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Linking it all Together

(Week 7)

America's jurisprudence is rooted in the cultural traditions of England. Much of what we take for granted comes from across the pond. The institution that is commonly referred to as the *jail* is no different. Originally conceived with the intent to detain those accused of violating the king's mandates, today, the term carries a more sinister connotation. In American society, jails have become the place that houses millions of souls who at one time or another have been accused of violating the law. The two types of individuals who are known to occupy jails are those who are awaiting trial, and those who have already been sentenced. Sometimes, however, there are exceptions to those who have been sent to court awaiting a proceeding that could potentially result in them being released back out into society e.g., habeas corpus proceedings. Some jails are much smaller than others. For instance, with a population of over 19,000 individuals, the Los Angeles County jail system is the largest jail system in America. Whereas Rikers Island has the capacity to house 15,000 people. However, Shelby Jail in Memphis, Tennessee houses close to 6,000. Despite their sizes, each of them is confronted with their own issues of struggling to deliver quality services to their incarceration populations. In addition, the bigger the jail, the higher the probability that there will be more problems that arise between those who are detained or from the officers tasked with watching over them. In fact, many officials have been held liable for violating the rights of detainees in jails across America. Some have claimed that their 8th Amendment rights were violated because they were either physically abused, were not given adequate medical treatment, or were forced to live in deplorable conditions. In either case, jail administrators are faced with the daunting task of managing the affairs of those in their custody.