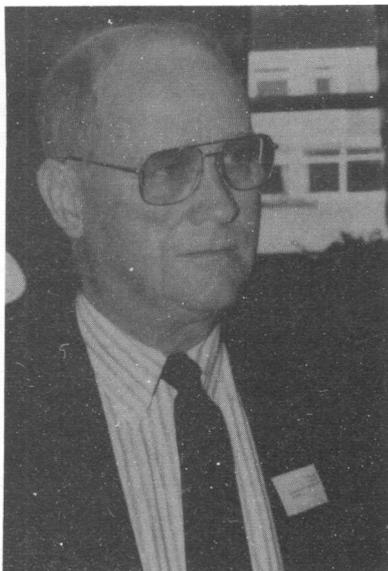


PUNISHMENT FOR PROFIT?



Don Hutto. Bringing the USA to the UK?

Devotees of conspiracy theory, on spotting in the conference programme that 'Sponsorship from Contract Prisons plc has helped to make this conference possible' were immediately worried. We needn't have been, as this well-organised, informative and timely Conference can only have enhanced the ISTD's reputation for enabling balanced, independent examination of criminal justice issues. A nicely-judged programme ranged the Centre for Criminology at Middlesex Polytechnic and the Prison Reform Trust against the private sector in the shape of UK Detention Services and Contract Prisons PLC, with the Head of the Home Office Remands Unit explaining Government proposals, and with the Association of Chief Officers of Probation taking the middle ground.

Don Hutto, Director of Corrections Corporation of America, led for the private sector. With regard to profit, his novel contention was that in the interests of consistency, the motives of all those in the criminal justice field should be examined. In other words, does a prison officer take a profit from punishment in the same way as a director of Contract Prisons

plc? Especially as Mr Hutto professed himself to be one who preferred his comparisons to be made 'apple for apple', I failed to understand his equation of employees in the criminal justice system, doing a day's work for a day's pay, with the activities of a business under a duty to its shareholders to maximise the return on its investment. Roger Matthews, from Middlesex Polytechnic, placed the issue of money in a broader context. Noting that the Government wishes to privatise remand services in the interests of cost-effectiveness, he pointed to the difficulty of identifying reliable financial information in the criminal justice area. For example the National Audit Commission recently criticised Metropolitan Police accounting procedures to the extent of suggesting there was little effective control over a very significant budget. However, even those facts which have been established appear to have carried little weight. For instance, because it is known that running comparatively low-security remand establishments costs less than providing dispersal prisons, private sector involvement in remand prisons will not result in private enterprise being asked to meet a representative proportion of the total costs of incarceration.

Sir Edward Gardner, speaking for Contract Prisons plc, appeared to overlook the fact that as he wasn't addressing the House of Commons, a speech based on argument rather than asseveration would have been more appropriate. Despite the advantage of speaking after Stephen Shaw of the Prison Reform Trust, he comprehensively failed to address Mr Shaw's point, and one of the principal themes of the Conference, that we do not sell blood in this country, and the custody of prisoners is a matter of that order, rather than being comparable with (say) the privatisation of street cleaning.

Until the private sector can convince us that it has thought about such issues, and can demonstrate that privatisation is not simply irrelevant to the prior question of who should be imprisoned and why, it would seem to have little to offer our prisons crisis.

Jim Todd, National Association of Probation Officers

VISITS Metropolitan Police Central Command Complex

The Complex, at New Scotland Yard, harbours what is generally regarded as the most sophisticated and reliable electronic communication system of its size in existence and is the nerve centre of a Force with 16,000 civilian staff and an authorised establishment of 28,115 (just over 10% are women and 1.5 % are drawn from ethnic minorities). The area covered by the Force is 786 square miles. For emergency purposes, the Complex also serves the area of the City of London Police; London's railway stations and property and the Underground, are policed by L Division of the British Transport Police which is not answerable to the Home Office. 3,664 members of the Force, including 213 women, are detective officers and at 20 different locations within the Metropolis there are special squads and branches dealing with such matters as robbery, drugs, cheque fraud, stolen motor vehicles, terrorism and company fraud.

We were shown a model showing the six sections which make up the Complex: 1) Information Room; 2) Traffic Control; 3) Interpol; 4) Operations Room which controls major incidents and ceremonial events; 5) Casualty Bureau opened when major disasters occur; and 6) Message Switch Office. The Command Complex has over 800 terminals connected to 75 Divisional Control Rooms around the country.

The Information Room which is staffed both by police and civilians, receives from 5,000 to 8,000 emergency calls daily - with rain usually forcing the lower figure up by about 1,000 per day. Up to 400 emergency calls can be handled simultaneously by the staff who work stints of 1 1/4 hours followed by 1/4 hour break. (Women, we were told, are considered superior to men in dealing with emergency calls received in the Information Room, maybe due to their greater calming effect on callers in distress, whilst men have the edge when coping with emergencies stemming from traffic problems.)

All police Officers on duty are normally in radio contact. The Air Support Unit has three helicopters one of which is in constant flight over London. Add to this 376 dogs (of which 10 have been specially trained to detect drugs), a Mounted Branch with 189 horses, the Thames Branch policing 66 miles of the river Thames and navigable creeks and the scale of operation becomes clear.

Traffic control monitors traffic over the whole of the Metropolitan Police district through its own communications network supported by closed circuit cameras. Furthermore, every traffic and pedestrian signal within an area of 240 square miles is now linked to the computer and can be controlled centrally. In practice, however, it is found that turning too many successive traffic lights to green to relieve congestion along a particular highway leads to an increase in accidents due to speeding.

The Interpol radio room keeps in touch with police forces of 146 countries around the world and with HQ in Paris. Over 62,000 messages are dealt with annually and staff have to be proficient word processor users and possess a working knowledge of French, the official language of Interpol.

Dr IM Watkin was formerly a County Medical Officer of Health.

Metropolitan Police Force Firearms Unit, Loughton, Essex

This proved to be one of the most interesting visits I have made, particularly as the subject of firearms is very much in the public mind. Lippits Hill Camp, which accommodates the Unit started as an army camp in the 1930's, became a POW camp towards the end of the war and was purchased by the Met. in 1960.

Some 2000 people have been trained to date and many have come from other forces and overseas. Only the Met. has this full scale training facility. Selection is by general aptitude and the ability to use firearms - not by complex psychological testing procedures.

The Unit provides staff training for the Diplomatic and Heathrow Security Sections, the Force Riflemen and the PT17 Tactical Firearms Unit. Personnel from other forces in the UK and Overseas are also trained here. Refresher courses are held at regular intervals and vary in length depending on the level of instruction and attainment for the particular grade. The pink card held by a qualified police officer can be withdrawn at any time if, for any reason, the ability of the holder is in doubt.

Our moment of truth came in the second half of the tour when we visited the video range in the Gallery. Videos were shown on the target area all of which were based on real life situations. Using revolvers firing 0.22 inch ammunition, we were each put through two situations where we had to decide whether to fire or not. In my case, a room containing an armed robber, who had already shot someone in a bank raid, was being searched. A cupboard door was opened by a second policeman to reveal the gunman pointing his shotgun directly at me. No doubt in my mind, I fired!

Gordon Field, Hammersmith & Fulham Police Consultative Group

Metropolitan Police Public Order Training Centre (PT.18)

A throwaway gift and a throwaway remark contributed to the significance of this memorable ISTD study visit. The gift was a plastic bullet: a solid PVC cylinder, 4" x 1 1/2", weighing less than 5 ounces can be loaded into a cartridge and fired from a baton gun with a velocity of up to 80 feet per second. The reassuring remark came from our excellent Course Instructor who said that the police never sought public order confrontations with people because, amongst other reasons, they realized that civilians, especially the young unemployed, easily feel an escalating excitement in combative situations.

PT.18, the largest of its kind in the UK, services the 28,000 Metropolitan Police; it has the only UK

deposit of baton guns and plastic bullets and has a permanent reserve of about 33 officers who are trained to use them. Each gun is 'personalised' (sic) in its firing capacity and bears an officer's first name. Plastic bullets have never yet been used in Britain, although our Instructor who had been with the Territorial Support Group (TSG) sent to Tottenham in October 1985, said that baton guns had been taken there in case of emergency.

Only TSG officers are allowed to use the baton guns, long truncheons, and armoured vehicles and they are subject to rigorous re-training and certification to 'Level 1'. They are volunteers and do regular 'Level 2' training in long and round shield, horse and baton gun deployment. All police male and female have a general 2-day training in cordon, horse and long shield deployment and learn how to cope with petrol bombs.

A tour of the film set inner city area showed us battles in progress between advancing 'rioters' who were obviously enjoying themselves throwing real petrol bombs and wood 'bricks' and tyres at their coolly-controlled colleagues protected by long shields (each of which weighs 17 1/2 lbs). The favoured Mix'n'Match technique combines such an advance with the use of the lighter round shields by senior officers who directed operations from behind. The round shields can be used offensively against rioters if necessary whilst the long shields are essentially defensive. We also saw a mounted police charge, the latest armoured vehicles (one of which was used as an ambulance at Hungerford), dragon lights which disorientate people, and a small locked reserve of CS canisters and guns, which the police dislike greatly.

We were grateful for the open and direct way in which the Instructor responded to our penetrating questions including an honest admission about police failures during the Broadwater Farm Estate riot. We were also pleased to learn that PT. 18 regularly welcomes other public group visits, including those from sixth forms of schools. I feel, after this visit, that I can still say that the British police are the best in the world!

Yvonne Craig, Editor 'Mediation' F.I.R.M.

LECTURES

Police and Prostitution

Between 5pm and 6pm on the 24th June 1988 397 cars passed down a quiet residential road in Streatham; between 11pm and midnight on the same day 518 cars passed the same spot. The pubs close and kerbcrawlers are on their way. Tom Wilson and Roger Matthews made a joint presentation on similar initiatives concerned with prostitution in Finsbury Park and in Streatham.

'But what's the problem?' you may ask. The oldest profession is as old as time and is here to stay; why not just put up with it? The residents of both areas did not agree. They were subject to various irritations including noise, threats by 'minders' and uninvited guests in their front gardens who left used condoms in their wake.

Co-operation was the answer. In Finsbury Park the Police, the Local Authority and local residents worked together to identify and close down brothels and to implement a traffic scheme to send kerb crawlers on a circuitous route away from recognised pick-up points. They had some success. The 'awayday girls' - who had been drawn to London from other cities and who would stay only a few months - passed the word on. The heat is on in Finsbury Park and should be avoided. The minders left and the punters left, leaving only a hard-core of 'career' prostitutes.

Research shows that rather than being displaced geographically to other areas, the majority of prostitutes move on to other activities and to this extent the 'problem' of prostitution went away.

In Streatham the residents have learnt some lessons from north of the river and are trying to implement a traffic scheme and are encouraging the police to be more pro-active in using their powers. A detailed account of the Finsbury Park initiative is given in '*Policing Prostitution - a Multi-Agency Approach*' which is available from the Centre for Criminology, Middlesex Polytechnic, Queensway, Enfield, Middlesex EN3 4SF

Martin Farrell

Helping Victims of Sexual Assault

This lecture was given by Dr Raine Roberts, Clinical Director of the St. Mary's Centre in Manchester. The Centre, based at a local hospital, provides acute and longer-term psychological treatment, not only for the victims and survivors of sexual assault, but also for the victim's partner or family if required. The Centre takes referrals of women and men, though not children.

The Centre has taken over 700 referrals since it was set up late in 1986. The facilities were refurbished through a grant from the DOE and the salaries of Dr Roberts and the five counsellors who work at the Centre are paid for by the police. Despite this support there is, we were told, no pressure placed upon anyone seeking help at the Centre to report crimes to the police.

Control is in the hands of the victim. They can refuse to have a medical examination, and although the staff of the Centre are keen that assaults should be reported to the police, no persuasion is used. Dr Roberts described one case where a woman had come to the Centre and had not wanted to report the assault. She did want to be examined but wanted the information to be treated confidentially. Three weeks later - during which times she had been seen daily by a counsellor - she decided to give a statement, which was, we were told, extremely comprehensive and detailed despite the delay. Indeed Dr Roberts argued that the investigation

of the crime benefited from the support that the victim had been given.

There was a vigorous discussion at the end of the lecture, covering such areas as the potential use of trained volunteers as a backup for services such as that at St Mary's, the need for support for counsellors and the effects of current sentencing practices. For some years now it has been recognised that insufficient thought has been given to the treatment and support that is provided for victims of serious sexual assault. St. Mary's seems to show, however, that with the co-operation of the major agencies much can be done to aid survival.

Tim Newburn, Home Office Research and Planning Unit

SCOTLAND

The Use and Abuse of Imprisonment

Prison sentences should be reduced by a quarter, imprisonment for fine-defaulters ended, and the number of people in prison on remand should be reduced by half, according to Bruce Ritson, chairman of the Howard League in Scotland. He was speaking at a week-end conference organised by the Scottish Association for the Study of Delinquency.

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, opened the conference with a familiar call for a fresh look at how to deal with the non-violent majority of offenders. Prisons do not provide the best conditions in which to teach the socially disadvantaged how to live a normal and law

The South West Branch

The first day conference to be held in the South West took place in Bristol in May 1979. It was arranged by Eve Saville with the help of Dermot Grubb, who was then Governor of Bristol prison, and from it the ISTD South-West Seminar (later Branch) was established. Youth Custody and Supervision (another Green Paper!) was the title. This year, therefore, we celebrate our first decade and are marking the occasion with a **conference on juvenile crime on 29th September.**

As the police are featured in this

issue of CJM we should like to report that members of the police service have attended nearly all our meetings - not only from Avon and Somerset, but also from Devon and Cornwall and we value their active interest. Last year the Deputy Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Police was one of the speakers at our day conference on Crime and the Media and at earlier meetings of the Branch police officers have shared with us their experience of community policing in Devon and community relations in Bristol.

Contact Kirsty Wood (0272 423339)

FIRST PERSON

abiding life, to work at a job or maintain a family. He said *'It is this challenge of balancing the needs of the offender with the need to punish that is becoming increasingly urgent today. We must find ways, constructive ways, acceptable to the public, of reducing the prison population.'*

The prison service cannot simply put up 'no vacancy' signs, and must accept people sent there by the courts. The Scottish prison population is now about 5,200, having reached its all-time peak in March 1986 of 5,797. In the glorious setting of Peebles Hydro Hotel, it was sad to hear such time-worn arguments - and sadder still to realize how little progress has been made since similar inquiries recommended similar changes nearly 240 years ago.

Alison Liebling, Institute of Criminology, Cambridge

UNDERSTANDING THE PAEDOPHILE

Perceptions of the Paedophile, like those of the Rorschach blot, vary enormously. The conference, organised jointly by the Portman Clinic and ISTD, brought together speakers from different disciplines to try to find common ground. There appears to be less than one might have imagined.

Helena Kennedy, Barrister, spoke of the lawyer's obligation to minimise the culpability of their clients in the hope of acquittal or mitigated sentence whilst Ray Wyre, Director of the Gracewell Clinic assumes that the paedophiles he treats will lie and deny and that his role is to both confront and expose. The third speaker, Mervyn Glasser, Portman Clinic, considered the inner world of the paedophile. One might not have expected common ground to be established after a brief twenty four hour conference, but the event did graphically demonstrate the importance of continuing to work towards the inter-disciplinary ideal. A second joint conference is planned for 1990.

Conference Papers are available from the ISTD office, price £3 per copy

A Difficult Transition

Most of the time we relate to colleagues from behind our own professional mask. In this section we ask a professional to speak personally - in the first person. Jenny Hilton is Commander at the Metropolitan Police Training Centre at Hendon.

For the past four months I have been responsible for the training of all 8000 recruits to the Metropolitan Police, of all 200 cadets, of all our sergeants (over 400 this year) and inspectors on promotion. Before coming to Hendon, I ran Chiswick Division for ten years with its regular 'excitements' of policing Brentford football matches, was responsible at the yard for part of Kenneth Newman's revolution in our ideas and systems and dealt with Complaints, Discipline, Personnel and Community Relations in North East London. It has, in some ways, been a difficult transition.

Our pace is wholly different here - planning strategy for the next two or three years rather than the stimulus of daily problem-solving. I have had to learn new techniques. Thirty years ago police training consisted of force-feeding recruits with chunks of indigestible law and police regulations. Parrot-fashion, we learned the questions to be put at the scene of a road accident - 'What happened here, Sir, please?' (No alternative formula for women drivers was suggested) and 'Did anyone see what happened?'. As the emphasis now is on student-centred learning, all our trainers employ developmental and facilitative styles of instruction.

This style of teaching makes it much harder to judge both student performance and staff effectiveness. Recruits are still expected to learn a great deal of formal knowledge about the law, their powers and police procedures. It is in the application of this knowledge that we hope to instil sympathy, imagination and professionalism.

To my post I have inevitably brought some of the operational impatience that results from a lifetime in the police service. The Metropolitan Police is a large bureaucracy of over 40,000 people with procedures dictated by law, necessity, the Home Of-

fice and the Treasury. If one looks at the startling changes in style and structure that have taken place in the past six or seven years, we see that the Force is now more open-minded, more responsive to the community and has learned to develop long-term and realistic strategies.

My day begins at about 8.30; my first visitor of the day is usually the Training School Chief Superintendent. With 800 young men and women as his concern there are regular problems of welfare or discipline to report. These are usually trivial matters but the peccadillos of police recruits are always a matter of fascination for some sections of the media.

My personal secretary arrives. She takes dictation and helps to organise my responses to a variety of files on everything from language courses to cadets with scabies. More elaborate files and papers I put aside for reading. Some of these relate to national police training which has a complex pattern and is different in many respects to Met. training although I am encouraging greater rapprochement wherever possible.

Thereafter, my day may assume a variety of guises - Promotion Boards, Discipline Boards, meetings at the Yard to consider Equal Opportunities, or at the Home Office to contribute to national training strategy.

On other days I present trophies to the recruits finishing their five month course here - they go on to Divisional and day release training for the remainder of their two years' probation. On presentation of trophies, I am expected to deliver an inspiring speech. Moralising is counter-productive so I give them some paradoxical and counter-cultural ideas like 'Moral courage is more important than physical courage, but reaps fewer rewards', and 'Imagination as an essential quality in a police officer'. Or I might offer 'Loyalty as a hazard for the police service'. Later, I join the recruits for their final dining-out night and final parade.

At the end of the day, mine is an interesting and enjoyable post - but I do sometimes miss the daily challenge, companionship and high adventure that I met earlier in my career.