”, 68% of respondents said yes. Leaving aside the manufactured nature of this result, it comes as no surprise. After all, there is a persistent media narrative that “crime” is “out of control”. Scarcely a week goes by without multiple headlines about things like drugs, gangs, guns, violence or the current flavours of the month: youth crime and ram raids.

The number of stories on topics like these contrast sharply with the magnitude of the crimes that don’t dominate the headlines. For example, the most recent available estimate from the Serious Fraud Office put the value of economic and financial crime, typical “white collar” crimes, at \$180 million per week. This is more than 450 times the estimated cost of the recent spike in ram raids. IRD’s very limited investigations alone turned up \$854 million in what they call “tax position differences” last year, though this generated no headlines. Given how disproportionate this is, the question is inescapable: what drives media attention on certain kinds of crime?

To begin with, the media themselves are responsible for the disproportionate volume of these stories. They produce the exact kind of emotive, outrage-inducing headlines that are great clickbait. In a landscape of declining ad revenue and web traffic mostly dictated by engagement-driven social media algorithms, the media’s profit incentive creates some particularly perverse outcomes. The news media’s profit incentive also makes them very willing accomplices to the ends of certain groups who benefit from a moral panic

around crime. For example, politicians regularly focus on crime as a “crisis” in the media because it allows them to posture as “tough on crime” and is an easy way for them to build political capital without having to offer any real solutions. Members of parliament from the Labour, National and ACT parties, as well as several Auckland mayoral candidates, have cashed in on this recently. Similarly, business groups use stories on crime to call for more police on the street, essentially lobbying to use the police as publicly funded security guards.

Meanwhile, the Police Association’s Chris Cahill has used recent media coverage of crime to advocate for the general arming of police, something that the leader of the National Party supports. This is despite the police’s own research estimating that general arming would have meant an additional 92 people shot and 43 people killed by police over the last ten years, while their review of all critical incidents since 2015 failed to identify a single event in which access to a firearm would’ve saved the life of an officer or a member of the public.

Regardless of what these politicians and interest groups say, the reality of crime in Aotearoa is much more complex than the simple “crisis” narrative they present. To begin with, almost all kinds of crime have been decreasing steadily for years. Youth crime rates are now less than half what they were 15 years ago. Most kinds of violent crime, including homicides and the worst kinds of violent firearm crime, are also declining.

There are other categories or types of offences that have increased recently, some by a lot. Offences involving intimidation and threats,

including those with firearms, have nearly doubled in the last few years. Family violence has increased steadily over the last two decades. Assaults have increased in some areas. Police also report significantly more firearms offences. While this may be true, some of this increase is a direct result of the government making a large number of firearms illegal in 2019, along with a significant shift in police enforcement towards illegal firearms that followed.

Unfortunately, what happens as a result of politicians, business owners and police stoking moral panic about crime is that the voices of experts and people working on the frontlines trying to address social harms get drowned out. The national conversation becomes almost totally focused on “tough on crime” responses.

The \$600m package announced recently by the government is emblematic of this. It throws money at a criminal justice system that only perpetuates harm. It’s not hard to think how this money could be better spent: housing, health and addiction services, or community specialists trained to deal with specific types of harm are just a few ideas. Many community service providers are stretched and crying out for funding or other support from central government.

Almost a quarter of the \$600 million package is going into providing police with tactical training and faster access to guns. This was announced less than a month after police shot and killed an unarmed Māori man named Kaoss Price. It follows reports that the number of people killed each year by police in Aotearoa has tripled over the last decade and is now 11 times higher per capita than in England and Wales.

These “tough on crime” crime responses pathologise crime as something that simply needs to be excised from certain individuals or communities. They are used to justify overpolicing of certain, mostly Māori communities. They end with more Māori forced through a criminal justice system where they face disproportionately harsh treatment at every step.

At the same time, they prevent us from treating crime and social harm as processes connected

to wider systems and structures. They mean we ignore our collective responsibility to address all kinds of harm. This includes the interpersonal harm that happens every day, as well as the drivers of crime like racism, inequality, poverty, alienation, drug harm, or the fact that people are struggling to access basic necessities like housing, healthcare, food and education.

This is the reality of the current discourse in the media. “Tough on crime” approaches ruin lives. They disproportionately target marginalised groups with violence, applying criminal penalties that harm people’s relationships, standing in their community, employment opportunities, and having flow-on effects to physical and mental health. They do not prevent crime and do nothing to actually address or remedy the harm that someone may have caused.

We need to do better, and we could start on this particular issue by holding politicians, police and media outlets accountable for the rhetoric that they spout. More broadly we need to question not only the facts of these narratives but the ideological edifice that they spring from. Until then, ending the cycles of harm and violence that are perpetuated daily remains out of reach.

Tom is the parliamentary advocacy coordinator for People Against Prisons Aotearoa.

WORKING GROUPS AND BRANCH UPDATES

Advocacy:

The Advocacy team have supported many people in prison who need it. We have provided funding to people for underwear, socks, shoes, phone cards, and toiletries (all essential items that Corrections fails to adequately provide). Additionally, we have helped people navigate the prison system through giving them information that helps them within prison and on release.

Parliamentary Advocacy:

Recently in Parliamentary Advocacy we submitted in favour of the government scrapping Three Strikes laws because they were racist and unfair. At the moment we're working on some feedback over Search and Surveillance laws because they give the state too much power and there's no one who can check that the police aren't misusing them, or stop police from misusing them.

Newsletter:

What have we been working on? You're holding it! **Take No Prisoners** is back, and we're planning to release a new issue every three months. We want this newsletter to be by and for incarcerated people, so if there's something you want to see more of, articles you'd like to read, or you'd like to write something for publication, please get in touch.

Ngā Ringaringa e Rua:

The Ngā Ringaringa e Rua working has been working with two Prisoner Political Committees to build political organising power in prisons and to bring prisoners together into one collective voice. We have also been collaborating with the Justice Coalition on a COVID in Prisons campaign, in response to concerns raised by the PPCs.

Tāmaki Makaurau Branch:

The Tāmaki Makaurau PAPA branch has been organising and holding events online via zoom. One event was a panel discussion called 'Fighting Capitalism and Colonisation: Building Solidarity across Movements in Tāmaki Makaurau,' with spokespeople from Auckland Action Against Poverty, Protect Pūtiki, and PAPA. We talked about different aspects of the mahi we do, how we can strengthen our movements, and some of the challenges in movement organising. As a group of organisations with some crossover in experiences and goals, we hope to build up solidarity between our organisations as we continue these fights. The branch has also started working on making a new zine to be out by the end of the year and discussing more direct actions we can take as Covid eases. Watch this space!

Research:

Over the past year, the Research working group has supported parliamentary submissions on legislative and government consultations, undertaken a systematic review of prison Ombudsman and Inspectorate reports of New Zealand prisons from 2017 to 2021, and begun a collaborative research project to help inform an upcoming campaign to challenge 'tough on crime' media narratives.

ART AND POETRY FROM THE INSIDE

blinded by routine

Alan at Spring Hill

Nice one Kelvin Davis for blaming PAPA for enticing riots when refuting to the Waikeria Uprising

When you consider the prison conditions And the breach of human rights it's not at all surprising

Yet he pointed the finger and tried to shift the blame

Eager to punish the protesters, restore order but not a care if the condition remain the same.

Research shows that what we are doing isn't right,

Like putting a addict in jail out of public sight,

It's a common misconception Jail is the key,

Maybe walk a mile in prison shoes before you judge me,

Thousands of men in jail doing hard time,

The family's suffering at home is the true crime

Correct means the chance to fix or make things right

But the department of corrections means there's no end in sight,

A thousand years of jail time handed out for cannabis in the past 30 years

But our government can tax it, no more bad story's or jail cell tears

Money talks, ballshit walks

In a world we thought we all knew

White-collar crime is at its prime

Also the boys in blue

How many cops fall into temptation

Pocketing drug money before they get back to the station

Lie under oath to get a conviction

Or the word of a crackhead that gets paid for snitching

Abuse of police powers alibis and lies

No charges laid after police shooting, Unarmed man dies.

People forget what it means to be human they get to caught up in politics and money

To top it off we continue with a justice system that's so backwards it's not even funny

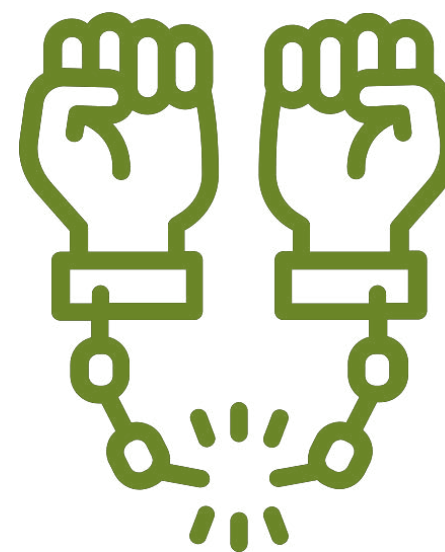
Blame gangs and drugs for a local dairy or liquor store being robbed

Familys gather around a body and a window as she sobs

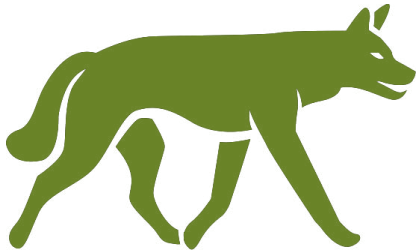
Alcohol and sigarettts are the target of these crimes

Two things that have killed more people since the beginning of time

We all suffer from different forms of illnesses over our lifetime



Addiction is the only one that comes with judgement jail time and a fine
Over 65% of prisoners go back to jail it's only a matter of when
Jail doesn't fix problems it simply magnifies them
Giving troubled youth 1 or 2 months prison time in hopes it will be a deterrence
It doesn't make community's safer, in and out of jail just becomes a reoccurrence
Prisoners learn to hate the system, injustices and isolation causes people to rebel
That what u get when u confine social creatures and put them through hell
Because of how they are treated most grow to hate the monsters in charge
How safe really is our community's once the justice system has abused and neglected people then releases them at large
Think of it this way what happens if you take a heard animal away from its pack,
Lock it up and confine it, the damage and trauma is what u can't take back
No animal can learn or be at its best when it's anxious or stressed
Let alone work through past trauma but who would have guessed,
That despite all the evidence that the justice system is out dated and what's needed is a more compassionate stance
If you enter the justice system as it is you'll never stand a chance
Surely that's enuf to realise we have to stop this madness
To not stop what we know is wrong is what fills my heart with sadness



He took those things in his mouth with yelps of gratitude and chewed on them hopefully, before discarding them when she looked away.
She was most supportive as he gnawed on the wire, and assured him that freedom would eventually be his reward.
She talked of the fine times that they would have together then.
How, together, they would find their way to town and live happily ever after.
Of course, she did understand that he would need to run and roam and chase rabbits and, of course, she would allow him time to do that.
She would even understand his need for dingo company. That wouldn't be a problem as long as he honoured his debt to her.
He chewed and listened, and chewed and listened.
And felt his silent hunger pains.
The Kelpie would, daily, go off to her other life at the farmhouse to dine on those things essential to life.
She ran happily with her canine friends and thought longingly of her dingo lover.
The Dingo fed on galvanizing and rust and the blood that ran from his mouth.
He garnished this repast with the insects and leaves dropped into his world by the faithful Kelpie.
When his supplies of hope ran out, he subsided on cold desperation.
As the Kelpie came to be the only component of freedom for him, he came to think of her as his mate.
He asked her to explore the region for rabbit warrens and a lair fit for them to make their home in.
She allowed him these delusions of practicality and spoke of the comfortable kennel back at the farm.
From which he would be totally free to come and go.
She would attend to it personally.
She didn't see the light fade from his eyes.
She saw the sunshine and the starlight.
He saw the clouds across the moon and the shadow fled like rabbits before him.
At night, alone in the dark, he slept and was free.
He pursued countless rabbits and tasted the salty blood in his mouth.
He heard the howling of his pack.
But somehow, the light of the morning, stopped up his ears.

Tena rawa atu koe, awhina mai i a au.

The Dingo and the Kelpie

Daa John La Roche

A dingo found himself in a eagle trap.
At first he thought that the Dingo God would come to set him free but as time went on and this didn't happen, he settled down to chewing on the wire in the knowledge that, eventually, it would break and he would again be free.
Intermittently, in the long darkness, he would howl into the empty desert. It happened that he was heard by a straying Kelpie.
She came to him and sat by the trap and loneliness was eased for both of them.
She talked to him and was gratified by his interest in her.
He began to see her as a fellow soul and was comforted.
He asked her to catch him a rabbit and she would go off and return with leaves and pebbles and butterflies.

Prison justice, Protocol.
Justice not served
Let the good times roll.
Your lips are tight. All answers no.
You lost your fight. Let the BAD past go.
They push you left. They push you right.
It will take two to win their fight.
Not a thing was seen, or a word be said.
You’ve got your LIFE, you could be dead.
But past be past, our future slow.
So tight lips guys, not a need to know.
Protocol is out of sight, as we all know
it’s FLIGHT or FIGHT.

Mystic Places
Anonymous

Honeyed words and sugared phrases Leads you into mystic places Lips that whisper in your ear Will tell you what you want to hear	Eyes that close from yawning breaths Lulls you into unknown depths Hands that touch begin to scream Of pleasure found only in dreams
Stories told of far away In ancient lands where you can stay A voice that turns its words to music Close your eyes and listen to it	Pictures painted forming words A hundred times have been rehearsed Tales told of sultry night Do much to nurture our delight
Every syllable a river Wet and cold will make you shiver Now and then a sudden pause A silence like a fire roars	Paragraphs that twist its plot Read from letters that were lost Handwriting lain on the page Stories from another age
Messages of dark design Are seedlings planted in your mind Evil words and lusting phrases Traps you in forbidden mazes	Lips that whisper one last time Kisses are sweeter than rhymes Promised words and lipstick phrases Fall in love in mystic places.

CONNECT

Take No Prisoners is a newsletter published every three months by People Against Prisons Aotearoa. It is freely available to anyone in prison. We want this newsletter to reflect your interests, questions and perspectives — we could not do what we do without your input. If there’s something going on that you think we should know about, if you’d like to know more about something in the newsletter, or if you’d like us to research and write about something specific, please get in touch. It is helpful for us if you let us know whether you’re happy for your words to be shared in future issues or on our social media, and whether you’d like your name attached to them.

We welcome art and poetry to be printed in future issues and/or shared on our social media. We are also interested in hearing from anyone interested in writing articles and longer pieces, get in touch if this is you! You can contact PAPA at **People Against Prisons, PO Box 5870, Victoria St West, Auckland Central 1142.**

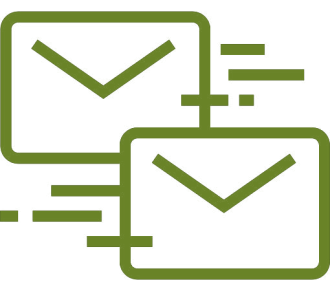
Finally, in every issue of *Take No Prisoners*, the **CONNECT** section will collect any opportunities we’re aware of for you to make your voice heard.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to write to us. Your voices are so important to us, and they shape what we do every single day.

Ngā mihi nui,
Kerry (Newsletter Coordinator)

Prisoner Correspondence Network (PCN):	If you would like to apply for a penpal, send your name, PRN, date of birth, address, and an introduction (a bit about yourself) to: PCN Aotearoa PO Box 5870 Victoria St West Auckland Central 1142 NOTE: This is NOT a dating service.
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COVID-19 Campaign:	People Against Prisons Aotearoa are working on a campaign to address the unacceptable and harmful response of prisons to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The core demands of the campaign are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urgent release of ‘low risk’ prisoners• Immediate end to 23 hr lockdowns• Lifting visitor ban• Access to high-quality PPE for all prisoners. Your perspectives and stories are incredibly valuable to us as we work to inform people, mobilise the public, and apply pressure to justice leaders. Please get in touch if you would like to share any of your experiences or thoughts on this, and let us know if you are happy for us to share your words and whether you would like your name included.
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Letters from the Inside:

If you went through state care and were abused by either the State or Church—you need to speak it out. It is so important. Please contact the Royal Commission free phone number 0800 222 727 or write to them:

Royal Commission, Private bag 10071, The Terrace, Wellington.

This is a unique opportunity to have issues around intergenerational trauma and absolute brutal regimes brought to their knees. For all those who have been hurt by these regimes, this is an opportunity to bring these regimes to an end once and for all. Your voice is so important and I promise you, you will be heard. Now is the time to reach out—for the sake of our children, and their children, and also to heal ourselves from the pain and horrific histories we have carried for years and years. The Commission’s final report will be produced next year. If you are to make any headway or make a gain out of it, please connect with the Royal Commission. For you, for your whānau, hapu, iwi, pākehā whānau, and pacific whānau. Be brave and reach out. Because when that window of opportunity closes, it will be closes forever and you will not get another chance to have your life story told, heard, and acknowledged and validated before that of the settler state governments and church leaders. Both of whom need to be brought to their knees and to reset new structures and governing bodies to provide compensation and remedies for the wrongs committed. And initiate a new programme that better provides for our society’s most vulnerable. They will only reach that milestone by understanding our personal history.

Call for Letters About Prisoner Voting Rights:

PAPA has joined a campaign led by the Green party to get voting rights for everyone in prison. At the moment, anyone serving more than three years loses the right to vote. Aotearoa is a democracy so we believe that’s unfair. Your voice could help with this campaign, so if you have something to say you can write to us and share your thoughts:

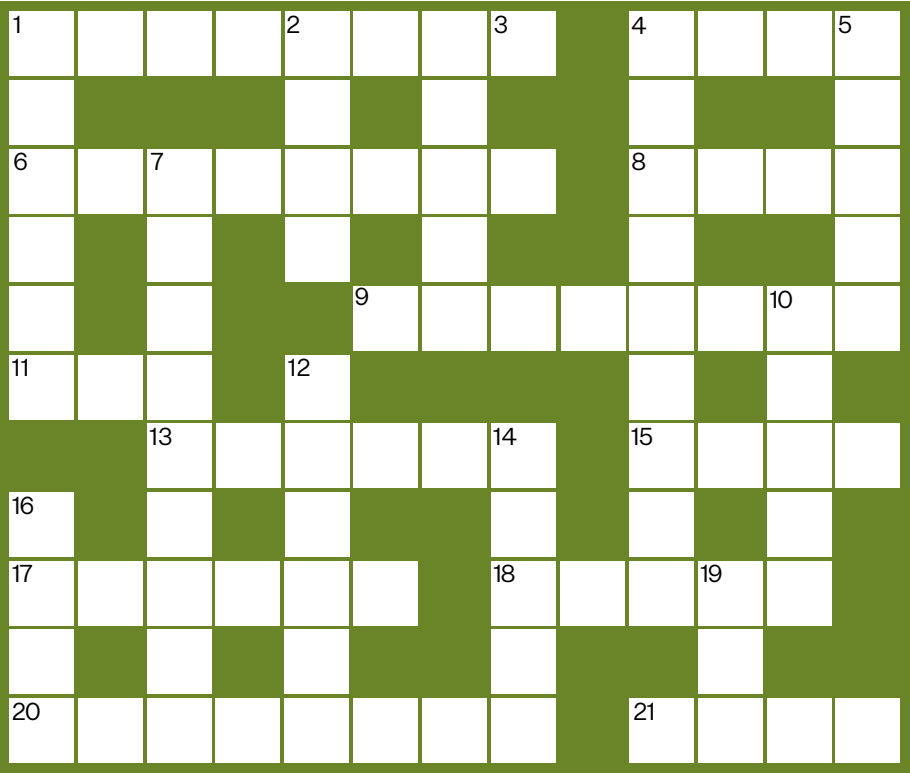
PAPA Voting Rights
PO Box 5870
Victoria St West
Auckland Central 1142

In your letter please let us know if you are happy for us and others to share it on social media and other places, and if you would like your name included or taken off. We won’t share it without your consent, but this would help to put pressure on the government to change the law.

Aotearoa Justice Watch:

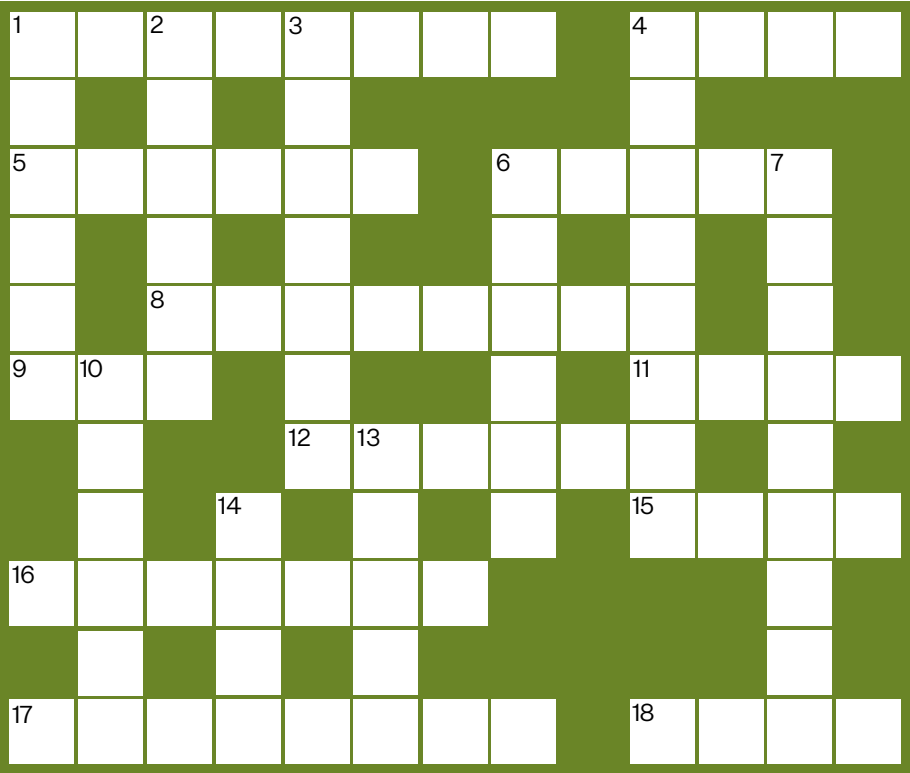
Aotearoa Justice Watch is a group of independent organisations that care about justice and human rights. We believe that more must be done to protect the people and communities who are harmed by our current prison and policing systems. We provide a tool for people to record issues they are experiencing or seeing in policing or prisons. We then collate and anonymously release information on the issues people share. We’re documenting the big issues where the system is failing people and communities, so we can change things for the better. You can support the project by sharing your story in the form included in this newsletter and posting it back to us using the prepaid envelope. Alternatively, you can submit your story online at AotearoaJusticeWatch.org.nz

CROSSWORDS!



- Across**
- 1) Chinese tile puzzle
 - 4) Tiger’s Game
 - 6) Heats a room, cools an engine
 - 8) Capital of Peru
 - 9) Nonsexual relationship
 - 11) Drink loved by pirates
 - 13) River between NY State and Ontario
 - 15) An image linked to an App or file
 - 17) Tape or vinyl
 - 18) Very annoyed
 - 20) Firebug
 - 21) Demigod of mischief

- Down**
- 1) Looking Glass
 - 2) By mouth
 - 3) Foo Fighter Dave
 - 4) Four legs, running
 - 5) Money you can’t spend in Paris
 - 7) Electronic Dance Music (4,1,4)
 - 10)Tusk
 - 12) The colour of a chestnut left on an island
 - 14) Separated
 - 16) Status
 - 19) Prophet ___ Kenana



- Across**
- 1) Exclusive control
 - 4) Galvanising
 - 5) Spider
 - 6) Bring together for a purpose
 - 8) The first
 - 9) Spirit flavoured with juniper berries
 - 11) Viral medical condition
 - 12) Accomplish/Acquire
 - 15) Information
 - 16) Represented in binary code
 - 17) Religiously persistent
 - 18) God of mischief and destruction

- Down**
- 1) Designing and building
 - 2) Idea
 - 3) Sweet red pepper
 - 4) East South Africa
 - 6) Landing strip
 - 7) Measure or standard
 - 10) Blue-violet
 - 13) Characteristic
 - 14) Movie