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# Ahead of His Time

## MEMORIES OF SIR LIONEL FOX

JAMES BENNETT

*Director of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons*

THE BRITISH CIVIL SERVICE is a constant source of amazement to Americans in its capacity to develop executive personnel with a high degree of versatility that enables them to shift from one field of work to another. Sir Lionel Fox was one who did so with exceptional adroitness and success. Although he was primarily a penologist he spent, in the middle of his career, eight years with the Metropolitan Police District. In 1942 he became Chairman of the Prison Commission and soon demonstrated that as a penologist he would follow in the tradition of the world-renowned Alexander Paterson. As a matter of fact, Sir Lionel worked closely with Paterson on the Prison Commission between 1925 and 1934 and again after 1942. He frankly acknowledged that Paterson had helped him tremendously in shaping his

own thoughts and opinions on the difficult problems of prison management.

I had the great privilege of meeting Sir Lionel several times over the years. He was affable and pleasant and had all those characteristics that make Englishmen so attractive to Americans. He also had the knack for feeling the lash that stings another's back and I think that this sense of empathy had much to do with his success as a prison administrator. One of our great Presidents, Abraham Lincoln, once said that most people lack this quality and understanding comes to them only when the lash strikes their own back. One of our great Civil War historians echoed this philosophical observation. He wrote that this lack of sensitivity "is one of the commonest and most disastrous of all human traits, because it consents to

cruelty and injustice; and it consents largely because the insensitive person does not even realise that these things exist unless they touch him personally. He can live next to monstrous wrong because he does not really know that it is there; it affects another person and so he does not feel it. Society approaches a respectable level of civilisation only when it develops an active spirit of compassion."

It speaks well for British civilisation that Sir Lionel had that active spirit of compassion. In his writings he frequently quoted Oscar Wilde, whose imprisonment was such a traumatic and painful experience. Sir Lionel was also conscious of his heritage and referred often to John Howard, the British penal reformer whose own sense of compassion was apparently implanted ineradicably when he himself became a prisoner in France and suffered the indignities common to the imprisoned of the eighteenth century.

Like John Howard, Sir Lionel was a penological figure of international significance. He gave much of his time to the United Nations, where we were friendly collaborators in trying to improve the treatment of prisoners around the world. He stood shoulder to shoulder with us in developing the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners which the United Nations ultimately adopted. The Rules reflected much of his

thinking and will stand for many years, with their recognition of basic human rights and privileges, as a credit to civilized nations.

During our long friendship I had many discussions with him on basic penological problems, sharing for example deep misgivings over the shortcomings of the sentencing methods in our respective countries. I knew that in England offenders were commonly sentenced by magistrates untrained in the law and I urged him to work for legislation which would put the determination of final sentences into the hands of a board, as in California, or which would make them more completely indeterminate. He had some doubts that either plan would work in England, and countered by pointing out to me that the disparities in sentences were even more severe in the United States where sentencing was performed by judges with a competence in the law. I admitted the disparities but told him that they were as much due to penal laws permitting a severity bordering on barbarity as they were to the judges who differed greatly among themselves as to sentencing practice and philosophy.

When I last saw Sir Lionel in 1960 I was able to report to him that in the Federal jurisdiction at least the sentencing process had been virtually revolutionised. Until 1958 a judge could, for most offences except narcotics viola-

tions (for which statutes provided a severe mandatory penalty), sentence a defendant to a term of years within the statutory maximum under which he would become automatically eligible for parole when he had served one-third. This was a rather rigid system, and it made no allowance for differences in offenders in their response to rehabilitative programmes. In 1958, Congress of the United States enacted an omnibus law which was intended to invest the sentencing process with much more flexibility and at the same time, more consistency. The old sentencing system was made discretionary, and to it were added new discretionary elements. If the judge felt the old way of sentencing did not fit the defendant's case, he could impose any maximum within the statutory limit as before, but he could also specify that the U.S. Board of Parole would determine when the defendant would become eligible for parole—imposing, in effect, an indeterminate sentence. Or, if in the interests of giving force to society's disapproval of a given act he wanted to make sure that the defendant spent at least a certain amount of time in prison he could fix the defendant's eligibility for parole at any point up to one-third of the maximum sentence imposed.

The authors of the legislation also realised that in some cases the judge lacked enough information

upon which to base an intelligent sentence and wrote in a provision which would enable the judge to commit the defendant for a period of up to six months for observation, diagnosis, and sentencing recommendation. After receiving the recommendation the judge could impose any sentence that he thought was indicated, within the statutory maximum. Another provision of the bill authorised the Parole Board to terminate the supervision of a parolee who had proved that he could get along well in the community. Still another extended the Federal Youth Corrections Act, roughly similar to the borstal system (providing for most defendants sentenced under it a six year indeterminate term with parole mandatory not later than four years after the beginning of the sentence) and until 1958 limited to youths under the age of 22, to selected youths up to the age of 25.

It is apparent that while this new flexibility would enable the courts to tailor sentences more fittingly to the requirements of the individual cases it also would increase the potential for disparity. To offset this possibility and to make further efforts to minimise disparities the legislation authorised the Federal judges to convene periodically in institutes and seminars to discuss sentencing problems and to work out a consensus in philosophy and practice.

This new legislation has been put to good use. More than 25 per cent of the approximately 14,000 annual commitments to Federal institutions are now made under some form of indeterminate sentence, and the proportion is growing annually. The judges are also committing more than 500 difficult sentencing cases a year for diagnosis, and in nearly all instances they follow the recommendations of the Bureau of Prisons as to disposition.

The sentencing study is a highly co-ordinated responsibility in our System, and the ultimate recommendation represents the distillation of the work and views of a great many experienced people in our institutions and in our central office. After the detailed studies are made in the institutions and the data has been reviewed and evaluated in our central office, I personally participate in formulating a sentencing recommendation in each case. There are few of our responsibilities that we consider more important. In the final analysis it is the sentence that determines what can be done with an offender and it is in the sentence that we find the most realistic expression of the public interest.

Each day's mail sees a number of these recommendations forwarded to the courts. The other day one case involved a housewife who, overwhelmed by

indebtedness and emotional problems, gulped down some whiskey and tried to rob a bank; after studying her we recommended a three-year indeterminate sentence in order to give us time to stabilise her emotions and work out a release plan which would fit her economic circumstances. A second case was that of a 41-year-old man convicted of forgery who also had a history of burglary and arson with overtones of sexual aberration; we found that although competent for trial he was a chronic psychotic and recommended to the judge that he be retained in prison only until such time as we could arrange his commitment to a state mental hospital. In a third case we recommended the maximum term possible for the offence of which the defendant was convicted, mail theft. He had spent most of his life in institutions, he was seriously handicapped physically, and his other problems, emotional and social, were such that he could attempt a satisfactory adjustment only within the environment of an institution. The protection of the public requires that in some cases we quarantine an anti-social person no matter how understandable his crime may be.

The sentencing institutes have been helpful too. By this time every circuit in the Federal jurisdiction has held one or more meetings of this kind and more

are in prospect. At the meetings the judges listen to the views of representatives of various government agencies as to the sentences that should be imposed on specific types of offenders—income tax violators, bank robbers, and so on. The judges also get together in workshops to discuss actual cases and to try to reach some accord on the sentencing issues that these cases bring up. The judges vote on the kind of sentence they would impose in each case, once at the beginning of the workshop sessions and again at the end of the sessions. The differences in the initial poll are amazing, much similar to those recorded in a similar experiment at a quarterly meeting of magistrates that Sir Lionel told me about. Needless to say, there is much more agreement evident at the close of the workshop session than at the beginning.

The judges have already developed a tentative agreement on a number of sentencing issues. They agree that probation is a preferable disposition unless other factors dictate confinement. They agree that in dealing with juvenile and youth offenders rehabilitation is the primary purpose of the sentence. On the other hand, in such white collar offences as income tax evasion they agree that deterrence is the sentencing factor of almost exclusive significance. They agree that judges ought to give reasons for the sentence when

imposing it and also that judges ought to visit the penal institutions regularly so that they know what happens to offenders and what their sentences actually mean. But they have failed to agree on some issues too, as for example the question of whether an offender ought to be shown leniency for pleading guilty and thus saving the time of the court in contrast to an offender who has been found guilty after insisting on standing trial.

Sir Lionel thought that the judicial sentencing institute was a good idea and one that might well be emulated by the magistrates of England. He expressed his intention of arousing interest in the idea among them but before he could do so fate intervened. At the time of our discussion in 1960, however, he did take some comfort in the fact that severely excessive and disparate sentences could be appealed in England, under a statute that had been in existence for more than 50 years. I had to admit that in the United States there was no similar provision in most States or in the Federal jurisdiction, although a proposal of this kind has been under consideration in the Congress for several years. For the correction of excessive sentences we have to depend upon the exercise of executive clemency. In this respect, incidentally, President Kennedy has been more

active and helpful than any of the several Presidents under whom I have worked.

Perhaps the most pressing problem that Sir Lionel and I shared and about which we had the most extended and mutually sympathetic discussions was prison overcrowding. Sir Lionel told me that the English institutions on the whole held a third more prisoners than they could accommodate comfortably and that these institutions, physically, had long outlived their usefulness. I had to respond that much the same problems existed in the United States, but that the last decade had seen much improvement. More new construction has been undertaken in the various penal systems of the United States over the past ten years than during the previous fifty.

In the Federal system, after an interval of twenty years during which no new prisons were built, we have a number of institutions on the drawing boards and under construction. A new maximum custody penitentiary was opened at Marion, Illinois, this year. It is designed to be attractive even to the imprisoned, equipped with the most up-to-date facilities needed for modern treatment techniques, and laid out to facilitate the day-to-day, hour-by-hour activities of the prison program. In North Carolina we are planning a new facility for the treatment of men-

tally ill prisoners, and while this facility embraces many of the aspects of both a prison and a hospital it looks like neither. Its very design, intended to uplift the human spirit, is a part of the therapy that has been conceived for its patients. We also have a juvenile training school under design and are working on the concepts of a new youth institution and a women's reformatory.

In England too there has been an unusual amount of prison construction in recent years, much of it, I am sure, due to the persuasiveness of Sir Lionel in his attempts to solve the problem of overcrowding. I note that in 1962 alone the English system opened eight new establishments and that a number of others were under construction; the time element alone suggests that the groundwork for their construction must have been laid during Sir Lionel's tenure as Chairman of the Prison Commission. Of all the problems with which he was faced there were few that he felt more keenly than that of overcrowding.

We were in substantial accord concerning the overall requirements of prison design, particularly such basic elements as John Howard once proposed—space, privacy and sanitation. But it was on the details that we differed. I thought that it was useless to build a wall unless it was guarded by gun towers; he thought the wall

alone provided sufficient security. He preferred dining facilities in each housing unit; I preferred a central dining room for the entire institution. I felt strongly that a prison should be designed to make highly economical use of personnel. This factor wasn't as important to him, and he pointed out the ratio of personnel to prisoners was much more equal in England than in the United States where the prisoners outnumbered the personnel several times.

We resolved our points of view on this note. Our cultures were different, and solutions that might be appropriate for one country would not necessarily be appropriate for the other. For example, in the United States we feel that our police must be armed, and in England the citizens feel equally strongly that the police must remain unarmed. But both systems seem to work, reflecting the fact that the content of crime in the two countries is far from identical, and the ways of dealing with it cannot therefore be the same.

Sir Lionel worried about the problems of the released prisoner. He quoted Oscar Wilde on this point too:

"Many men on their release carry their prison about with them into the air, and hide it as a secret disgrace in their hearts, and at length, like poor poisoned things, creep into some hole and die. It is wretched that they

should have to do so, and it is wrong, terribly wrong, of society that it should force them to do so."

He was distressed at the high rates of recidivism and he sought to find some way of reducing it. He was convinced that most ex-prisoners wanted to make good and needed only a chance. England, under his leadership, was one of the first to experiment with the hostel system, beginning in 1953, and I am pleased to note that it is being steadily expanded to-day.

In America we have adapted the hostel idea, as we have adapted several other ideas that we picked up in the United Kingdom. While the English hostels are usually located on the grounds of a prison, we have opened what we call pre-release guidance centres, located in the downtown areas of several large cities. The programme has so far been confined to juveniles and youths who have completed periods of institutional treatment and are ready for parole. They live in the centres, typically a part of a large Y.M.C.A., work at jobs in commercial firms, and in off-work hours participate in counselling and planned recreational programmes. The guidance centres have been so successful in reducing parole violation rates among the most difficult group of youngsters that we are now laying plans for an expansion of the programme to include more communities and older types of offenders.



Much of Sir Lionel's distress over recidivism stemmed from his reception statistics indicating that two-thirds or more of the newly-committed offenders had been institutionalised for crime before. We have similar statistics in the Federal system in the United States, but for many years they were misquoted to suggest that it was this proportion of prisoners released from Federal institutions who got into trouble again. A five-year study of released Federal prisoners, recently completed by the University of Illinois under a Ford Foundation grant, disclosed that, as Sir Lionel guessed, about 90 per cent of all ex-prisoners earnestly desire to make good and make at least one sincere try to obtain honest employment. Unfortunately, too many of them are unsuccessful because of the hostility of employers, discriminatory laws, and union rules. But the same study showed, more encouragingly, that two-thirds of the ex-prisoners persevered in their effort and managed to avoid further trouble with the law.

Recidivism could be greatly reduced, Sir Lionel argued, if society was more receptive to the ex-prisoner. Sir Lionel put himself in the place of the ex-prisoner and he sensed keenly the barriers and the rebuffs to his reassimilation in the community. He confided to me once that although the after-

care societies were doing a commendable job in minimising the problem, it would not be completely resolved until society had progressed through several more civilising generations. After all, he told me, it was only 150 years since England was confronted with the misery, degradation and corruption of the bridewells, the hulks and the transportation system. Today these evils would be unthinkable and yet only a few generations ago it was a rare individual who concerned himself about their existence. Like John Howard, for example.

Sir Lionel Fox belongs to the same tradition as John Howard, with whom he will stand in the pages of history along with such giants as Captain Machonochie and Alexander Paterson. The name of each of them was the very synonym for enlightened penology in their day, just as Sir Lionel Fox's name is today. In any nation, and in any generation, the men who can match their stature are too few. And when they have gone it seems, at least for a time, that no one can ever take their places.

Fortunately for Sir Lionel's successors, he built with an eye toward the future. He could not himself leap into tomorrow, but he certainly accelerated the pace of the rest of us in our journey toward it.

# Another Look at Group Counselling

E. S. DARLING

IT MAY SEEM presumptuous and repetitious to be considering group counselling once more, yet five years have passed since its introduction into the Prison Service, and for many people it still remains something of a mystery. It has developed from at least four different sources:

- (1) Group therapy at Wormwood Scrubs gradually came to include non-specialist members of the staff in the treatment of inmates. From this arose a need to discuss their own attitudes towards the day-to-day problems of dealing with inmates;
- (2) Certain Governors attended a Conference in Group Relations organised at Leicester by the Tavistock Institute, and translated what they had learned into group counselling programmes at Wakefield and Pollington;
- (3) Much encouragement was received from the knowledge of what had been going on in the Californian Department of Corrections in the way of counselling with inmates, in prison, on parole, and in some cases, including their families;

- (4) Many people had visited and read about the experiment in setting up a therapeutic community at the Henderson Hospital.

The factor common to all of these was that the main burden was carried by lay staff.

Counselling has spread to about fifteen establishments—both open and closed borstals, training and recidivist prisons, as it were, from Pollington to Dartmoor via Holloway! The present pattern is that a fairly senior member of the staff is responsible for supervising counselling within the establishment. He will most likely have undergone a course to gain experience of counselling itself, and of the problems involved in getting it going. In turn he organises training courses for members of his own staff wishing to become counsellors, and subsequently arranges regular meetings at which they have an opportunity of discussing their own problems and attitudes towards inmate groups. To most counselling establishments there is also assigned a psychologist, often on a visiting basis,

whose function is to act as a technical adviser.

The general pattern, however, conceals wide variations, so that it is difficult to talk about a unified concept of counselling. Some of the content has already been previously described in this journal. These variations have occurred sometimes haphazardly, sometimes deliberately, others as a reaction to difficulties experienced with other forms.

In smaller establishments there is a tendency for counselling to involve all inmates, on a compulsory basis, throughout the duration of their stay. Whether counselling takes place during working hours, as part of the educational programme, or in "free" time depends on the priority given to it as a training medium, and, in part, on how conscious the staff are of the need to improve communications not only between staff and inmates, but between the various grades and departments.

In some larger establishments, particularly prisons, the tendency is for counselling to have a limited duration; and for it not to encroach on the working day. It may thus be available to a man for only a limited part of his sentence.

Similarly there have been variations in the way inmates have been selected ranging from care of the order one would use in choosing people for group psychotherapy at one extreme, to taking all-comers at the other.

What sort of expectations are held about counselling? That it should achieve some alteration in people's attitudes, increase their insight and awareness of themselves and others, and in some rather vague way, make them "better" people. This, I think, at any rate, is what most people hoped it would achieve. In other words they probably hoped that counselling would do for inmates what group psycho-therapy achieves for certain types of emotionally disturbed patients. Yet when one considers the care with which patients are selected for group treatment; how long the treatment lasts; the amount of training undergone by the therapist himself; and, finally, the sometimes limited degree of success obtained, it is hardly surprising that the immediate effects of counselling on the behaviour of inmates may not be particularly dramatic. Such rather limited investigations as have been made suggest that counselling does not lead to a deterioration in formal discipline—contrary to the gloomy prognostications of some. Indeed, in some cases, an improvement in discipline was noted so long as counselling lasted.

As far as I am aware, nothing like a rigorously controlled experiment has been tried to assess the effectiveness of any of the variations of counselling already referred to. This, of course, while regrettable, is not surprising, particularly if one gives a moment's thought to the difficulties of

staging such an undertaking. On the other hand we shall not be able to capitalise on this varied experience, nor shall we know what we are achieving unless this kind of problem is tackled squarely. As long as the primary function of the service was a custodial one—and many people still see it in this light, there was no logical need to assess effectiveness in other terms. The tradition in training prisons and borstals is a different one, although the notion that one should expose what one is doing and offering to critical description and evaluation is not always widely accepted. Which of us, even in our objective moments, is not sensitive to the threatening nature of this form of enquiry, however well-intentioned?

The fact remains that many counsellors find the experience a rewarding one—in a minor way because their original apprehensions are not confirmed, and in a major way because of the increased insight and understanding they acquire—not only of inmates, but into their own feelings and attitudes, towards inmates and towards each other.

Increased awareness, however leads in its turn to an increase in the number of difficulties and problems one perceives in one's work. Relations with inmates and fellow staff are seen to be more complex, and one's earlier, perhaps comparatively clear-cut, attitudes no longer fill the bill. Unless one can subsequently work through to

a solution of these new problems, increased awareness, of itself, may prove to be a mixed blessing.

If, then, counselling facilitates communication between inmates and staff, one must consider the corollary that counselling improves communication amongst the various grades and departments that comprise the staff. There is not much doubt that this occurs in some smaller establishments where inmate groups are backed up by regular staff meetings. This model approaches the concept of the therapeutic community, developed at the Henderson Hospital. In most of these experiments the size of the unit does not much exceed one hundred, and in one case ("E" Wing at Holloway) is very much less. In addition to the common factor of small numbers it seems to me that one ought not to disregard the comparative homogeneity of the populations involved. There is also a presumption that inmates will tend more or less to speak the same language and the range of their problems will be narrower than in, say, a recidivist prison.

How does this situation compare with a large prison or borstal where many of the staff and inmates are not involved in counselling, and where the regime, however liberal and permissive, is organised on more orthodox lines? One might think that "partial" counselling, considered as a communications tool, would be better than none at all. Experience seems to suggest

however that there comes a point when people having experienced better communications in one possibly circumscribed part of an establishment, become frustrated and annoyed if similar improvements fail to occur elsewhere in the system, whatever the reason may be. They feel undervalued and disregarded. In their disappointment they may turn against counselling and hold it responsible and this leads to the usual throwing out of baby and bath water.

Possibly, in future experiments, one should aim at initiating counselling completely within wing or house, rather than piece-meal throughout a large establishment as a whole, since the results in practice are so vastly different.

Despite the somewhat sketchy and inconclusive nature of the

foregoing, there are certain conclusions one might usefully draw. Firstly, that counselling has not turned out to be what many people originally expected, although its usefulness has not been diminished thereby. Secondly, that to be really effective, counselling activities need to be integrated within the life of an establishment as a whole, and not kept carefully in a back-water of institutional life. Thirdly, that we need more description and assessment of the various forms of counselling in current practice, however wearisome and threatening a task this may seem. Finally, we need to tackle the problem of preserving continuity, and the difficulties which ensue when a counselling supervisor is transferred, so that the dynamic is preserved regardless of changes in personality.

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# Prison Visiting

## A Contemporary Approach

GRAHAME H. CAVE

I CANNOT HELP FEELING as I reflect on the life and work of Elizabeth Fry, that were she alive today, she would expect a different system of prison visiting than we have at the present time. After a careful study of the history of Penal Reform it seems clear to me that we have not come very far with regard to prison visiting. Over the past fifteen years we have witnessed an enlightened change in penal policy brought about by the passing of the Criminal Justice Act, 1948 and the 1957 White Paper, "Penal Practice in a Changing Society," only to mention two of the major parts. In the light of this, it is rather surprising that prison visiting has remained basically the same since 1901 when the Association of Lady Visitors was formed. It is well known that Elizabeth Fry first visited Newgate Prison in 1813—but this was before the formation of the late body of Prison Commissioners in 1877, so it is not really a fair assessment to take the story back thus far.

The original concept of a prison

visitor is someone who visited certain inmates, at the latter's request, once during a week to have a friendly talk, discuss any topic of interest to the prisoner and impart any relevant news of the outside world—in the words of a Governor, "to bring a breath of fresh air into the prison." Let us not lose sight of the fact that in those early days this was very welcome because there was no Norwich Scheme, no personal newspapers or periodicals, not so many letters were allowed and there were no educational classes. Today, all of these privileges are parts of prison discipline aimed to help the prisoner against becoming institutionalised. It is because of these facts that I am absolutely convinced that the role of the prison visitor, if he is to remain effective, must therefore undergo a metamorphosis. I suggest that we must be allowed to be more practical in our approach. Before I exemplify this statement let me explain that I am aware that at the time of writing, negotiations are going on between the Prison

Department of the Home Office and executive officers of the National Association of Prison Visitors, to revise the rule book issued to new visitors. Second to this, discussion is taking place between these bodies on the question of prison visitors becoming associates. However, in the meantime I will make my suggestions which incidentally, do not necessarily represent the views of the National Association.

The practical approach and application which I advocate means being allowed to give "real" help to the prisoners when it is required. Let me illustrate what I mean by "real" help. At the close of my weekly visit to the men on my list I always ask if there is anything worrying them or if there is anything I can do for them. (The dynamics of this approach is a subject for another time and place!). One such occasion, approximately a year ago, in response to my offer, a man whom I had been visiting told me that he was frantic with worry over his wife. It appeared she was in hospital and he had not received any news from her for at least a week. Of course, he asked me if I could go and see her and find out how she was progressing and why she had not written. It was my painful duty to inform him that rules and regulations would not allow me to undertake such a task and accordingly refer him to the Welfare Officer. His look was one of dis-

may and portrayed the words, "What the hell do you want to ask me if there is anything you can do for me if you will not do the thing I want most?" I say "will not" as opposed to "cannot" because as far as he was concerned—I just *would* not. He does not understand, nor is he concerned with the rules and regulations governing prison visitors. Let's face it—prisoners are people who are not concerned with rules and regulations otherwise they would not be in prison! No, let's be sensible about this. I maintain that I should have been allowed to go to this particular hospital, see this man's wife, find out how she was progressing and find out why she had not written to him. Then on the following evening I could have gone back to the prison and given the man the news. This would put an end to any uncertainty. Why should a man have to undergo mental torture of this nature because he is in prison? It was as far back as the early 1920's that Sir Alexander Paterson said "A man is sent to prison AS a punishment not FOR punishment." I wonder what his views on my suggestion would have been? The occasions when I have been asked to help the men I visit by negotiating outside the prison on their behalf or visit a relative are not isolated. Because of my repeated refusals, I can almost hear these men saying, "These prison visitors are all right until you ask them to do something

for you". We must guard against becoming a band of "Do-gooders".

Secondly there is the question of After-Care. Lord Longford has described this as the most neglected corner of our Welfare State. I believe that in this field the prison visitor can play a very prominent role indeed. I know that many do and have been doing so for many years. I did mention earlier that negotiations are proceeding in relation to the question of prison visitors becoming associates. I think that the Prison Department will have something more definite to say on this point now that the report of the Advisory Committee on After-Care has been published. Whilst on this subject, I would mention that executive officers of the Association were invited, and gave oral evidence to this committee; this in itself illustrates in some measure that the opinions of prison visitors are held in fairly high esteem. A visitor establishes a very close contact with a prisoner during his visits. Surely, there are cases whereby a prisoner would benefit by retaining this contact on release. Not all prisoners who elect to have a visitor want this, and in some cases it would be inadvisable for obvious reasons. On this point the visitor must use his discretion. Perhaps a visit or a letter once a month to see if all is going well, help with employment, help with domestic problems. It is a solid comfort to some prisoners to know

as they are nearing the end of their sentence and are apprehensive about facing life outside, that there is someone to whom they can turn for a sympathetic and understanding ear. Again, I know that many visitors have been doing this unobtrusively for years, but I mention these points because I have come across quite a number who feel that their responsibility ends when the man is released. Of course, nobody would be foolish enough to think that such visitors are any the less good visitors because they hold this view. My view is that if ever a man needed a companion, it is when he steps outside of the prison gates on the morning of his release—in the words of one of our more enlightened Governors, "When some men are released, they literally do not know whether to turn left or right". Whenever possible a visitor should be at the gate when any of his men are released, unless the prisoner prefers to be left to his own devices. I have come across men who would prefer not to be met.

In these views I shall doubtless have many critics from inside of the service who will answer me saying that in a situation such as the one regarding the man's wife in hospital, that this case should be dealt with by the Prison Welfare Officer. On this score I am bound to agree but I would make one proviso. I think it is an established fact that many prisoners



will more readily confide in their visitor than they will with members of the official staff of the prison. Nobody would wish in any way to deprecate the wonderful work done by Prison Welfare Officers, we all know that their load is a heavy one. The suggestion of the Maxwell Report calling for Welfare Officers in our prisons was one of the most enlightened pieces of social and penal policy of recent years. Nevertheless, the visitor could relieve this official of some of the burden if allowed to take on an occasional visitation on behalf of a prisoner if requested and report the findings to him so that he, (the Welfare Officer) could take up the case from this point if necessary. Here I am wide open to some very sound criticism, and that is, that prison visitors are not qualified social workers. We are all aware what harm can be, and indeed is, done in difficult social case work when it is "meddled" with by someone who is not competent to deal with the situation. In answer to this I can only say that I think a prison visitor is experienced enough to exercise the right discretion whether to deal with the case personally or refer it to the Welfare Officer. It may be that in a particular case a visitor may be able to deal with an outside problem quicker than the Welfare Officer could. The latter may be on holiday, on sick leave, or very busy on matters just as urgent.

Why should a prisoner have to wait if there *are* means to deal with his problem quicker? My more purist and conventional colleagues are always trying to impress upon me the dangers of visiting a man's relatives whilst he is serving a sentence. That these obvious dangers exist cannot be denied, and it would be most unwise to disregard them, but there is a way around this. If a visitor was allowed to visit the relatives of a man in prison or undertake something on his behalf in the outside world he can always take a third person with him, say his wife, a friend or even another visitor. Of course I use the word friend with reserve, obviously it would have to be someone with an interest in social work. The difficulties are not insurmountable.

There you have it. These are but a few thoughts after seven years as a prison visitor. I hope the next seven years will be allowed to be more practical. I think these thoughts are in accordance with the modern outlook on social work. I throw them out as a challenge. We must adapt ourselves to social changes which the advance of time makes inevitable. We must inspire confidence in the man (and women, because all I have said applies to the woman visitor although perhaps in a varying degree) that we visit. We can only do this by being men and women of action.

# Blackfriars Settlement

## Prison After-Care Scheme

ALAN MARKHAM

HERE AT THE Blackfriars Settlement in London we organise an Associate After-Care Scheme. An easy phrase but not so easy to appreciate. "Scheme" is straightforward enough; "after-care" is not so difficult, but is a very wide term; "Associate" is quickly becoming an acceptable title but without any particular definition. A dozen people will say "I am an Associate," and each will have totally different ideas of his role and methods of working. Apart from all the confusion likely within the service and among the outside organisations, the ultimate position will be disastrous at the very root of the work being attempted. The only aim of Associate work is to help men and women establish or regain a useful and acceptable position in society. This will only be possible if confidence and trust can be established. To expect this from a prisoner without understanding or any accurate pre-release knowledge of what to expect is ridiculous.

If the whole value of Associate work is not to disappear in a cloud of mixed ideas, it is very necessary that the exact role of the Associates

attached to different organisations is known. As a first consideration then, what do we at Blackfriars mean by Associate?

The average volunteer who comes to us interested in prison after-care has no special knowledge of the field nor experience or training in social work generally. He or she will be leading a full life with a usual amount of family and personal commitments. Therefore, we have to think of the role of the Associate as something that is possible within limited amounts of spare time. Another consideration is that the prudent volunteer would not think it feasible to commit his spare time, uninterrupted over a long period, say of two or three years.

For us the voluntary Associate is somebody able to establish a companionship with a prisoner that will encourage a continued contact during the original months of re-settlement in society. The Associate becomes the person to whom the ex-prisoner turns spontaneously for advice, for help and support. The person who can demonstrate personal interest and concern.

interest and concern which cannot in the ex-prisoner's eyes appear as of duty or reward. The Associate offers to share a part of his spare time with a selected companion, to encourage him out of loneliness and isolation and help him out of inadequacy.

The best way of conveying an idea of the sort of person who volunteers for this work is to give one or two examples:-

**Example 1.**

Male: 55 years old: Married.

Religion: Humanist.

A Civil Servant with previous experience as Prison Visitor and teaching at Evening Institute.

(1) Realisation that after-care best practical work.

Reason for volunteering:

(2) Need for assistance for those already engaged in such work.

**Example 2.**

Male: 34 years old: Single.

Religion: Presbyterian.

An Advertising Executive, with no previous social work experience.

Reason for volunteering:

Interested in doing social work, layman's interest in prisons and after-care.

**Example 3.**

Male: 49 years old: Married.

Religion: Church of England.

A schoolmaster, with experience of education and rehabilitation of disturbed children.

Reason for volunteering:

A consideration that experience and personal qualities may be of some value.

**Example 4.**

Female: 31 years old: Single.

Religion: Congregationalist.

A secretary with voluntary experience with Family Welfare Association, Old People and Youth Work.

Reason for volunteering:

Interest in people and their problems.

Assuming the volunteer to be available and the role of Associate to be of possible value, why then not let the individual get on with it? Why the need for a scheme? Of the people who come to us at the Settlement interested in prison after-care, many not only have little specialised knowledge or information in that field but have no real experience of general social work. Immediately they are within an organisation with a wide range of activity, of which they become a part and from which they can draw experience and information of value. They are not confined narrowly to prison after-care, but can relate their work to the much wider issues involved.

Within the prison after-care work, the volunteer has the very real need of supervision. The need is not only there but is recognised by the volunteer. The field of work in which he is entering will contain many situations and demand varied action about which he will require guidance and instruction. In that he is an Associate on our scheme to which mainly recidivists are referred, the responsibilities he is taking on are very real and he must be able to call on adequate support and advice. This will indicate a very clear role for a professional organiser.

Any person who volunteers for Associate work is in no position to know either if the work is suitable for him or he for the work. He will have no real knowledge of the problem, of the people and situa-

tions he will be in contact with, of the work that is expected of him or of the physical and emotional demands involved. If he has to become involved without first being able to find answers to these, he will either decide against it and potential voluntary help is lost or he will take something on with which he cannot cope, achieving nothing either for himself, or most importantly, for the person he has wanted to help. Indeed, he may well intensify a condition he is there to overcome.

All voluntary workers should not only have the opportunity but should be expected to participate in, preparation and training at which they could understand in some measure the field of their volunteered activity. The training should not only include factual information as of the Associate scheme, the prisons and the penal system, welfare and after-care facilities, but must instruct on relationships particularly of Associates and prisoners, drawing value and guidance from the experience of other Associates in such things as case discussions and group discussions.

These are some of the reasons why we feel our scheme at Blackfriars is necessary. We give this preparation and training to all potential Associates. The need for a professional organiser is obvious but we believe there is also another very necessary role. To attempt to give volunteers some understanding of Associate rela-

tionships, to lead case discussions, to advise on or interview the more difficult recidivist, this is the job of a psychiatrist. At Blackfriars, we retain a psychiatrist for just this role and his experiences on our scheme make him an invaluable consultant for the individual Associate.

Potential Associates can decide after the training sessions if they still wish to take up individual Associate work but are they likely to be suitable for the work, or the work for them? Here we have another reason for the scheme and a very definite responsibility. Responsibility to the volunteer that he does not become involved in something to his detriment, responsibility to the prison staff and welfare departments and to the men we are trying to help. On our scheme, individual Associate suitability can in some measure be decided by the organiser during interviews and the course of training meetings but the final decisions are taken by a panel of experienced professional workers.

Our Associates are given preparation and training not to create a body of like-thinking, like-acting personnel, but to allow them to use their individual approach to the situation to the maximum effect, and are given the opportunity of continued discussion and interchange of experiences and ideas with other Associates as well as with the organiser and psychiatrist, to allow full benefit to and from their work.

Having the organisation, the Associates, and an accepted idea of the role of the Associate, to which ex-prisoners is the scheme best geared? Two considerations are that we are concerned with recidivists and that our Associates, though training has been mentioned a lot, are still non-professional, unqualified people. Just because they are volunteers, it is hardly sensible to think that their introduction to any prisoner is a good thing, or that they are likely to be able to create stability in a prisoner who has already received, unavailingly, a great deal of specialised professional help.

We have felt that a broad group from whom prisoners could be referred to Associates is that of the friendless, inadequate person whose isolation probably goes back to childhood. It is best here to give examples of one or two of those who have been referred and been accepted.

**Example 1:** 27 years old male. No relatives and friends. No fixed abode. Occupation given as labourer. Serving eight months for larceny. History of petty larceny, many cases, starting with an Approved School sentence. Previously in orphanage, no knowledge of parents.

**Example 2:** 35 years old male. Married with two children. Separated, no hope of reconciliation. No other relatives. Occupation given as painter. Serving two years for office breaking. Eight previous similar. Extract from Welfare Officer's report: "This man is without doubt immature, he feels very rejected and lonely, and might, if not shown interest and warmth, become psychopathic."

**Example 3:** 48 years old male. Divorced: 3 children. No contact

with other relations. Occupation given as engineer. Serving nine months for attempted larceny. 5 previous—all larceny and attempted larceny. Trouble started from time of break-up of family.

These examples have been selected not only as typical of those referred in the past but also because they represent examples of cases when contact with an Associate has been retained over a useful period. To relate this in some fashion, the following information may help:

**Example 1:** Two months between last two sentences. 15 months contact with Associate.

**Example 2:** Four months between last two sentences. 26 months contact with Associate.

**Example 3:** Seven months between last two sentences. 13 months contact with Associate.

The contact given is the time period since date of discharge.

It must be remembered that this work at the Settlement has only been in operation just over two years, during which time studying the possibilities of the work and formulating procedure and conditions have played a big part. The introduction, preparation, primary and continued training of Associates have altered and enlarged in structure and content, selection method improved, the creation of a very experienced Advisory Group together with the continued involvement of the psychiatrist, have all greatly increased the support available to the individual Associate.

But the Associate is only one half of what is hoped will be a beneficial relationship. What of the other half and how does the relationship come about. As has been mentioned, we are concerned with recidivists and, in that our Associates are mainly from the Greater London area, with recidivists who will be living in London on discharge. This means we are principally concerned with Wandsworth, Pentonville, and Holloway prisons. Since the scheme started all referrals to us for Associate after-care have been made by the Welfare Officers at those prisons. The procedure is: -

1. Referral by a Welfare Officer.
2. Prisoner interviewed by organiser.
3. History advised to organiser from Welfare Officer.
4. Acceptance or rejection by organiser.
5. Organiser checks availability of selected suitable Associate.
6. Associate introduced to prisoner by Welfare Officer.
7. Associate can visit further through Welfare Officer.
8. Attempted continued contact after discharge.

As a selecting agent for Associate after-care the Welfare Officer has many difficulties. In Wandsworth and Pentonville, the numbers of prisoners and the high discharge rate combine to reduce the time of selection to the pre-discharge board. Outside this, the choice of

selection can only be those men previously known to the Welfare Officer or those who have reason to request interviews.

Of necessity, many of the prisoners have been referred to us at the time of their pre-discharge board, a few weeks before discharge. They are unlikely to understand anything of the voluntary commitment they agree to, or of the position of the Associate to whom they are introduced. Indeed, at this stage, with the "fever" mounting, any help offered would be seen only in terms of money, accommodation or job, and the worth of the Associate will be measured only in terms of the production of one or all of these. This is not only demanding the impossible of the majority of Associates but is obviously no basis for a continued relationship.

Records of our work so far show a high proportion of "lost contact" in the cases of men referred at this short notice before discharge and have convinced us of the necessity of the introduction of the Associate at a stage well before gate-fever onset, allowing for a succession of visits before discharge. In this way, the Associate and prisoner have the opportunity of getting to know each other, the Associate to know the problems of the prisoner, the prisoner to realise the help he can get from the Associate, and above all time for preparation.

In an attempt to overcome some of the difficulties of late referral, we have started an experiment at

Wandsworth, which could be valuable. The facilities have been given to us on the H and K wings and allow us to visit every week. The procedure being attempted is as follows: -

- (a) Talk by the organiser to any group of prisoners interested in hearing more about Associates.
- (b) From those still interested, a smaller group of men, each with similar discharge dates about six to nine months ahead, is formed and names submitted to Welfare Office.
- (c) Consultation between the Welfare Office and organiser decides the men suitable for Associate after-care.
- (d) The group meets weekly and Associates are introduced successively each week until all are paired off.
- (e) Between now and discharge meetings can be singly or in groups.

The advantages of this are:

- (1) Men are given the opportunity of knowing something of the role of an Associate at the very outset.
- (2) The value of group discussion.
- (3) More natural pairing and ample time for personal interviews.
- (4) The opportunity for the organizer to use the knowledge and advice of the Assistant Governors and prison officers on the wings, as an aid to selection.

The potential help of group discussions, as mentioned above,

has already been tried in another experiment at Pentonville. In this case, Associates have been introduced to the existing pre-release course run on H Wing by the Deputy Governor. The Associates sit with the prisoners during the talk and question time, after which, for a further period, each Associate sits with a group of men, continuing the discussion. Every third week there is no speaker, the whole time is used in groups.

The advantages are:

- (a) To the prisoners, Associates become people instead of bodyless ideas.
- (b) An aid to selection of suitable referrals is created.
- (c) Some natural pairings are possible.

Two other factors connected with the Settlement have value to Associates. Accommodation here can be used at times by discharged men, which, even though only for short periods, is an extra link. Small working-parties of four men at week-ends are paroled to the Settlement, and work side by side with Associates.

In considering the future, an essential consideration is the role of this scheme as a model or prototype for others to observe, modify and adopt in time. As mentioned before, a considerable amount of development has taken place during the two years, in factors of selection and training of voluntary workers, in selection of prisoners and in conditions of introduction and interview.

These developments have been made from a study of the work to date, together with suggested improvements forthcoming from case and group discussions.

We could, at this stage, quote a lot of facts, the number of men referred, varying stages of referral, quote cases of prolonged association and short association, of men settled down, of men back inside, but this would not constitute firm and objective evidence of the possible role and work of voluntary workers in this field. This will come from a future detailed assessment of the operation of the scheme and then we will have achieved the object of making it a prototype for the use of others.

What seems to be necessary now is that we should explain our work to other people and to note the many possible pitfalls of Associate work. The main one of these would appear to be that mentioned right at the start, the diversity of ideas as to the role of the Associate. Not that our idea of the role is the only one, but at least the role as interpreted by different organisations should be known and understood. The Associate idea is catching on, and there are many dangers in it, being welcomed too freely, without sufficient control and investigation.

If the Associate idea is worthwhile, then there should be opportunity for visiting in prison,

for information to be received concerning the man to be helped, the need for a link with not only the Welfare Officer but with the prison staff and prison visitors. These will hardly sensibly be available to an individual, about whom the only thing known is that he is called an Associate.

At Blackfriars, we now attempt to supply this assurance by a process of careful selection: selection which not only considers the prisoner and prison staff but also the volunteer himself.

Our other consideration is that the idea that a prisoner can find out what it is all about after his discharge is not substantiated. If a contact is made in these circumstances then it is for mere practical after-care and the chances of sustained contact are rare. There is a need for a full explanation to the serving prisoner not only of Associates, but of his own particular Associate.

The great advantage of this type of scheme is that the voluntary Associate represents society and the community, and not only does he offer to the prisoner through his interest and concern, that of the community at large, but through the Associate, the community is educated in this field. This will contribute towards community understanding of social work and provide encouragement and support for the social workers.



# Social Work in Prisons

AUDREY EVANS

THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS in which the question of social work in the prison setting can be judged. There are many aspects that are highly controversial, and there is much that remains unassessed and unexplored. This article is an endeavour to look at the whole subject in an objective style. The opinions expressed are essentially the author's own observations, and where they are critical it is hoped that they will be considered as constructive, and not destructive, and where they are complimentary they are meant to reveal the high opinion that the author has of the Prison Service and its personnel.

Before elaborating on the more detailed and specific work undertaken under the umbrella title of social work, the definitions of social work, welfare work and social case work all need to be considered and furthermore, considered in the wider meaning and acceptance of these definitions to other outside social agencies throughout the country. Do we all mean the same thing when we use these terms, and what do we mean by them anyway?

The Younghusband Report, published in 1959, attempted to classify different styles and degrees

of social work within the range of local authorities' health and welfare services and perhaps it might be convenient to consider these divisions of the three types of social workers. To a large extent these recommendations have been accepted by most social work agencies in the country, and perhaps it would be as well to itemise the three grades of workers as set out in the Younghusband Report.

The worker is of course related to the style of work and the needs of the service, and it must be emphasised that this report dealt specifically with social workers in the local authority health and welfare services. Nevertheless some general consideration of these classifications is useful, always presuming that there is a generic comparison possible in other social work fields.

*Grade 1.* "A welfare assistant to relieve trained social workers of straightforward visiting and simple welfare duties in order that their skill might be used to greater advantage."

This assistant is seen as somebody who takes interest in "people with straightforward or obvious needs who require material help of

various kinds, some simple service or a periodic visit to see whether any change has taken place or to provide evidence of the continuing support and interest of the authority."

*Grade 2.* "A social worker broadly corresponding to the existing area or district welfare officer, but with a wider range of functions which could include duties in the mental health and mental deficiency services and other aspects of the National Health Service Acts as well as under the National Assistance Act."

This worker is seen as somebody who works with "people with more complex problems who require systematic help from a trained social worker."

*Grade 3.* "A social casework adviser, consultant or supervisor to other staff in a range of services."

And again this worker is seen as a trained social worker, dealing with "people with problems of special difficulty requiring skilled help by professionally trained and experienced social workers."

Having looked briefly at these classifications, is it right and proper to try and see if there is any comparison that can be made when considering the social work content in prisons and the various personnel in prisons dealing with social problems? It seems possible to relate this fairly easily, but mention must be made of an area of consideration that affects all prison matters very acutely, and that is the emphasis one should place on the part that the Official Secrets

Act makes on all departments. Accepting this as an ever present consideration, let us look more closely into the prison scene and try to assess the type of social problems that arise; the assessment of the numbers and degree of these problems and the question of who is dealing with what and why. If this is looked at in any detail and also considered in this way, prison by prison, the chaotic mass of material that would be revealed would represent confusion of the first order.

When one looks at social work undertaken in the prison service there are various issues that could easily be resolved. One is reminded of the situation in 1946 in the field of Child Care before the Myra Curtis report. Before this report various unrelated social agencies were dealing with the many social problems connected with deprived children. The Curtis report brought into being Children's Departments and better directed design and planning in this whole field. In the Prison Service not only are there various social workers thus designated to deal with social problems, but there are even more people variously designated dealing with social problems, because of their allied and obvious interest and concern in these problems. And all this takes place in one service, in one agency, i.e. in the Prison Service.

Social workers are appointed to detention centres and allocation centres. Psychiatric Social Workers are appointed to psychiatric units

of the prison. Welfare Officers are appointed to prisons but not to borstals. Area Welfare Officers are appointed to the Central After-Care Association to visit various selected prisons. Here are four designated social worker groups appointed to various institutions, receiving slightly differing scales of salaries and slightly different conditions of service. Some are full civil servants, some are not, but all are connected, however loosely, with the Prison Service. Does it seem too unreasonable to suggest an overall acceptance of one title of Social Worker in a service as small as the Prison Service, with one all embracing system of salary structure, service conditions and status?

If one looks further at the situation one comes immediately to the long overdue problem of other members of the prison staffs who deal with social problems.

Inevitably it becomes necessary to generalise and equally inevitably the discussion must now be deeply influenced by observations derived from the Wakefield scene as the main place of review but the hope is that some of these generalities can be applicable to the Service as a whole.

#### **The dilemma of the Assistant Governor role and the Welfare Officer role**

Many Assistant Governors do not see their work in terms of social work considerations; many do. Many Welfare Officers deceive

themselves in thinking that headed notepaper, stating that they are representatives of the National Association of Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies or the Central After-Care Association means that they have no staff discipline role in their appointments. We all of us want the simplest and the pleasantest working situation. Is it fair and right then to confuse issues by suggesting that, if there was a general and comprehensive amalgamation of all staffs who deal with social work in prisons, one could halve the staffing strengths? Is it fair or right to suggest that there is gross overlapping of functions? Is it fair or right to suggest that it may be a deception to think that the newly formed Welfare departments are contributing anything more than is already accomplished by the existing clerical staffs of discipline offices and by Assistant Governors' and Chaplains' departments? Is it fair or right to suggest that the time is long overdue when these issues should no longer be overlooked? New legislation and new reports are daily being produced and more extensive research is being undertaken. If the framework therefore is not good and sound then this extra knowledge is going to be wasted.

There is much woolly thinking about social work in prisons. All social work is a disciplined, demanding style of work. There is no real difference in social case-work aims and objectives to the prison rule 6. The concept is the

same. There can be no conflict between discipline and social work in prisons if both workers, the disciplinarian and the social worker, understand each other's functions. Welfare Departments should offer a service that is a constructive helping service to prisoners and which, with the other services in the prison, will create in prisoners their own understanding of their difficulties and how to face them.

The Maxwell report is ten years old. One criticism of that report could be that when the need for the increase of Welfare Officers in prisons was recommended, it was not emphasised that these appointments should be made as part of the Prison Service. This, to-day, would seem an unfortunate omission. If the Advisory Council on the Treatment of Offenders sub-committee on after-care see their recommendations purely in terms of interchangeability of probation officer staffs and prison welfare officers and the amalgamation of all the after-care agencies, this will be a pity because neither of these recommendations will go far enough. Rigidity is what the Prison Service has existed on for years; that and the ever present hope of staff promotion. Essentially there should be flexibility of all staffs but particularly of inside prison staffs. Welfare Officers and Assistant Governors should be as interchangeable in their appointments as any generic trained social case worker in the outside fields. If this is an acceptable principle the

real problem then lies in the application of this principle and brings us back again to considering the difficulties of social images and promotion. This idea of interchangeability of Assistant Governors and Welfare Officers takes place in Sweden and should not be difficult to implement in this country if the real and fundamental roles and duties of Assistant Governors is seen as essentially one of social work function.

#### **The dilemma of the Chaplains' departments' functions and Assistant Governors' functions and Welfare departments' functions**

Now what is the next consideration under this heading? Is it possible for interchangeability at this level? Is the spiritual advisor to remain only within a spiritual teaching field? Is the Welfare Officer threatened by the Chaplain departments' activities in dealing with social problems? Is the Chaplain's department threatened by the increase in Welfare Officer appointments? What are we doing about this situation? Does anybody know?

#### **Present prison social work policy**

If analysed, the old idea which still prevails, when considerations of definitions of functions as to who deals with social problems in prison, is this. Whilst the prisoner is in prison, the social problems that he faces are for the most part dealt with by whatever existing staffs an individual prison possesses. If there are extra staffs in the Chaplain's department and in the

Assistant Governor grades, or in the medical team, then these staffs tend to deal with the problems. In some prisons where this extra personnel does not exist, discipline staffs and clerical staffs deal with the problems.

When the question of a link and liason with outside agencies is considered and the whole question of pre-discharge arrangements are to be made, the case is passed to the Welfare department. In short, the existing prison staffs deal with internal difficulties and Welfare departments tend to deal with external and, more particularly, discharge problems. This division of work, arbitrarily expedient administratively but fundamentally wrong in terms of social work methods, may have had some justification as a procedure years ago, but it cannot be defended as a policy now. But it still continues. If the A.C.T.O. Sub-Committee's recommendations, which are to be published probably between the writing of this article and the publication of it, are going to eliminate the ridiculous arbitrary division of welfare work and after-care work at the four year sentence level, then surely it is time to put our internal systems in order. The social problems of prisoners must be referred to the personnel who have the skills to deal with these problems and not, as is the case to-day, be dealt with in the archaic concepts of "internal" and "external" needs. Internal considerations must be noted. Individual

staff availability and the individual choice of the prisoner for his case worker are obvious points. The first issue now is to throw away the false concept of division of work as "in prison" and "out of prison" problems, and use the skills of the various members of the staff according to their skills and not their titles.

If one accepts the need for this change, the next problem to face is who is to decide who shall undertake the individual cases. How in fact are you going to make this policy work? If the principle is accepted by all staffs then there should be no real problem here. Collectively at an induction board level it should be possible to allocate an individual worker to each individual case. If the collective information is sufficiently comprehensive it should not be difficult to decide which worker is best able to handle the individual social problem. Obviously it is possible to go on and on trying to decide which member of the staff should deal with which social problem and why. The tremendous issue of professional training and skills and levels of understanding of staffs becomes an open argument. It is possible that this whole issue of staff qualification could do with a great deal of tidying up but whether this is so or not, it is surely reasonable to grade the work and the worker along similar lines as envisaged in the Younghusband report.

### **What is the envisaged role of prison officers?**

Is there a new look? Is this role different now from what it was? Do prison officers want to be social workers; or social work orientated? Are they in fact being social workers?

It is difficult to generalise, and perhaps unfair of the author to make too much comment on this huge issue of prison officer training and the application of this training to the existing scenes in prison. Perhaps it is unfair to question how far achievement in terms of "winds of change" and "new looks" really can be assessed. Immediately one is confronted with the tremendous differences and emphases that occur in the many different sorts of establishments. Eliminating local prisons and heavy security prisons, and taking open prisons, training prisons and some recidivist prisons as the main consideration and accepting that the fundamental principle of permissiveness in terms of prisoner participation is the underlying policy of the prison, can one then evaluate this complex situation that present prison officers face? Does this present situation mean that the emphasis of prison officers' work moves from the purely disciplinarian, paternalistic role to a more educative, human and demanding role of endeavouring to help prisoners to work through their difficulties. More particularly does this mean

that the working through of these initial difficulties of prisoners takes place in the first instance at an aggressive behaviour stage. This in itself, the beginning of an inmate-prison officer relationship in terms of a possible belligerent encounter, is a situation that few specialist staffs have had to experience, and it is perhaps little wonder that prison officers if they move from this stage of their relationship with prisoners find themselves in an even more demanding inmate-worker phase. It is perhaps at this level that difficulties arise if the prison officer staff are left to continue unhelpt. For it is at this stage that prison officers have had an involvement (that few specialist staffs face), and have now to bring into the relationship an objective and non-involved counsellor approach. Non-involved counsellor techniques are the basic training requirements for skilled social workers. Is it therefore fair to expect prison officer groups to initiate a style of rapport which may well be impossible for them to achieve? Without continued support, continued teaching mediums and continued encouragement from the specialist and senior staffs, it would seem not only unfair but also unrealistic to expect them to do this.

All staffs when dealing with human problems need the opportunity of discussion, reference to other staffs, supervision and encouragement. Do we place

sufficient emphasis on these issues in prisons and particularly in relation to the large group of staff, the prison officer group?

### The problems of communication

Once specialist staffs increase; once issues concerning prisoners are looked at in greater detail and in greater depth, in terms of motives, behaviour patterns, previous criminality episodes, then interpretations to all staffs and lines of communications become of paramount importance. Then old-fashioned half-sheets and reporting procedures tend to lose much of their significance and if perpetual information, communication and interpretation from one branch of the staff to another is not constantly maintained, then the pressure and cohesion of the old system is lost, with nothing to hold on to in its place. And inevitably, the difficulties of this situation fall mostly on to the prison officer staff; on the ones who do the day to day duties. Likewise if the opinions and comments of all staffs are not transmitted up and down, back and forward, and sideways, the full use of all these comments and the teaching aspects to staffs is lost. All agencies that are expanding see the problem of internal communications as a vital issue. When one is dealing with private and personal matters, like all professional ethics, the standard and style of communication is heavily weighted with questions of confidentiality and

sub-cultural intrigues—at staff level; at inmate level.

Of all groups, social workers are notorious for thinking that not everyone “talks the same language” when looking at various human problems. The psychologists and psychiatrists can perhaps be thought to have a language of their own. These added artificial barriers only add to the general confusion, but then nobody doubts the importance of keeping all staffs well informed and one can only hope that sufficient machinery for the collection and dissemination of necessary information is gradually being put into operation in most prisons.

### Is this “the wind of change”?

If prisons are to be considered as therapeutic communities, and the emphasis is on treatment rather than training and discipline roles and attitudes generally diminish and new roles are seen in terms of educative and permissive concepts, two things are vital. Correct diagnosis and classification of individual prisoners and stringent selection for the prison that operates at this level.

A third point worth mentioning is that the directorship of such an establishment then presumably has to be guided by a medically trained person or a trained social worker as distinct from a pure disciplinarian. (Grendon Underwood prison seems a real example of all this).

The prison service has always been extremely good in terms of classification and selection of prisoners, in terms of previous criminality; nature of offence; age of prisoner. It remains to be seen if the basis of classification moves to social needs, psychological make-up, psychiatric diagnosis of prisoners, with the accompanying acceptance and realisation of previous criminality, nature of offence, age of offender, whether the existing high standards of classification and selection will alter.

Obviously, as the situation exists to-day, with the pressure of high numbers and the tendency of the Courts to pass longer sentences, expansion of thought in these matters must be made in more than one direction. If the idea of the treatment situation is to exist, selection must be unyielding.

**What should be the future role of the Welfare department?**

- (1) Should Welfare departments be the central office where all information of a social nature be passed? Should they then exclusively deal with the social problems presented?
- (2) Should they merely be clearing houses for the flow of information about prisoners and their social problems?
- (3) Should they remain outside the main staff structure of the prisons?
- (4) Is there a real consultative role for Welfare Officers, and have they sufficient skills for this, and if they have are they using them?

Do any of us know the answers to these questions?

**Is there an answer?**

It is easy perhaps to describe the situation as it seems to exist. It is easy perhaps to be critical. It is easy perhaps to suggest who is to blame. And it is preferable to blame the policy makers, the people furthest away from the immediate scene.

There is no doubt in the author's mind that the whole field of social work in prisons should be put in order. The existence of ad hoc development is only permissible so long as it works and is not too expensive. There is only one section of the Prison Service that can start the examination. And examination is needed.

An overall appreciation of the various social work designated groups should be made. And some uniformity must be imposed on this group.

An overall appreciation of the various other staffs who deal with social problems of prisoners should be made. Role definitions and the detailing of specific duties to staffs is not acceptable nor fashionable these days. And flexibility of staffs is undoubtedly desirable. But some broad plans surely can be designed



that preserve the policy of never revealing what an Assistant Governor should be doing with his day's work, which will not embarrass everyone. The time for these naive considerations was the twenties and thirties but not the sixties. For too long has the policy of non-directive counselling in the employment directive been the main consideration. Let us be realistic (and let us be brave), and say that certain jobs can be done by certain people and if need be, at certain times.

Let us be honest about the role that the prison officer can play. Let us be encouraging, let us train and use that training in the prison scene but most of all let us be supportive to this group. For them the change and the tempo in prison institutions has been the greatest. If the desire is for the preservation of prison officer staffs, their needs must be demanding on all other senior staffs if they are doing their job as it is envisaged. So adequate support must be written into the continuing training programme for these staffs whilst in the Prison Service.

Let us be honest about staff situations and about the pay of staffs. Has the increase in Assistant Governor appointments meant the decrease in Welfare Officer appointments? Has the increase in Welfare Officers, and clerical staffs to Welfare departments meant the decrease of Assistant Governors,

Chaplain department staffs, or prison clerical staffs? Will the pay of Prison Officers deservedly be increased if they see their future roles more clearly linked to a treatment situation? Does the Prison Officer receive more pay than the Welfare Officer, and work less or more hours?

Is it unkind to look at all these questions? Does somebody already know the answers?

This article has posed many questions and answered few of them. The author sees a great future for social work in prisons but a great deal of tidying up needs to be done.

At the beginning it was suggested that a closer look should be taken of the types of social problems that exist in prison, with the numbers and the depths of these problems assessed. This has not been looked at at all. Further articles would be needed to cover these aspects, but the staff consideration seemed to the author the more pertinent consideration.

Perhaps this ending may make us all realise how limited is our coverage and how much still remains to be done.

Does anybody know how many divorces are instigated by wives against prisoners, and how many divorces are instigated by prisoners against their wives in any one year in any one prison.



*CHI MA WAN Open Prison, Lantau Island, Hong Kong*

## **The Prison Service in Hong Kong**

**C. J. NORMAN, C.B.E., J.P.**

RECENT ARTICLES in this Journal have prompted me to give an account of the work of the Prison Service in Hong Kong, mainly because of the marked difference which appears to exist in the atmosphere of the two services. Even sympathetic observers give a picture of the home service as list-

less, unsure of itself, and discontented. Certainly, as Pauline Morris has pointed out, readers of the *Prison Officers' Magazine* do not get the feeling that all is well.

Before discussing the very marked differences between the two services it might be well to give

some idea of what Hong Kong is like; I find that people in England have only a very sketchy idea of the Colony—when I first came here twenty-two years ago I had a mental picture of something rather like Malaya, lush and tropical and jungle-covered. Nothing could be further from the truth. Hong Kong is in the main a large modern commercial city. There are country districts and many beautiful islands, but the great majority of the population are city-dwellers and city-workers. Because of the great influx from China the population has swollen from about one and a half million to three and a half millions. Most of these newcomers—they are not refugees in the true sense but simply people seeking a better and more prosperous way of life—have crowded into the urban areas, living in tenements or squatter huts. The latter are being cleared in a tremendous resettlement scheme, but it is important to remember that they are regarded as citizens of Hong Kong who have to be assimilated into the Colony's economy. The contrast between great commercial prosperity at some levels and the poverty of the squatters naturally strikes the visitor forcibly; but the fact that these vast numbers have been assimilated at all is something of a miracle. Outside the city, which lies on both sides of a magnificent harbour, are the country districts known as the New Territories, which include several hundred islands. So far from being jungly these districts are mostly barren

and hilly, with outcrops of the local granite. The nature of the New Territories has had an important bearing on the development of our penal system, as I hope to show later. Before the Pacific War Hong Kong's economy depended largely on the *entrepot* trade of the free port. This has much diminished in bulk, and a change has had to be made to an industrial and productive economy. This process has been long and difficult, and has naturally had a profound effect on the lives of the people.

### The Prison System

What kind of penal system is best suited to conditions here? There is the usual hundred-year-old gaol, but this is used now only as a reception and classification centre and all our other buildings are modern. As recently as 1937 the authorities of the time asked themselves my question and came up with the astonishing answer that *one* prison would do—for all ages, sentences and types of crime. This prison they proceeded to build on the beautiful peninsula of Stanley on the south of Hong Kong island. The architect did a magnificent job—separate cell blocks, good workshops, plenty of open space and a feeling of light and air which is most unusual for a maximum security prison. Most important of all, he built such good quarters for the officers that they are still among the best Government quarters in the Colony. It was only the system that was wrong—just how wrong we have

been proving ever since. Stanley was built to hold 1,650 prisoners, including remands, civil prisoners—the lot. The intention was to close the old Victoria Goal and depend entirely on Stanley. Luckily this was never done—Victoria, despite its age, is ideally situated as a remand and reception centre, close to the courts and to the lawyers' offices. There was, I am glad to say, a separate prison for women—at least they were not to be pushed into Stanley.

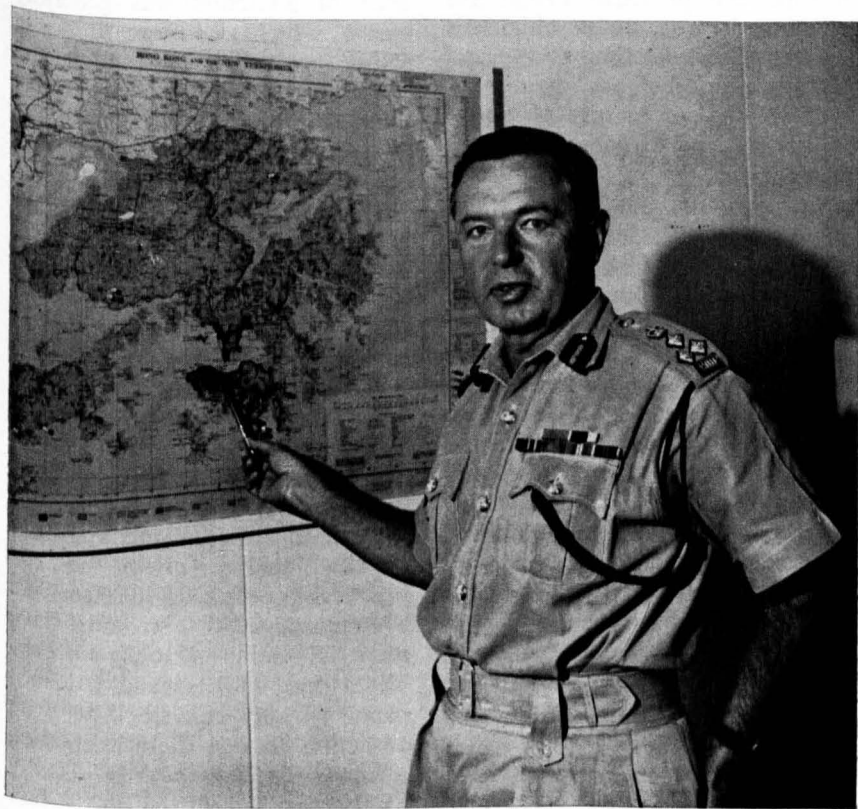
In the early days of the Colony the prison came under the Captain-Superintendent of Police, and the administration did not become a separate one until the first world war. In 1938 the first Commissioner of Prisons was appointed—Major J. L. Willcocks, D.S.O., M.C., on transfer from the Kenya Prison Service. When war broke out in 1939 I was a housemaster at North Sea Camp which was promptly closed. To my utter chagrin I was refused permission to join my regiment, the London Scottish, because I was in a "reserved occupation"—which had disappeared! With several other housemasters I was transferred to the Immigration Department and sent to the Port of London. There I had the idiotic and tedious job of going aboard vessels, mainly Dutch, drinking gin with the friendly captains and in theory looking for enemy aliens. I stood a few weeks of this and then had an interview with Sir Alexander Paterson who character-

istically took the view that I should think myself lucky to be retained in the home service at all; I was finally allowed to apply for a vacant post as Assistant Superintendent in Hong Kong, carrying with it a commission in the Volunteers. This seemed as good a way as any out of my impasse; it resulted in less than twelve months' work, two weeks' fighting and three and a half years in a prison camp. So it was not until the post-war years that we were able to get down to remodelling the prison system.

Clearly the first thing to be done was to get the younger age groups out of prison. The under-sixteens went to a Boys' Home (approved school) run by what is now the Social Welfare Department. We then opened two Training Centres for the age group 14-21, the reason for the lower age limit being that there is a provision in the law that "young persons" may not be sent to prison if there is an alternative, and we did not want any of this group who were unsuitable for the approved school to get into prison. The Training Centres are both "open"; the sentence is indeterminate—nine months to three years, but there the resemblance to borstal (a hideous word which we were determined not to use) ends. The Centres are in fact run on lines similar to the experiment carried out at North Sea Camp before the war; that is, the whole of the pseudo-public school system is dropped; the boys are divided into

vertical grades instead of houses; there are no housemasters and the boys, about 130 in each Centre, are in contact with all the staff and not just a small section of it. There are qualified schoolmasters and trade instructors—much importance is given to education as although Hong Kong has almost

caught up with the need for primary school places we cannot assume, as borstal does, that the intake is "educated". The success of the Centres may be judged, bearing in mind the economic background, by the fact that over ten years we have had a steady success rate of 75 per cent.



C. J. NORMAN, C.B.E., J.P.  
*Commissioner of Prisons, Hong Kong.*

*The pen points to the city of Victoria on Hong Kong Island. The shaded area above is Kowloon and the New Territories; to the left is the large island of Lantau, where most of the "open prison" developments are taking place.*

### The Next Step

Having got all the under-21's except a few young prisoners out of Stanley we then turned our attention to adults sentenced to two years or less—as usual, the majority of the population. We decided that they should all go to open prisons. If this sounds revolutionary, it is meant to be. No selection boards, no psychiatrist's reports, no discrimination and therefore no jealousy or discontent—a marked feature of books written by ex-prisoners at home. To achieve this we had to find open accommodation for about three thousand men; we have already housed 1,500 without building anew. One open prison on the island of Lantau was built in 1955 as a Home for the Disabled; it was found to be too remote for them and we were lucky enough to acquire it. The second consists of the engineers' "lines" at a completed dam project in the New Territories. We are, once again, fortunate in that there is unlimited work which would simply not be done but for the presence of prison labour—forestry on a vast scale, road-making and work in the villages putting in paths and drains—all work of constructive value. I have said that only prisoners with short sentences for relatively minor offences can go—dangerous secret society leaders and prisoners of the type who caused the recent tragedy in Singapore are kept in maximum security at Stanley.

### The Narcotics Problem

Of a prison population of 5,500, 75 per cent are sentenced for "dangerous drugs" offences. This bald statement may give some idea of the size of this problem in Hong Kong. Of the remaining 25 per cent, quite a number are drug addicts. Before the last war, the drug of addiction was generally opium, which was more or less a social habit and to which the Chinese developed a considerable tolerance. Some 80 per cent of the addiction is now to heroin and here there can be no discussion of "habit" or "tolerance". Addiction is rapid (a few days) and complete, and the destruction of the mental and moral fibre rapid and horrible to see. The change from opium to heroin has come about largely because the concentration of the latter makes it easier to smuggle and the effects are far more rapid. The narcotic problem is something which I cannot hope to deal with fully in an article of this kind and I must confine myself to the practical problem as it affects us. We determined that we must have a special institution solely for convicted drug addicts—and I do not mean persons convicted of drug addiction because there is no such offence. The offence is usually "possession" of drugs, but in fact we do not take the offence into account and a bicycle-thief or handbag-snatcher can receive treatment if it is decided at the reception centre that he is an addict in need of it. This special

institution, H.M. Prison, Tai Lam, is the open prison in the former engineers' lines to which I have referred. It has a full-time Medical Officer and a trained hospital staff but all the rest of the staff are prison officers drawn from the other institutions. This is work in which they take great pride and which is beginning to show remarkable results. The pitiful wrecks of humanity who come in regain strength rapidly on a good diet and a healthy open-air life. Research into the reasons for drug addiction still has far to go, but one most heartening feature is that, unlike the West, it is practically unknown among under 21's—some 80 per cent of the addicts are in the 30-50 age group, a fact which we are gradually relating to social and economic conditions. We are not making what I believe to be the mistake of the United States and treating all these people as psychiatric patients. We have excellent psychiatric facilities if they are needed but all our experience shows that this is an economic and social problem and we are tackling it as such. We have our own full-time after-care officers doing follow-up work—after-care is at present voluntary for drug addicts but statutory for Training Centre boys.

### The Staff

The Commissioner of Prisons controls the organisation from a headquarters in the City—an office in which he spends very little time

indeed as he visits every institution once a week. In this way the closest personal contact with the Superintendents (Governors in England) and all the staff is maintained. Communications is of the most direct kind, and Pauline Morris would find no "bureaucracy" here. The fact that she would find what she calls a "para-military" organisation we are not in the least ashamed of. It happens to work very well. All staff, from the Commissioner downwards, wear uniform and the fact that senior officers are saluted and called "Sir" seems to us in no way to impede our work; what is important is the close and friendly association of duty between *all* senior officers and their staffs. This would have to be seen and felt to be believed but officers who have come to us on transfer from the home service have been surprised at first and then very happy about it. We do not need "welfare officers"—every Superintendent is his own welfare officer and takes the keenest interest in the well-being of his men. This is a professional service with a professional head; every Superintendent has come up from the ranks of Prison Officers through a clear-cut and well-understood system of promotion. The most important step is the promotion examination from Prison Officer to Principal Officer. There is no selection for this—all Prison Officers have the right to take it. It consists of two sections—a written examination in the laws

of the Colony as they affect Prison Officers and a practical test in drill and the use of arms. The latter will, no doubt, be deeply suspect but in fact is merely a test of bearing and confidence and knowledge of two means of riot control—tear gas and the Greener gun, both of which are held in reserve, the whole staff going unarmed about their daily duties.

The Commissioner, the Senior Superintendent and one Superintendent are the only pre-war gazetted officers remaining—thus all the remaining Superintendents and Chief Officers have risen to those ranks since 1945. Prison Officers serve a two year probationary period and it is quite common for them to take the promotion examination and become acting Principal Officers during this period. The warders, subordinate to the Prison Officers, are of course unknown at home. Here again the avenue of promotion is clear—through specially trained Junior Prison Officers to Prison Officer and so on up the ladder.

The service is in no way isolated from the community—at Stanley what used to be the Prison Officers' Club has become simply the Stanley Club. It has been entirely refitted and air-conditioned and associate membership is open to the public. There are now 700 members, of whom only 140 are Prison Officers—the remainder are drawn from all sections of the community. The Prisons Department Sports Association is open

to all ranks and maintains a recreation pavilion in each institution.

Before the last war the staff was entirely expatriate—all officers were British and all warders were recruited in India. Now all warder recruitment is done locally and Prison Officer vacancies are usually filled by promotion, though an occasional candidate from Britain is still appointed.

Salaries correspond to those of equivalent grades in the Police. The rank structure and salaries, in dollars per month, are as follows:

Commissioner, 5,400; Deputy Commissioner, 4,900; Senior Superintendent 3,940-4,300; Superintendent, 3,460-3,820; Chief Officer, 2,740-3,340; Principal Industrial Officer, 1,935-3,340; Principal Officer, 1,935-2,385; Prison Officer, 830-1,845; Junior Prison Officer, 370-535; Principal Warder, 455-670; Assistant Principal Warder, 385-430; Warder, 240-400; Woman Superintendent 2,400-3,820; Woman Principal Officer, 1,530-2,000; Woman Prison Officer, 620-1,440; Woman Junior Prison Officer, 280-410; Principal Wardress, 340-500; Assistant Principal Wardress, 290-320; Wardress, 180-300.

1 Hong-Kong Dollar = 1s. 3d.

(The cost of living is considerably higher in Hong-Kong than it is in Britain.)

This is admittedly a somewhat elaborate hierarchy but the chain of control and responsibility is clear and every man knows what is expected of him. There is no question here of putting the interests of the prisoners before those of the staff; both are re-



garded as equally important but the fact is clearly recognised that without a well-paid, well-housed, contented and properly trained staff no penal system is going to be worth anything to the people it is trying to serve. If we believe that this can be achieved only by a strictly professional service with professional heads and the highest

standards of conduct, character and ability we may be wrong—but visitors from home who take an objective view seem to think that we are on the right lines and all their comments agree about one thing—that here is a happy service which knows what it has to do and is going about it with energy and imagination.

## New Books

### UNDER LOCK AND KEY

MRS. XENIA FIELD.

Max Parrish. 30s. 0d.

A study of women in prison will be welcomed by staff of the four London prisons where the Field lectures have been a regular and successful part of the leisure programmes for many years. This book, one of the first to deal almost exclusively with the problems of the women prisoners, will be fully reviewed in the next PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL.

### ROOTS OF EVIL

C. HIBBERT.

Weidenfeld & Nicholson. 36s. 0d. covers many aspects of work with delinquents in many settings will also be reviewed in the next Journal.

### PENTONVILLE

TERENCE AND PAULINE MORRIS both of whom have contributed to this Journal, comes from Routledge and Kegan Paul, 53s. 0d.

### THE PRISON JOURNAL OF THE PENNSYLVANIA PRISON SOCIETY

carries an interesting account of the work of the Henderson Hospital (formerly Belmont) seen through the eyes of a visiting American doctor and anthropologist Seymour Parker, and under the general banner of "*Involving the Sciences in Correction*" there is also

*The Divide — Action and Research*, with LESLIE T. WILKINS of the Home Office Research Unit delving deeply into the relationship between the power structure and the scientist.

This 63 page booklet is published semi-annually at the price of "one year, one dollar" and a specimen copy may be borrowed on application to the Editor of the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL.

Readers are reminded of the newly-improved library facilities at the Staff College, Wakefield.

# Cook's Tour to Moscow

F. McN. LIESCHING

I AM NOT particularly gregariously inclined and I do not rush to go on coach tours, but this tour was different. The advertised destination was Moscow. To meet the Russians in their own country would be exciting and to see something en route of Brussels, Berlin, Warsaw, Minsk and Smolensk would be a great experience, just as the steamer trip back all the way from Leningrad itself would be pleasantly relaxing. My mind was made up. I must go.

Many and excellent though the experiences were which Thos. Cook had stored up for this journey, I was eager to add to them. Would it be possible to visit a Russian prison? If so, how should one set about it? I enlisted the help of Mr. Peterson. Very soon he had written and received a reply from Mr. Smirnov, the Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., who indicated that I would be allowed to see something of the Russian prison regime and who instructed me to telephone a Col. Kozyrev upon my arrival in Moscow. I found it difficult somehow, reading this correspondence at Haldon Camp in the heart of the Devonshire

countryside, to visualize myself nipping smartly into a Moscow call box upon arrival there and telephoning the Colonel, as Mr. Smirnov's letter instructed, when I was unable to speak a single word of the language! However, I had the authority and, though I was scheduled to be in Moscow only two days, I had no intention of missing the opportunity.

Thus it was that one morning several weeks later I tore myself away from the fabulous treasures of the Kremlin museum ("This is the diamond throne of the Czars—there are 800 diamonds on the seat alone.") and half running through the streets of Moscow, arrived breathlessly at the hotel where the interpreter had promised to make the necessary 'phone call on my behalf. Within ten minutes of being 'phoned Col. Kozyrev was at the hotel and only a few minutes later, accompanied by another colonel, an administrator in the prison service and a woman interpreter, I was being swept out of Moscow in a large black limousine en route for Kryukovo Camp about fifty kilometres from the city.

As we drove, (I with pen and notebook in hand), my questions were incessant. Courteously and painstakingly they were answered. Kryukovo was a camp for prisoners who had committed the least serious crimes. There were three or four grades of camp according to the seriousness of the offences. This one was situated hard by the Moscow—Leningrad railway line in the satellite town of Kryukovo.

An excellent account of a visit to this camp has already appeared in the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL (Vol. I., No. 3-July, 1961) under the title 'Correctional Services in the U.S.S.R.' Mr. Conrad, who wrote the article, gave a detailed description both of the Camp and of the routine. I will not, therefore, cover all the same ground again, but rather write of what struck me particularly and of the distinctive impressions that I received.

Kryukovo had very much the look of a new town still being developed and the Camp was situated in a very unmade-up part of it. The entrance proved to be a wooden gate and the whole was surrounded by a wooden wall. It all looked highly insecure until from the inside one noticed immediately within the wall a clear passage of soil about ten feet wide on the inner side of which was a further barbed wire fence. Commanding the passage between the outer wall and the wire fence were sentry boxes high on the walls at

the corners of the Camp in which guards armed with rifles were plainly visible. The Governor told me that their orders in the event of an attempt to escape were to shoot over the man initially, but if this had no effect, to shoot at him.

Upon arrival I was taken to the Governor's Office, where I met the Governor and his Deputy, and where through the interpreter, I continued to ply my ceaseless questions. I was surprised how similar the Governor's Office looked to any in our own Service. There were the big desk, the safe, the grandfather clock and the cabinet filled with exhibits of the various articles made in the Camp. Also, to one side, was a large table, obviously used by some equivalent committee to the V.C.

I learnt that the Camp, which houses about 1,000 men, and which is subdivided into more manageable units, takes prisoners undergoing sentences from 3 months up to 5 years. There are 200 members of the staff, 50 of whom are guards. Only the wall guards are armed. Escapes are said to be few. There is a system of remission and I was told that fifty men this year had gained full remission, which, so far as I understood, amounted to one half of their sentence.

When finally my questions had dried up I was taken upon a conducted tour of the Camp. It had

been built prior to the war as a prison camp, but I found all the buildings were shabby in the extreme. The grounds too were most ill kept, though this hardly surprised me as I had noticed in the public parks what poor gardeners the Russians appeared to be.

I was somewhat glad that none of my own colleagues were witnessing my tour of the Camp as I felt sure, if they had seen it, they would have been vastly amused. The party consisted of the two colonels, the Governor and the Deputy Governor (both in uniform), the interpreter and myself. Wherever we went we were dogged by a flash-lamp photographer, who took many snapshots. As we proceeded in solemn procession from workshop to workshop I felt just as though, by the waving of some magic wand, that I had become royalty and was performing one of my public functions, an inappropriate thought, it must be conceded, in this country! As we moved from building to building, various persons in charge of different sections were introduced and through the interpreter I asked the appropriate questions. Every few minutes the light would flash again and one further picture would be taken of the day Liesching was shown Kryukovo!

The tour of the camp was most fascinating. The workshops were very poor buildings, but were filled with expensive and excellent

machinery and everywhere there was an air of industry. The men, who clearly were working very hard, were carrying out a normal day's work and the workshops were open for two shifts daily to enable all the men to work normal hours. Table spoons, saucepans, car and motor cycle parts were being made and I at once became immensely envious of their full working day, of the excellent machinery with which the shops were equipped and of the general hive of industry which was obvious even to a visitor. The knife was turned in the wound even further when I spotted that some of the machinery was English.

One innovation, which, if I understood the interpreter correctly, might have appealed to the more mercenary minded of our Governors, was that a rise in the production of the Camp was reflected in the size of the Governor's salary!

I was shown the Camp Library of 8,000 volumes. All the books looked exceedingly well thumbed and with pride they showed me some by Dickens and Galsworthy. I asked if there were any Bibles. They replied that there were none, nor were any religious services held in the Camp.

The dining room and kitchen were small but clean, and I was taken into two dormitories. Each slept about sixty men in two-tier bunks which were packed very

closely together. The springs of these bunks were boards.

The Visiting Room was a very long and narrow room down the centre of which about three feet apart were two lower walls about three feet high. Against these on the outsides were forms. As far as I understood it, the prisoner sat on the form one side talking to his visitor who would be sitting opposite him.

Off the Visiting Room were several small side rooms. On the door of one of these the Governor knocked and we entered. Inside a prisoner was being visited by his wife and small son. The use of this room, it was explained to me, was a special privilege for the very best behaved. As the room was equipped with a bed and the Governor took the trouble to knock on the door, I assumed (it not being easy to put it to the interpreter for confirmation) that these rooms were provided for conjugal visits.

As we walked round the Camp I was given several opportunities to speak to prisoners. All their heads were shorn so that one was not immediately impressed by their looks, but as far as one could tell the relationship between staff and men seemed to be a reasonably friendly one. I asked one man if he would care to come and serve his time at Haldon Camp and he very diplomatically replied that he could not answer, as he

did not know what conditions there were like.

Finally I was taken to the Punishment Block, which was situated in the corner of the Camp immediately beneath one of the sentry towers. Two men were under punishment, though I saw only one of them, the other being elsewhere at work. The cells were exceedingly primitive, furnished merely with a wooden plank bed which hinged to the wall and a central block of concrete in the middle of the floor topped with wood to act as a seat. It appears that the worst punishment for a man in such a Camp is to be returned to a prison.

At the end of my tour I was invited to join my hosts in a meal in the Officers' Mess. This was astonishingly similar to one of our own messes. The meal opened with one or two toasts in the most powerful cognac and it was not at all long before my Russian hosts were becoming exceedingly sociable.

I had asked them previously whether any other Englishmen had visited the Camp and they had assured me that the Lord Mayor of London had visited when he had been in Moscow. I now asked whether they had entertained him similarly and was assured that they had. I could not resist one further question. "How was the Lord Mayor when he left?" The question was solemnly put to the Governor by the inter-

preter and duly the reply was translated to me, "The Lord Mayor was 'gay' when he left!" I well understood why. I was having the utmost difficulty in controlling my own gaiety!

Throughout my visit to the Camp the Russian Officials were excellent hosts and courteous in the extreme. By the time this meal had come to an end, the local wine also having been sampled, one could not but gain the impression that these prison officials regarded their work in a very similar way to ourselves. Indeed the Governor expressed it rather charmingly himself, "We liked having the Lord Mayor," he said, "but we love you best of all, because you are one of us."

The next morning Col. Kozyrev met me again with the interpreter and we were driven to Buterskaya Prison in Moscow. This building, which was originally constructed in the late eighteenth century, is reserved for prisoners awaiting trial and included both men and women. Prisoners are normally moved elsewhere within ten days after sentence though two hundred or so are retained for maintenance purposes. It was a political prison during the Czarist regime and such famous prisoners as Gorky have been imprisoned there.

At the time of my visit the population was 2,600 with a staff of 300, 170-180 of whom were guards. Mostly the prisoners were sleeping in dormitories, where I

found the beds for the most part were packed very closely together.

Upon arrival I was introduced to the Governor and I was able to ask him a great many questions in his office before going round the prison. He told me the Supreme Soviet had issued new instructions recently about the administration of prisons and I was shown a large printed paper, which later I saw hanging up in cells, which were clearly the rules referring to prisoners.

Stressing to the interpreter that I would fully understand if the Governor did not wish to answer my question, I asked whether his work had changed at all since the cessation of the Stalin regime. He replied that under Stalin the Supreme Soviet had never interfered with the prison administration. This I regarded as a most significant and interesting reply.

Buterskaya Prison struck me as being in many ways very similar to our own large local prisons. The buildings were very much the same and the whole place was exceptionally clean. I was shown the reception, the hospital, which was comfortable and well equipped, and I was introduced to the doctor, who was a woman. The hospital included a small operating theatre, a dental department with American equipment and a small laboratory. The doctor showed me an exhibit of a large quantity of straw, which had been removed from the stomach of a

man who had been trying to simulate the symptoms of cancer.

The kitchen was spacious. Prior to entering both the hospital and the kitchen I was required to don a white coat. Kitchen equipment looked very old fashioned. I was shown four diet sheets—for remands, for convicted men, for hospital patients and for diabetics. All the food weights were given on the sheets.

One of the most interesting aspects of my visit was being allowed to talk to various women prisoners. In one room there were about fifteen women and the Governor required them to tell me what offence had brought them to prison. This information was translated to me by the interpreter, but I could not help but feel somewhat sorry for these women (who incidentally were allowed to wear their hair normally). So, when I said goodbye to them I shook them all by the hand. This immediately brought a delighted reaction and I asked the interpreter what they were all saying. "Oh!" she said, "they are saying, 'Good luck' and 'Come again soon.'"

The Visiting Rooms were, strangely enough, altogether more pleasant than at the Camp. Here prisoners are allowed to sit at tables with their visitors, which are even beclothed.

Though the Governor spoke of cells, it seems that most of these slept ten or twenty prisoners. At

one moment we were walking down one of the halls, when the Governor suddenly stopped, unlocked a cell door and said, "We will look in here. There are three murderers in here." Inside were three young men in their early twenties. They too were required to recite their offences to me.

Finally we returned to the Governor's Office where I was entertained to very extensive 'elevenses,' before being driven back to my hotel in the centre of Moscow.

Apart from visiting these two penal establishments, I saw something of Brussels, much of Berlin (particularly East Berlin) and Warsaw. We spent a night at Minsk, passed through Smolensk and toured the chief sites of Moscow. Leningrad, the city of three hundred bridges and palatial buildings, was unforgettable, and as we sailed the Baltic we were even allowed a glimpse of Helsinki.

For me, both the Prison Camp and the Prison in Moscow, like everything else I saw in Russia, proved to be quite fascinating, but I did not return from my holiday any more a Communist than when I went away, though much that I had seen was undeniably impressive. Rather I returned, frightened by the Communists' atheism, but struck by the impression of how much like ourselves the Russian people really were and how little they too wanted war.

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

FRANK LIESCHING is Deputy Governor at H.M. Prison, Wandsworth. He has served at Hollesley Bay and Rochester borstals and at Haldon Camp, Exeter, where he developed a reading scheme designed for adult illiterates.

MISS EVANS has been at Wakefield since October 1958. She first worked as a social worker to the psychiatric unit and more latterly, since April 1962, as prison Welfare Officer.

Prior to 1958, Miss Evans worked as a hospital almoner, and most of her previous employment experience was in a medical setting.

She is shortly to take an appointment as assistant lecturer in social work.

ALAN MARKHAM is organiser of an after-care scheme using voluntary Associates, at the Blackfriars Settlement. The scheme is financed by the Nuffield Foundation.

The Settlement is in the middle of the old borough of Southwark, quite near to the Elephant and Castle. It is concerned with a wide range of social work, much of it using voluntary helpers under the supervision and guidance of paid workers. Besides youth clubs, case-work and much contact with the old, the Settlement has been able to introduce several quite experimental pieces of social work, including a new occupational work centre, a large summer play scheme, and a series of clubs for educationally subnormal children.

GRAHAM H. CAVE is a prison visitor at H.M. Prison, Bristol. He has made an extensive study of the English penal system.

C. J. NORMAN was a Borstal house-master in 1938, transferring to Hong-Kong as Assistant Superintendent in 1940. He was interned by the Japanese in 1941, returning to duty in 1945: he was appointed Superintendent of Prisons in 1947 and has been Commissioner since 1953. He was made C.B.E. in the 1963 New Year's Honours.

E. S. DARLING studied psychology at Cambridge, and joined the Prison Service in 1957 at Wakefield, where he is a Senior Psychologist. He has been interested in, and associated with the group counselling programme there, off and on, for the last four years.

JAMES V. BENNETT: Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons since 1937. A.B. and L.L.B. Brown University. Cadet Aviator in World War I. In 1945 on leave of absence for six months to organise civil prisons in Germany. Recipient of War Department's Exceptional Civilian Service Medal, Navy's Distinguished Public Service Award, Selective Service Medal, and the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service.

The Federal Prison System consists of some 38 institutions including penitentiaries, reformatories, camps and four half-way houses.

Mr. Bennett has stated that his job is not only to carry out faithfully the orders of the court but also "to make the prisoner into a self-respecting citizen, trained to take his place in a production line and aware of his obligations to live a law abiding life."