Opinion: Acts by Calif. politicians have backfired

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

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When Gov. Jerry Brown unveiled a criminal sentencing reform measure last month, he cited the “unintended consequences” of a law he had signed nearly 40 years earlier.

Brown said he didn’t foresee that the 1977 law, setting rigid sentences for felons, would remove “incentives for inmates to improve themselves” and discourage them from working toward earlier release through rehabilitation.

The “determinate sentence law” that Brown signed reflected the political angst that sharply rising crime rates were creating in the 1970s.

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