

The Criminal Justice Act 1991: a landmark in legislation or a wasted opportunity? On the eve of implementation, this issue of CJM brings you a series of articles from distinguished commentators in the field, plus, this time some pithy observations from key 'informed sources', within both voluntary and statutory sectors. Very many thanks to all who contributed.

**Andrew Ashworth**, a leading campaigner for reform of sentencing practice, considers it to be an open question whether the Act will, in practice, achieve a reduction in prison population.

**Rob Allen**, from the Home Office describes the main steps being taken by the executive to bring the hopes embodied in the legislation into reality and (separately) provides information about the national standards intended to promote best practice in the Probation Service, thereby raising both effectiveness and judicial confidence.

**Paul Cavadino**, outlines the Act's ambitions but also highlights the degree to which its success depends upon factors beyond its legislative scope.

**Robert Harris**, focuses upon the Act's perceived political and other prime objectives of securing proportionality in sentencing practice and simultaneous reduction in the prison population.

**Alan Peggie, Roger Shaw** and **Bill McWilliams**, all with a probation service background, raise issues of utmost significance to the Act's concerns. **Roger Shaw** writes from experience of research into current probation practice with the dangerous offender, a type of criminal singled out by the 1991 Act for special treatment. **Allan Peggie** raises issues about consequences of the unit fine system that may have been overlooked while **Bill McWilliams** mourns what he sees as the passing of the historic ideal which gave birth to the concept of Probation.

*Julia Braggins*

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*Each issue of CJM focuses on a special area of criminological interest. CJM 10 will consider YOUTH JUSTICE. Contributions are welcome, and will be considered for inclusion if sent to Julia Braggins, ISTD, by NOVEMBER 30th 1992.*

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