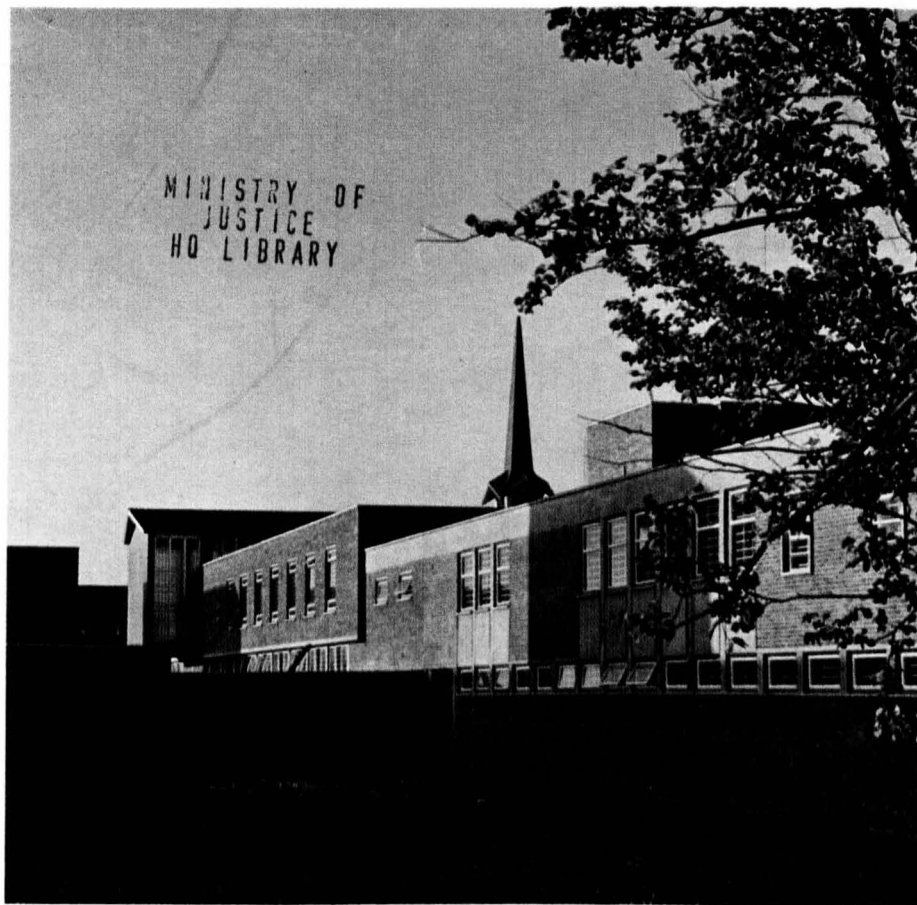


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P R I S O N S E R V I C E J O U R N A L



5p QUARTERLY

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A NEW LOOK

IN 1960, this Journal made its appearance saying: "we hope to provide an opportunity for comment and discussion in any topic relevant to the function which the Prison Service performs and the field in which it operates".

For 10 years, in 37 issues, the Journal has tried to do this, and many thousands of words have been written by politicians, prison officers (even the occasional prisoner) and by people in associated fields on a variety of subjects; we have been complimented, sometimes criticised, possibly ignored rather more than the Journal deserves.

However, this is not the moment for soliciting praise or side-stepping criticisms.

The Editorial Board's decision to change the size and format of the Journal is linked with the decimalisation and metrication changes now almost upon us.

In changing size and format it is hoped the Journal will be more easily readable. The quality of the material will depend, as before, on the skill of the author and the ruthlessness of the editor. The quantity of reading material will remain at the old level with minimal fluctuations.

Readers will observe that 5p is the new name for the old price.

The contributors, as always, depend on the printers for the final presentation of their work and this issue (as in the past) reflects great credit on the Leyhill printers for their skill and hard work.

Finally, the readers are the judges of all that the printers, editors and contributors have produced.

Please tell us of your likes and dislikes of the *new* PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL.

New Careers for Ex-offenders

Can (or should) ex-prisoners expect, to get work in "correctional agencies" such as Alcoholics Anonymous? This is happening in America; will it happen here?

ANDREW RUTHERFORD examines this intriguing question

AGENCIES that have as a goal the betterment of the offender have long lamented the difficulties their clients have in finding stable employment and in particular the problems in starting out on a new career. It is therefore rather surprising that these agencies have not themselves set other employers more of a lead. This is one of several arguments put forward in the United States by those who support the concept of new careers for ex-offenders within correctional agencies. Some developments in the United States over the last decade have ensured that this concept cannot be dismissed as a rather improbable innovation.

The employment of ex-offenders by official agencies can be viewed within the context of a wide social movement that encompasses the philosophies of self-help and ground level participation in decision making. In brief, solutions are sought from within the social problem rather than from external sources. Alcoholics Anonymous and Synanon are two of nearly 300 self-help groups that have sprung up. These groups demonstrate that people with similar problems can be of mutual assistance and that as a result of their involvement in the difficulties of others they are more able to master their own, a phenomena which prompted a new term for American sociology, "retroflexive reformation".¹

During this same period there was a growing sensitivity within the liberal establishment to the high level of paternalism in many official programmes designed to combat poverty. Governmental support was therefore forthcoming for the view that "if the poor have a stake in their own destiny, if they have an opportunity to utilise education for personal advantage, and if they are afforded dignity in the

process, then motivation to participate in the system will logically follow".² "New careers for the poor" and "maximum feasible participation" were catchwords in the days when the Great Society could be mentioned without any hint of irony. Officially sponsored anti-poverty programmes employed many ex-offenders and these developed alongside non-official agencies and self-help groups.

One such non-official agency, not founded by ex-offenders, is the Vera Institute of Justice in New York City. Vera was established with the aim of reducing the inequities of the pre-trial situation and it employs ex-offenders in several of its projects. New Careers Development Inc. in Oakland, California, is directly involved in the training and placement of new careerists in social service agencies. There are some 140 trainees and they are mostly from the ghetto with about 10 per cent having arrest records. Douglas Grant who was largely responsible for setting up the organisation is gradually withdrawing in favour of the group of highly competent ex-offenders who comprise most of the senior staff. Of the self-help societies founded by ex-offenders for ex-offenders the best known is the Seventh Step Foundation. The seven steps have much in common with those of A.A. and they were developed by the late Bill Sands and others in Kansas State Penitentiary in 1962. Although chapters do recruit people without criminal records, "square Johns", onto their boards of directors, Seventh Step has remained very much an ex-offender's association. When "square Johns" take over, as happened recently in Los Angeles, the chapter is likely to disintegrate. Several chapters do, however, work closely with official agencies, an example being at the



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Preston School of the California Youth Authority,³ and there have been only a few instances of the distrust that characterised relations between Synanon and officialdom. Seventh Step workers often stress that nothing has changed within themselves but rather that they are finding new directions to channel their energy and skills. Coming to work with Seventh Step, said one of these men, was "starting an adventure" and for him it involved much of the unpredictable excitement that he had experienced in criminal activities over a 20-year period.

New careers programmes are concerned with ex-offenders, by which is meant people no longer on probation or incarcerated. There are, however, close links between developments and projects where the offender, whilst in custody or on probation supervision, is an active participant in strategies arising from the betterment goal. Because the ex-offender is in a stronger position to determine events, new careers programmes are more highly developed than projects within the correctional situation. There are, however, indications that the offender may not be far behind the ex-offender in this respect. At the Washington State Penitentiary a number of men, identified as being mainly strict constructionists of the inmate code, asked permission to form their own self-help group with a focus on recidivism.⁴ More recently at the O.H. Close School, Stockton in California, several boys have founded a drug investigation group which among other activities is reviewing books and articles on drug taking. A large number

of self-help groups are flourishing and receiving official support at the Colorado State Penitentiary.⁵

Prison inmates have, of course, long worked in a variety of tasks, from being armed guards to clerical assistants, that serve the stable operative goals of control and maintenance. It has been less common for inmates to be involved in tasks associated with the more precarious goal of inmate betterment. When this has happened it has generally been the result of personnel shortages. Early education programmes in federal prisons relied heavily on inmate teachers and administrators. That meaning can be given to very long sentences is demonstrated in a north-eastern state where two men serving life sentences are full-time teachers in the state's reformatory where they live in staff quarters. An inmate at the Indiana State Reformatory, who was a college graduate with computer experience, was the principal initiator of an inmate-manned tabulating department which performs work for several of the state's agencies and local universities. This inmate was transferred to the state prison to set up a data processing system for the state's six institutions and after being paroled he was appointed Assistant Director of Classification and Treatment in the Department of Corrections. The potential of inmates in research programmes has been demonstrated by Douglas Grant⁶ and Hans Toch⁷ and, in Britain, was favourably viewed by the Advisory Council on the Penal System when considering the problems of the long-term inmate of high security prisons.⁸ Hans Toch, whose offender-participant study of violence will probably become a classic, writes: "Penology stands in need of new approaches to persons who are currently stored in correctional institutions. Research participation can easily and cheaply serve rehabilitative goals".⁹

These developments within correctional agencies represent the coming together of offenders' demands to be involved in betterment, sociological theory and the application of the milieu therapy ideology to penal settings. The lead in attempting to exploit these sources in a systematic way was, for a few years, taken by the California Department of Corrections. The department's best known programme was at Pine Hall in the California Institution for Men at Chino where a high degree of blurring of inmate and staff roles took place.¹⁰ That this and other attempts at the "therapeutic community" were shortlived in California is a reflection of

the neglect of the organisational context by those involved. These projects generated enormous interest in and outside California and two notable new careers projects developed from the Pine Hall experience. Seven Pine Hall graduates, all parolees, were hired by the state of North Carolina to staff a small open penal unit. The Research and Youth

Professional Correctional Workers' views on colleagues from inside

Development Centre at Chapel Hill had 20 young inmates who worked with the staff in developing new state programmes to combat poverty and crime. Only one of the parolees remained with the unit and under his direction it was showing increasing strength in weathering crises at the time it was closed due to the cessation of state funding. The parolee who had been in charge went on to become deputy director of a counselling centre for delinquent youth in Kentucky. The Pine Hall experience also gave rise to the New Careers Development Project which was set up in 1964. Inmates from the California Department of Corrections, after undergoing a selection process, were allocated to this experimental programme and to a control group. The controls continued with their regular prison routine whilst the experimentals underwent a four-month training course just prior to their parole. There were three consecutive courses and each involved six inmates. The original plan had been that they would be trained for programme development tasks within correctional settings but it became clear that such openings would not occur. As a number of federally funded anti-poverty programmes were starting at this time the training was focussed instead on job development programmes for the poor. All 18 men were felony offenders, seven had been previously incarcerated and almost all had prior arrest records and long histories of known delinquency. After being paroled they were found social service employment and they were given considerable support in meeting the demands of their new career. Three years after the programme one of the 18 was back in prison, four had returned to semi-

skilled work and a sixth had become a college student. The remaining 12 were still employed by state and federal agencies and by universities where they occupied middle management positions with salaries ranging from 10 to 15 thousand dollars. The comparative follow-up results showed that the controls did less well than was predicted from their base expectancy scores, whilst the experimentals did better than predicted. It was also found that those who had the most going for them before, amongst the experimentals, were least able to make good use of this new opportunity. The 12 new careerists came mainly from ghetto backgrounds and an important source of support for them in their new careers came from the women they became involved with who encouraged them to think in terms of changing social institutions rather than merely being against them. Although the training project was shortlived, for state funding did not replace federal support, it provides a good example of the contagious quality of these new career developments. Commenting on these 12 men, Grant has drawn attention to their activities in new career associations at local and national levels and to the impressive impact that they have had through these associations and in the course of their employment on legislatures and funding agencies. In his use of the word contagion, Grant has in mind more than the passing on of information and techniques to others but also "passing on their conviction that they and other deviants in the culture could contribute to that culture's development; that change, though difficult, could be brought about by people like themselves; that there were no absolute truths to guide social action but only approximations to the truth which must be continually tested against experience".¹¹

In the California Youth Authority there are several projects that involve training offenders as aides in betterment programmes with the possibility of full-time employment within the authority on discharge. Most of these are federally funded and the largest is the Aide Training Project at the O.H. Close School. The trainee aides come to O.H. Close School from the Youth Training School in Ontario where they have been for at least three months. They are between two and three years older than the O.H. Close Boys with whom they work as teacher and recreation aides for the final six months of their sentence. The programme started in January 1968 and at any one time there are 25 aides in training. The aides share the same

living quarters and they wear their own clothes. In response to this project a new civil service class was created in California, the Correctional Programme Assistant which is open to aides on discharge. This entry level position combines practical and academic work and can be a first step for a career within the Youth Authority. At the present time felons can be employed in Youth Authority parole units but not in institutions. A research study comparing boys who have been in the aide programme with a control group is under way and an early report on a six-month follow-up shows that whilst there was no difference in recidivism the employment position of the experimentals was significantly better and that eight of the 26 experimentals were in jobs related to their aide training, most of them in the Youth Authority.¹²

The Los Angeles Probation Department is also undertaking several programmes with considerable new careers potential. About 100 former probationers are employed by the department in various capacities and mostly under the title of community worker. In the largest of these projects, RODEO (Reduction of Delinquency Through Expansion of Opportunity), two community workers are attached to a probation officer and in most cases they are of the same racial group as predominates in the part of the city they are based in. There is at the moment no easy upward mobility. The next grade up is group supervisor and that requires two years of college and the grade of probation officer requires a further two years. It seems probable, however, that a decline in applications from college graduates will lead to modification of these educational requirements. Mention should also be made of the Los Angeles Police Department which, along with the police departments of Richmond and Philadelphia employs ex-offenders in community liaison work.

Official new career programmes for ex-offenders are not confined to the west coast. Examples could be cited from among others, such diverse states as Minnesota, Alabama, New Jersey, Kansas and South Carolina. A recent survey showed that some 40 states have statutory or administrative prohibitions against the employment of probationers or parolees and that many of these have prohibitions against ex-offenders who are completely free of supervision. In many states people with felony convictions are deprived of the right to vote and the official ventures into new careers in a nation where civil death can still be a reality are all the more impressive.

Possibly the most committed agency to the new careers idea is the New York State Division for Youth.¹³ This agency was created in 1960 to provide flexible alternatives to the existing options available to the courts for the 15 to 17-year old offender. It has remained remarkably free from bureaucratic restraint and would have a strong claim to be amongst the most innovative penal

Need for New Approach

agencies in the world. Its new careers programme was initiated in 1963 and has made steady growth and a comprehensive evaluative study has recently been initiated. Twenty-five young men new careerists are employed by the division at present and they comprise about 10 per cent of the total staff. They include immediate graduates, past graduates and adults who are under the supervision of the New York State Division of Parole. Milton Luger, until recently the director, says that the goal has been "to preserve the original sensitivity and empathy of the new careerist, while urging him to prepare himself realistically for movement up the civil service ladder".¹⁴

The accumulated results of recent research projects should provide some pointers to the many unanswered questions concerning selection, training and on tasks with the greatest potential. These research findings will probably do little, however, to reduce the wide differences in philosophy that separate some new career practitioners. The New York State Division for Youth has, for example, remained more selective than some other agencies. Luger stresses that he is looking for people with something to offer whilst others view the new careerist as the main gainer or lay stress on the need to change social institutions. As an aspect of the selection issue it would appear, that with a few exceptions, most of the programmes largely involve minority racial groups. These groups are generally under-represented on official agency staffs and over-represented amongst the clientele. To see the new careers movement, merely in terms of achieving a racial balance would miss its more fundamental significance as a claim by the socially disadvantaged and dishonoured to have an important say in the determination of their plight in their relationship with official agencies.

Among the groups most resistant to the new careers concept are correctional workers. Luger has commented on the feelings of staff in his division who had not been directly associated with new careerists that "their own professionalism was being threatened by the new-found feelings of heightened pride and self-worth slowly being inculcated through the new careerists' important roles in our facilities".¹⁵ It is not only notions of professionalism that are challenged but the very core of the caste-like relationship that staff and offenders conventionally share. The new careerist in fact crosses caste lines and, as one observer puts it, he finds a "rite of passage" back from criminal to non-criminal status.¹⁶ A recent Louis Harris poll (conducted for the Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training) found that 50 per cent of correctional workers rejected the new careers approach and a further 15 per cent were not sure. Workers in juvenile settings were on the whole in favour whilst those in adult settings, especially those in institutions, were largely against. One-third of administrators and specialists were in favour of hiring ex-offenders in their agencies whilst only one-seventh of line workers felt this way. The greater the education of the staff member the more accepting of the new careerist, although even in the higher reaches this was far from complete. More than half of all staff thought that hiring ex-offenders would lower the standards of the profession and this view was especially strong amongst line workers. Those who were in favour cited the ex-offender's ability to empathise as his main contribution. Those against pointed to bad character, unreliability, maladjustment and security risks involved as his main defects. The Manpower Commission commenting on these findings, which were part of a general survey of staff views, state: "Perhaps more than anywhere else in the survey correctional personnel expressed dissatisfaction with their own accomplishment in their negative reaction to the employment of ex-offenders. Rehabilitation they seemed to be saying has not been successful. We do not turn out the whole man. The ex-offender may be the next offender and we cannot trust him as we do another".¹⁷ The findings underline the point that alterations to the caste relationship cannot be achieved by changes in the role of the offender alone. Equally important is the role definition of correctional staff and it is vital to ensure that changes do not reduce their security and satisfaction. Hans Toch writes: "If programme

development is likely to involve shifts in staff functions and roles—and it inevitably will—then it is important not only that staff be involved in the direction of the new programming but also that new career development opportunities be opened for them as well as for the offender group".¹⁸ Grant has pointed out that other sources of resistance can be reduced by avoiding inadequate preparation and by building the new career concept into the organisation rather than having it tacked on as an optional extra.

There is a danger of the ex-offender's contribution in general being romanticised, and even amongst those who have a contribution to make there is no reason for supposing that large numbers of them would wish to make a career in this direction. New careerists in the United States, however small a proportion of the total staff they remain, seem likely to make a significant impact on the agencies they work for, and for the offenders they come in contact with they provide continual and dramatic examples of breaks with recidivism. These attempts by official agencies to develop new careers for ex-offenders may, furthermore, be amongst the first clues of an emerging and radically new orientation to offenders. The offender is less likely to be seen as a passive recipient and preconceptions about what is best for him will give way to joint decisions by offenders and staff which will be determined by what seems relevant to them. These new career developments may then represent an early step in acknowledging that offenders, as the largest group in the correctional process, should have an important say in the shape and direction of decisions concerning how their time will be spent. Developments in Britain have still to reach this initial stage but it seems probable that considerably more notice than has been the case up to now will be given to the potential that some ex-offenders have as new careerists. Once these new career openings have been created for the ex-offender, further and more fundamental organisational adjustments can be expected by the official agencies in relation to the offender as distinct from the ex-offender. Adjustments to present arrangements may in fact be insufficient and increasing interest may be given to the task of developing new organisational models that will take into account and support increasingly high levels of participation by both offenders and lower level staff within agencies that have, as one of their goals, the betterment of offenders.

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Is there a place in the system for the employment of ex-prisoners?

Should a previous conviction automatically debar a candidate from certain "official" jobs. If we can accept "retroflexive reformation" as a good idea how far can we see it developing in, say, probation and after-care work, in "volunteer" activities, or in any form of counselling?

The Journal will publish your letter

It should be signed but we would not use your name if you so wished

NEXT ISSUE (April)

of the new
PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL
includes

LORD STONHAM's review of . . .

The Honest Politician's Guide to Crime Control

by
GORDON HAWKINS
and
NORVAL MORRIS

"Defences of the Weak"

Norwegian Penal Work

A Study on Suicide

Early in 1970, Keith Bottomley and Alan Bilton talked to 40 of the 260 prisoners then in Hull Prison

About Parole

What was the background of these men? How many had been granted parole? How many had declined? How many had been refused?

ALAN BILTON is a former member of the Probation and After-care Service who is now reading for a social studies degree at the University of Hull

Dr. KEITH BOTTOMLEY is a lecturer in criminology and penal policy in the Department of Social Administration, University of Hull; before this he did research at the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge

INTERVIEWED by the Hull Prison magazine *Contact*, Lord Hunt, chairman of the Parole Board, is quoted as saying: "I am concerned about your contention that the average prisoner feels that he does not have enough 'say', and is therefore apathetic about parole. It may be that we should try to get a wider survey of prisoners' opinions on this point". This article summarises the findings of a small survey carried out in Hull Prison during March-April 1970, with such an aim in mind. Any survey of this kind is bound to be more or less "unrepresentative" of a wider population, and it is not claimed that these attitudes are necessarily typical of all eligible prisoners in the country as a whole; however, this is a representative group of prisoners at Hull, and therefore the attitudes are only likely to be as typical as Hull itself is a typical prison.

At the time of the survey, Hull was a maximum security prison with an average daily population of 260 inmates, serving sentences of a minimum of five years; there was a small minority of men serving over 10 years, but the average length of sentence was six years. Over 40 per cent were serving sentences for offences of violence against the person, and a further 10 per cent for sexual offences; about 30 per cent had been convicted of breaking and entering offences, and the only other significantly large group of offenders was that of those convicted of fraud and false pretences (9 per cent).

Twenty-five per cent of the men had been sentenced for violence as their main offence; the proportion of "breaking and entering" offenders was uncharacteristically high at 45 per cent (compared to 30 per cent in the prison), as was that of sex offenders at 17 per cent (compared to 10 per cent in the prison as a whole), although this was largely due to the inclusion by chance of four men serving sentences for living on immoral earnings.

Only three men had been granted parole and were approaching their date

of release on licence; of the remainder, two had declined to be considered, and 35 had been refused parole. However, a fifth of the sample (eight men) had been recommended for parole by the Local Review Committee, which represents the average proportion recommended at this particular prison in the year ending March 1970. The 35 men who had been refused parole were asked what they thought were the likely reasons for their rejection, and more than a third (13) said they had no idea; the largest group giving a definite answer to this question were those nine who believed that their past criminal record was mainly responsible. Almost all expressed the view that they should be given some explanation of the refusal, as most felt this would help them, where practicable, to try to "put it right" for their next review.

Who decides and how

Many men held rather cynical views on the "real reasons" why parole was introduced. Almost half (19) said at once that the purpose was to empty the prisons. A further eight men believed the system was brought in to justify the longer sentences which they were convinced were a conscious policy within the penal system. Only one respondent gave as the sole reason "to give men a chance", and his view was perhaps offset by the man who saw it all as a manoeuvre to "employ more civil servants"!

Disappointment with the working of the system so far was common—perhaps understandably so among a group of prisoners of whom so many had been rejected. Twenty-five felt it had not operated as they had hoped it might and of the 13 who said their expectations had been borne out, six indicated that this was simply due to having hoped for little or nothing from the system as a whole. As at present operated, men were unable to detect any clear aim or principle—24 said they had no idea what these were and many mentioned particular examples which seemed to them entirely contradictory.

Only four (10 per cent) felt that the main aim was to benefit the prisoner.

When asked what ought to be the main aims or principles, respondents were seldom specific; the largest single group suggested "to give a *real* chance to *all*", with the implication that the present scheme was offering largely false hopes and appeared to be only for the few. There was similar difficulty in pinpointing what were the main factors determining the parole decision in a given case. Once again, 12 (30 per cent) felt that their experience to date had been so conflicting as to prevent any reliable assessment of the various factors involved; but nine believed past record to be the main factor, a further nine thought reports from the police and prison staff, eight mentioned the domestic situation and only two work prospects.

Review procedures

There were many suggestions put forward to improve parole review procedures, of which the main one was the promotion of greater involvement of the prisoners concerned. Fifteen men felt that decisions were taken by people remote from the prisoner who, under present arrangements, was "excluded". Five men thought the system should be "more independent", and four that they should appear in person before whatever body made the *final* decision. Thirty-five felt very strongly that they should have the right to a personal appearance before the Local Review Committee, although five more believed this would be unhelpful.

The preparatory interview with a member of the Local Review Committee was seen in sharply differing ways. Nineteen men saw no purpose in it, whilst 16 found it helpful—mainly "to put your case". Opinion on the value of written representations was similarly divided; 14 described it as useless, seven felt it inadequate, three positively unfair on those of limited literacy, but 16 (some with reservations) considered it worthwhile "to have your say".

The system of each prison having its own Local Review Committee was generally favoured, with 27 supporting and only nine opposed to it.

Effects on prison organisation

The majority view was that the introduction of parole had had no noticeable effects on other aspects of prison life and administration. Although 10 believed it had made no appreciable difference, yet 25 men felt that it had had a valuable effect in reducing "trouble" in general and violence in particular. Perhaps rather contradictorily, a greater majority (31 men) thought that its

introduction had not altered prisoners' attitudes and conduct towards staff, with many referring specifically to Hull where, they said, "things have always been good here".

None had noticed any change with regard to labour allocation and most felt similarly about the effect on the hostel scheme; however, on this aspect, six men expressed the view that the policy of sending men selected for parole to hostel, prior to release on licence, in some way took places from others not so favoured with parole.

Parole supervision

The value of supervision on licence divided opinion fairly evenly; 16 considered it would be of no help, 14 took the opposite view, and 10 felt it might, in the right circumstances, be of assistance. There was more agreement as to the form which "help" should take. Apart from 10 who stated that neither material nor non-material help would be worthwhile ("If I can't sort these things out for myself, I shouldn't be given parole"), 14 men saw only the material form of help as relevant and only three mentioned "personal problem" help as most important.

A number of men described previous adverse experience of the Probation and After-care Service, but there was no broad area of agreement when respondents were asked to suggest improvements in the supervision arrangements. Thirteen had no suggestions, and five recommended its total abolition, but seven saw no need for alteration. In particular, four said they would prefer to report to the police and five others wanted more flexible conditions. Overall, there seemed to be an expectation that the requirements of licence might be too rigidly enforced, although this view does not seem as yet to have been confirmed in view of the small number of parolees recalled simply for breach of requirement without committing further offences.

In terms of parole, during the year immediately before the survey the proportion of men who declined to be considered for parole at Hull was almost double the national average, and of those who wished to be considered, the proportion who were granted parole was slightly over half the national average. These figures must be kept in mind when considering the results of this survey and they may perhaps explain some of the rather pessimistic and cynical attitudes expressed by these men, of whom the majority had been *rejected* for parole. It would be invaluable to make a comparative study of attitudes in a prison

where many more are granted parole.

In view of the fact that a larger study of all parole review cases in the year ending March 1970, was being carried out in the same prison, by one of the authors, it was decided to select for interview from this main sample those prisoners who were reviewed for parole in September and December 1969. In the event, a few prisoners were also interviewed who were reviewed in October 1969 and January 1970. A total of 42 prisoners were approached, of whom only two declined to be interviewed, when the purpose was explained to them. The interviews were conducted in private and assurances of confidentiality and the independence of the interviewer from prison and parole authorities appeared to be readily accepted by all respondents. The interviews lasted usually for about an hour each and were based on a structured but "open-ended" schedule of questions.

The sample

Of the 40 men interviewed, 21 (52 per cent) were serving a sentence of five years, six (15 per cent) were serving six years, seven (17 per cent) seven years and six were serving eight years or more. These proportions are almost exactly the same as were found in a census of the prison's population taken in March

1969. Two-thirds of the sample interviewed were aged between 26-35 years, and only five over 45 years. Exactly half the men were separated or divorced, 11 were single, and nine married.

Conclusions

It was notable that many men, even when expressing a decidedly minority view, believed that theirs was the generally held opinion. There was a widespread view that far too much emphasis was laid on written reports ("those bits of paper"), and that not enough was done to discover "the man behind the forms". Despite its wide ventilation as a topic of discussion among prisoners, some of whom were very well informed, there was also considerable confusion as to the actual practice of procedure, and a few were convinced that their application for parole "never left the prison". In a sample so heavily weighted with men who had been refused parole, some disappointment is readily understandable, but many tried to be objective and yet still found the system unjust and, more particularly, "too secret". The great majority believed that there was still an over-cautious policy of selection, and that until this was relaxed the scheme would continue to be regarded with, at least suspicion, if not cynicism.

Making of Assistant Governors

FRANK AINSWORTH

THE role of the assistant governor in the Prison Service and the appropriate training for someone appointed to this position is a subject which has been discussed on many occasions. I make no apology for returning to this subject for there still appears to be much confusion and need for clarification about these two areas. Experience of training for probation officers and residential child care staff now seems increasingly relevant yet the Prison Service remains largely unaffected by the lessons learnt in these situations. To utilise this experience would require major re-organisation of our training programme but this is exactly what I suggest needs doing if professional development both at an individual level and as a Service is to occur.

Anyone expressing interest in becoming an assistant governor receives the following job description from the recruiting body: "An assistant governor

is responsible for the oversight of a group of men or boys during the period of their sentence. There are two main aspects of the work. He is concerned with each individual member of the group, with assessing the cause of his delinquency and with his needs in terms of training, and of personal advice and counsel. He is also concerned with the group life of the house or wing where they live. . . . An assistant governor will also have responsibilities for the supervision and training of staff. His precise duties will vary with the approach to training of the particular establishment in which he is serving".

This job description clearly gives the assistant governor three areas of responsibility: to the individual, to the group and to the total community. To be competent in these areas demands a knowledge of general theories relating to human growth and development (the individual), group dynamics and role

theory (the group), and the sociology of institutions (the community). It is exactly the same areas as needed by residential child care staff and which are being developed in the syllabuses of courses designed to train staff for work in all areas of residential care.

Normal and abnormal development

A specific knowledge of delinquency or prisons is in many respects the least necessary initial knowledge for this will arise from experience gained in the practical day to day situation. A knowledge of delinquency or faulty personality development will also arise from the study of normal rather than abnormal development and should be related to our general theoretical framework rather than be regarded as a special subject. For I would suggest that our primary task is to run residential institutions for the care of delinquents who need secure conditions. Our focus must be on normality not on pathological development. For to concentrate on areas of faulty development can only be sterile and produce a feeling of frustration and hopelessness which is already too familiar in the Prison Service.

Nor should we assume that our situation is unique which is what we do if we place too much emphasis on our clients' delinquency. Institutions for social deviants are common enough and all must embody the essential components of residential care, namely care, comfort and control. The fact that in our instance control is emphasised merely highlights an order of priorities, but an institution which fails to care and to comfort as well as to control can only reinforce and not alleviate delinquency. For it is the experience of these three components, correctly ordered, which provides the basis for further emotional development so essential to the individual in his struggle towards a non-delinquent image.

Such a view of the penal institution may be radical in so far that it shifts the emphasis of our thinking away from the areas in which our clients are different from ourselves to the areas in which they are the same. It allows us to see our clients not as delinquents but as people firstly and delinquents secondly. Our approach in training can then be towards developing our clients' good parts rather than on concentrating on his bad parts. To reinforce our clients' good feelings about themselves seems, in many instances, to be our best hope of rehabilitation. This must be particularly true of adolescents where our aim must always be to prevent further reinforcement of the delinquent image

which once it is confirmed will be very difficult to change. It also allows opportunities for those in our care to seek new roles for themselves other than that of "delinquent". In many respects our concentration on our clients' delinquency must be a defence against anxiety and having to admit that our clients are just like us.

The present training of assistant governors must, as a result of this view be questioned, for it seems to concentrate very much on "delinquency" and "prison" rather than on providing the general theoretical background which I have outlined. It falls into many errors and reinforces defences. A redesigned course ought to begin by regarding the entire two-year probationary period as training. The initial period would be in the central training organisation, being

of a small group of trainees for whom they would be responsible during the period of their sentence and who they would see very frequently on a casework basis. Given careful selection of suitable cases this would allow the acting assistant governor to learn about the type of individuals he has to deal with in considerable depth as well as about the institution and the practical problems of management of individual training programmes. Whilst occupying such a role the acting assistant governor would not have administrative responsibilities other than in relation to those cases he was working with nor would he be a member of the senior management group or be responsible for staff supervision or training.

Allied to such a development would be the need for professional supervision

The role and training of probably the most controversial figure in the Prison Service structure—the A.G.—is discussed by FRANK AINSWORTH, who describes his own career as: "Following the Certificate in Social Science course at Liverpool University, I ran a hostel for ex-prisoners in Manchester. In 1965, I joined the Prison Service and was posted to Feltham Borstal. In 1969, I qualified as a psychiatric social worker at the London School of Economics and also transferred to Rochester. Currently I am concluding my service at Rochester as I have resigned from the Prison Service to take up appointment on 1st January 1971 as lecturer in Applied Social Studies at Dundee University where I will have responsibility for the teaching of residential care".

a theoretical course in the subject of human growth and development, role theory and group dynamics and the sociology of institutions. This period would be shorter than the present staff course and would be followed by postings to selected institutions. At institution level, newly recruited assistant governors would not immediately be immersed in managerial duties but would be appointed to the role of "acting" assistant governor. Practices of this kind are already well established in the field of probation and child care. To immerse newly recruited assistant governors, many of whom may never have had any institutional experience, immediately in the responsibility of running a borstal house or wing of a prison as happens at present can only create enormous anxiety and impede learning which must necessarily be accomplished at this time if professional development is to occur.

Acting assistant governors would be allotted to a student role in the receiving institutions and be given limited duties such as those given to student caseworkers in fieldwork training situations. This would involve supervision

at institution level and each institution to which acting assistant governors were posted would need facilities and an appropriate experienced and qualified member of staff allocated to the role of supervisor. The objective of this supervision would be to support the acting assistant governor whilst he is learning about his clients and the institution, to facilitate learning and to keep his anxiety at a manageable level so that this does not interfere with learning. Only by organising ourselves in this way are we likely to improve the integration between theory and practice which in so many situations in the Service appear to be completely divorced.

As acting assistant governors would not, in this plan, have institutional responsibilities it would be possible to recall them to the central training organisation for further periods of training during the remaining probationary period. No longer would this be difficult because the assistant governor was too immersed in his institution to be spared. Indeed his role specifically is designed to allow this to take place. Nor would it be necessary to cram into the initial training period all the

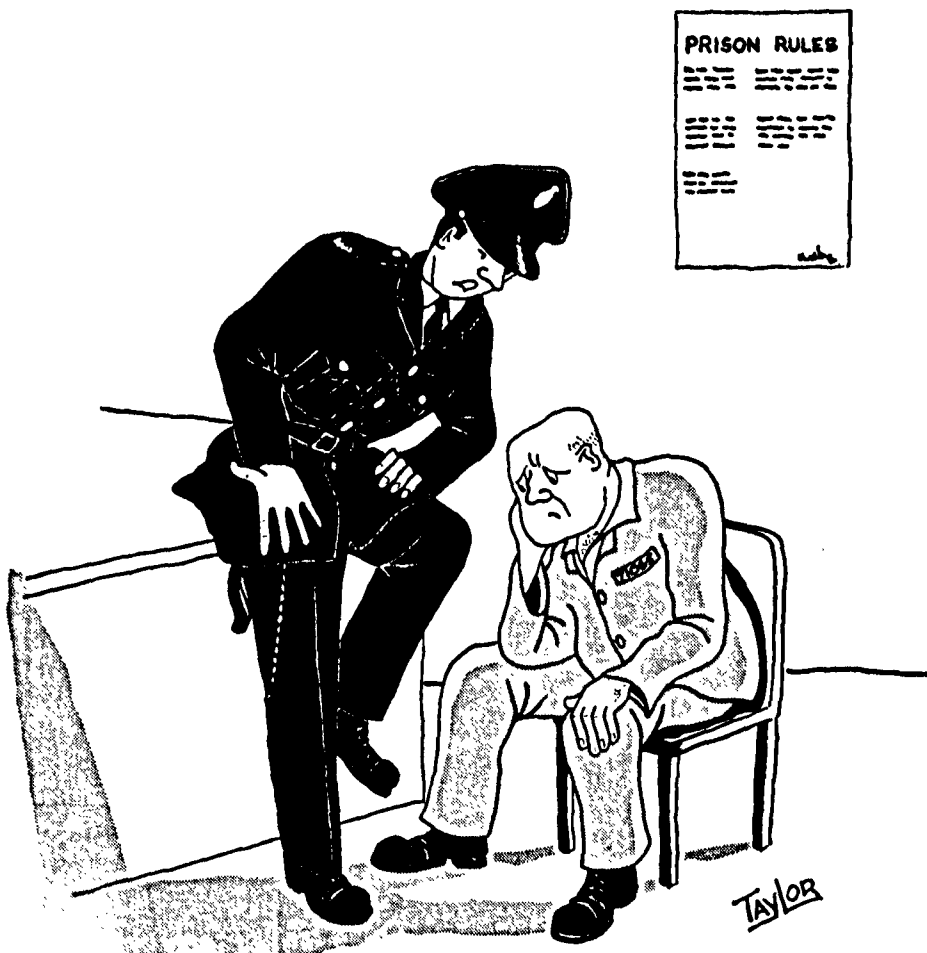
knowledge necessary for someone becoming an assistant governor. Some knowledge more appropriate to a later stage in an assistant governor's career could be left for these recall periods, when it would be of more meaningful and direct value. Here I think criminology, penology, management studies and staff and student supervision could best be introduced, some of them probably in the final recall session as the probationary period was concluding and the acting assistant governor was about to assume responsibility for a unit of an institution.

Caseworkers or managers

This type of scheme demands that we train all newly joined assistant governors as caseworkers firstly and managers secondly and no doubt the plea will be made that this is not necessary for all our institutions and is only really applicable to borstals. Such a view does not seem tenable, for to manage an effective institution demands understanding of individual behaviour in the context of the group and the community which can best be acquired by casework training. Management training can then be built on a very firm foundation and it is the depth and quality of these studies which will need to be varied according to the size and type of institution in which we work.

To implement a model of this kind demands resources in terms of teaching staff for the central organisation, supervisors for the field and recruits to train. It would probably mean using a limited number of institutions as training units and posting people away from them following the end of the probationary period. A claim will be made that at present we cannot afford to do all of these things but I suspect that a redistribution of existing resources would go a long way to covering the demands that a scheme of this kind would make.

As I watch the recruitment of assistant governors and see how many of them fail to become effective leaders of institution staff because of inadequate training rather than because of personal defects, I ask if we can continue to abuse our scarce resources any longer. Instead of helping to develop the Service many assistant governors simply become encapsulated in a role which fails to provide them with any satisfaction or have any impact on either the staff or inmates they are supposed to support and train. The ethos of the institution in which they serve remains unaltered and this must reflect the inadequacy of our present training methods.



"I understand about your wife and twelve kids Brown but you're due for release and you just have to go!"

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Read Any Good Books Lately?

The Journal's Review Committee (Roy Taylor, John Cape, Ian Dunbar, Philip Harrap and Mark Beeson) have commissioned reviews from—

H. J. TAYLOR, formerly Chief Director, Prison Department.

R. CARTER, Deputy Governor, Bristol.

S. G. NORRIS, Principal, C1 Division, Home Office.

Miss P. I. BARRETT, Assistant Principal Probation Officer, Hampshire.

J. WHITTY, Assistant Governor, Officers' Training School.

M. F. G. SELBY, Staff Training Development Officer, Prison Department.

WHICH IS THE JUSTICE?

JOHN WATSON

Published 1969. Allen and Unwin. 40s.

THE sub-title of this book is "Reflections of a Juvenile Court Magistrate". It is not an autobiography but there are refreshing glimpses of the author's early years, of his interest in prisons and borstal and of his work in Europe after the war. But the main part of the book concerns his work as a juvenile court magistrate, the problems and difficulties that arise and that have caused his colleagues and himself much thought. Although he was not a member of the Prison Service he became associated with it and its work at an early age: indeed he must have been the youngest voluntary worker in the Prison Service ever. His interest in this was fostered and influenced by that remarkable man Alec Paterson, Commissioner of Prisons (later Sir Alec Paterson). The diminishing number of those of us who came under the same influence as John Watson will be glad to read this part of the book. The author, having caught the spirit of an incident or situation, has the gift of being able to convey it to the reader. He captured the spirit of the early days of borstal and recalls it in one of the chapters.

The title of the book is taken from King Lear IV, 6:

See how yon' justice rails upon
yon' simple thief. Hark, in thine
ear: change places; and, handy-
dandy, which is the justice, which
is the thief?

This quotation, familiar to certain staff course members of years gone by, is the core to the theme of the book and is a pithy introduction to the author's concern with the difficulties and complex problems facing those who have to deal with people in trouble. The middle chapters are interesting, critical, constructive and very readable. One learns a good deal about the magistracy and how justice could be improved. In "Sentencing and Sentences" such matters as the punishment fitting the crime, or whether the offender should get what he deserves, or whether a concept of punishment should figure in a court's decision, stimulate the reader. Inevitably the purpose of punishment is considered, be it deterrence, retribution, restitution or reformation. Such were the alternatives most men of my age studied. John Watson having been a juvenile court magistrate uses, as one would expect, the word "treatment" and not "reformation". He stresses the need for understanding and is concerned that all who have to deal with delinquents or people in trouble should have a knowledge and understanding of people, and also familiarity with and understanding of the various forms of treatment that could be used. The author has a real care for young people. He does not shirk the difficult subject of present-day aspects of adolescent rebellion and the upsurge of drug taking in this country. This chapter is worrying and may well expose one's intolerance in an uncomfortable way.

When considering these and the many problems that face a panel of magistrates or a judge sitting alone, John Watson shows how seriously he has regarded his magistrates oath. He is a man of forthright character, and in order that he and others should "... do right to all manner of men ..." he makes suggestions that could raise the quality of justice and also lighten the burden of individual responsibility of those who have to make a decision affecting a person's future.

John Watson's visit to Germany immediately after the war was of undoubted help to the legal division of the control commission of Germany—but must have been a distressful period for him. The aftermath of war is easily forgotten and it may be that these chapters, interesting in their context, also serve another purpose. This book will cause much reflection and will be a stimulus and a refreshment both to the general public and to the social worker.

H.J.T.

FREEDOM AND JUSTICE WITHIN WALLS

The Bristol Prison Experiment

F. E. EMERY.

Published by Tavistock Publications,
London, 1970. 28s.

THIS is an account of the experiment of introducing the "Norwich" system, which provided communal recreational and dining facilities into a local prison. Closer involvement between staff and inmates was one feature of the experiment. The author was invited to assess the effects of introducing the new system at Bristol. In spite of the fact that 12 years have elapsed between the start of this study and its publication, many of the issues are still relevant. The "Norwich" system has lost its novelty, association is the accepted pattern, even in local prisons; but the reaction of staff and inmates to changes in the penal setting pose many problems. This is a very readable account of before, during and after such a change and one cannot fail to be impressed by the thorough preparation and the explicit nature of the author's methodological approach.

The theoretical considerations to support the idea of the inherent instability of the conventional prison system are well presented and developed, the social and psychological conflicts of staff and prisoners are informative and provocative. The criteria for measurement of change and the prediction of the results of the introduction of association are designed to highlight staff/inmate interaction in a critical and objective fashion.

The most interesting and valuable feature of the book from a staff point of view is the lucid and methodical analysis of the effect during, and after, the introduction of increased freedom by association in terms of conflict between staff and prisoners. For those who demand statistical proof of results, there is an abundance—for those who do not know Chi-squared from their elbow, the written explanation is straightforward and comprehensive.

Mr. Emery has his feet firmly planted on the ground in his summing up of the results of the survey; his estimate of the security/treatment dilemma is depressing but not hopeless.

R.C.

CRIME AND INFORMATION THEORY

M. A. P. WILLMER

Edinburgh University Press, 1970. 40s. 117 pages.

IN BRITAIN, "criminology" has usually meant enquiries into the causes of offences and the treatment of offenders and has had little to do with police investigation—unlike the position in parts of continental Europe and of the United States, where "criminology" has long included forensic science. This situation is altering under the influence of two widely different traditions of thought. While sociologists have turned their attention from the offender to the organisations and people involved in the making and enforcement of law, police studies have been brought into prominence also by the advent of operations research scientists briefed to improve the performance of the police, who are producing criminology of a very different kind from the customary penological and aetiological enquiries. It is reminiscent of classical criminology in its assumptions of utilitarian choice on the part of the offender, and is influenced by the concepts and approaches of mathematics, natural sciences, business

management and economics, rather than by those of law, psychology or sociology.

Willmer's *Crime and Information Theory* belongs to this criminological tradition and is largely a distillation of work begun as a member of the Home Office Police Research and Planning Branch. Although he seems inclined to present his approach as an improvement on traditional criminology, he is really concerned with different questions. His purpose is to develop conceptual and mathematical models which are approximate representations of the behaviour of police and offenders. The offences at the forefront of his mind are property offences, and basic assumptions limit much of his theorising to offenders whose behaviour can usefully be regarded as the result of rational choices in which the expected value to be gained by the offence is calculated with regard to the probability of detection as well as the value of the property to be stolen. He alludes from time to time to the possibility of testing his theoretical models by empirical research, but his method is more rationalist than empirical, and in fact it is arguable that in studying skilful professional property offenders it would be more fruitful to develop models of their behaviour, as Willmer does, by deduction from basic assumptions of utilitarian motivation than by inferences from the (probably) biased samples conveniently available in penal institutions or by attempts to mount sociological research into the way of life of professional criminals.

Willmer offers his book not as a completed piece of research but as an "introduction to an approach based mainly on exploring how things happen rather than why". It might perhaps be more accurate to say that he explores how things should happen, given certain assumptions about why they happen. He likens himself to an explorer investigating unknown territory, who has sailed up one or two rivers and has explored some of the land in between. The book is intended to show that the land beyond is worth exploring in greater detail. The reader who follows Willmer in his explorations may well experience mixed feelings. The mathematical notes can be omitted without losing the gist of the book, but in leaving them out one would be neglecting an important part of Willmer's work. Some of the notes are extremely terse, and the non-mathematician may find himself plodding through them with bewildered reverence for the crock of gold that he feels must lie at the end of

such impressive notation. For readers whose mathematics is weak it would be helpful if in any future edition the mathematical notes were expanded to make all the logical steps evident and to avoid unexplained simplifications.

The reader may next suffer disillusionment when he realises that putting the mathematical models to use by substituting quantities for the symbols would require data that are not available and could be derived only with difficulty by empirical research akin to more traditional types of criminology. The reader, however, who perseveres is likely to find in the end that he has developed a fresh and stimulating perspective on relations between the police and the offender as a result of the parallels Willmer has seen in the concepts of communication and information theory and as a result of his application of the basic concepts of decision theory and game theory to the behaviour of criminals and the police. Willmer may be somewhat unconvincing when he hints at the practical value of the work reported in his book, but there is no questioning his success in developing and demonstrating an approach which gives fresh insights into the conflicts, compromises and accommodations that occur in the relationships of police and offenders.

S.N.

NEUROSIS AND CRIME

FRANCES SMART

Duckworth. Published 1970, 178 pages. 45s.

WHILST it is recognised that therapeutic institutions like Grendon Underwood can effect psychological growth during a prisoner's sentence, how far is it possible for a psychotherapist to achieve this in the normal busy prison? With the pressure of increased numbers of men filling our penal institutions we are forced to look again at the aetiology of crime and of rehabilitative measures to curb its growth.

Dr. Smart's book describes her experience as a visiting psychiatrist to H.M. Prison, Wormwood Scrubs, from 1957-67. Trained as a Jungian she brought extensive experience from hospital and private practice to her work, and her dedication was such that during the period she virtually gave up private patients to devote more time to this

field. Her genuine concern and compassion for her fellow men is integrated with balanced realism. She recognised the truth of Roper's statement that "crime is essentially the solution of personal problems at a childish level of conduct". She used a multi-factorial approach, particularly identifying social, biological and psychological factors in her diagnosis and treatment.

One of the advantages of working in a prison was the amount of time her patients had for inner reflection and introspection often avoided in normal life, which could be used constructively with skilled aid. The first nine chapters describe not only each of the factors in turn but also the normal development of personality and those aspects of family life which can interfere with development.

The tragedy of this book is that Dr. Smart died before its completion. Miss B. Curtis Brown, a professional journalist and friend who was working with Dr. Smart in the book's preparation, has completed the final nine chapters from notes, lectures and material which had been left. While this creates some limitations, the personality of Dr. Smart shines through her case studies. Her theoretical and philosophical basis is clearly delineated coupled with graphic case material through which one may follow her diagnosis and treatment plan. She underlined the importance of a secure home background with parental love which accepts the child as he is rather than as the parents would wish him to be. So often an outbreak of aggression in a prisoner's life is seen to be a natural way of asserting himself to get the attention he needs. The constant view is that love is the essential basis for the development of the personality and that the first task of the therapist is to give the patient insight and understanding that leads to tolerance and acceptance; control and motivation of the sick part of the personality comes later and this introduces the concept of reality. Frequently a man's life as shown tends to be a denial of his true self and therapy strives to give him wholeness and identity.

The valuable contribution of this book is as a springboard to deeper thinking on ways in which men with psychological and personality problems can be helped by individual therapy.

P.I.B.

THE ORIGINS OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF DETENTION CENTRES

VALERIE CHOPPEN

British Journal of Criminology, vol 10,
No. 2. April 1970.

and

RESEARCH INTO DETENTION CENTRES

ELIZABETH FIELD

British Journal of Criminology, vol 9,
No. 1. January 1969

THE emotive atmosphere generated amongst those who observe and discuss the work of detention centres is shared by most who write about them, thus accurate study is difficult. These two articles, however, act as a dispassionate and admirable introduction.

Valerie Choppen surveys the curious life of detention centres from prolonged pregnancy, both in the Criminal Justice Act of 1948 and subsequent growth and surprisingly healthy development. Supporters will be relieved to learn that conception was not the responsibility of W. S. Gilbert but probably of the Cadogan Committee (a departmental committee on corporal punishment) who reported in 1938. It resurrected a recommendation by another committee in 1927 for "an alternative to prison . . . in some cases a short period of detention" for young offenders and added that ". . . in many cases what the offender really needs is not a prolonged supervision and training, but some form of short, sharp punishment, which will pull him up and give him the lesson he needs". One recognises wearily, the origin of the infamous phrase, "short, sharp, shock" that has distorted so much subsequent development. But this is not the only thread, and Miss Choppen untangles the confused thoughts and emotions which have gone to make and form detention centres. In doing so she offers a highly significant insight into the tortuous, curiously punitive manner in which this treatment process has been approached. This haphazard mixture of the various elements of punishment is a reflection of the dilemma of custodial treatment as a whole.

After all this, are detention centres effective? Elizabeth Field analyses the six completed research studies and, despite their considerable diversity, attempts a comparative study. Predictably the

answer is blurred and only a vague pattern emerges but it is the only attempt of this kind and repays careful study.

She ends by listing current studies. Amongst these Peter Shapland's comprehensive five-year study is significant; the most interesting and possibly the most important is John McCarthy's research at Latchmere House.

M.S.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AFTER-CARE HOSTEL

W. A. GRIFFITHS

British Journal of Criminology, October 1969.

THE author, one time liaison probation officer for Dismas House, Southampton, has produced a paper which should be read by all grades of prison staff. They will find it enjoyable reading helped by a touch of humour. He makes modest claims and draws realistic conclusions, underlining the fact that hostel life for both staff and inmates is a most demanding experience which requires both training and preparation. Staff reading this article will become more aware that completely new thinking must be applied in order to prepare men for discharge to hostels of all sorts. So often in a last minute panic (and I have done it) a hostel is seen as the answer to a homeless discharge, determined by his suitability rather than a close look at the man's needs and the particular provisions of various hostels.

Dismas House was opened in 1962 through the efforts of a religious community, in response to a glaring social need, but as the use of hostels increases we need to have our expectations set at a realistic level. Mr. Griffiths attempts to do this by claiming that residence in this hostel: (a) substantially extended the intervals of freedom between offences; and (b) helped men effect some improvement in their ability to form relationships. Prison staff do not have any real conception of hostel life and see it in terms of the overworked phrase "half-way house". For the type of man who needs hostel care this can be misleading; for most of them it is half way to nowhere, because: (a) they have never been anywhere; and (b) they will find it extremely difficult to find somewhere new to go. Most homeless ex-offenders will seldom be able to take up a self-sufficient role in society and

they will need constant support and tolerance.

The main difficulties confronting the development of this form of after-care are: (i) lack of established knowledge about the dynamics of hostel life; and (ii) lack of knowledge about the group behaviour of recidivists in open society.

From his account, it is apparent that prison staff could help by giving more attention to the preparation of men for a hostel and by working (on secondment) in a hostel as an assistant to the warden. It amazes me that greater use is not made of staff who have considerable experience of men in custody. Much of what he describes, we have seen in our prisons and we have dealt with positively.

The study covers a year in the life of the hostel and includes aspects such as: payment of rent, domestic activity, misbehaviour, and the interplay of relationships between residents and staff. The author suggests that it is too easy to claim that imprisonment is the cause of the problems of homeless recidivists. In his view, when a man becomes an offender and homeless, this may be because of an "irreversible personality defect which prison may confirm or exacerbate but would scarcely create". If so, it means that institution and after-care staff must make radical changes in thinking about preparation for hostels which could then be seen as: (i) short stay hostels to cater for those people whose primary need is for a supportive environment on discharge until they demonstrate they can cope without the hostel; and (ii) long term stay where men may well remain for many years—even the remainder of their lives.

As a department we are still unable to manipulate either our hostel scheme or the inmates to achieve better results in spite of the selected population. I wonder how much of this is due to lack of sensitivity on the part of prison staff. Only recently I heard it said that prison staff should have dealt with major domestic problems before a man is transferred to a hostel. This paper shows that often the problems do not appear until the man is in the hostel.

All but four men incurred rent arrears at some stage, and this was often accompanied by drink. Often this appeared to be associated with a man's uncertainty about leaving the hostel. The regular payment of rent was seen as a sign of dependence by the older inadequate recidivist.

Drinking and TV were the main leisure activities. The majority of men returned to the hostel drunk at some time.

For some, drink could encourage self-expression which seemed to have good cathartic effects. It will, however, be some time before "Double Diamond" is seen as an aid to good interviewing or casework, I fear! Almost all disruptions in hostel life were precipitated by drink, and was also the most common refuge from anxiety and depression.

The solitariness of the recidivist was noted and one of the main tasks must be to help men to use their leisure time constructively and achieve greater social intercourse. A more enterprising use of local communities and voluntary associates could help the process of socialisation. I know from my own experience of a relatively successful voluntary associate scheme.

The hostellers at Dismas House were received from a variety of sources including courts, probation officers and prisons. Selection was largely on intuition but men who were likely to be very disruptive were not accepted. There was a wide age range (21-45) but this did not cause any difficulties for the men were very tolerant of each other.

Although there were good work prospects, unemployment was high; only half of all working man hours being spent in employment. Frequently this

failure was due to: (1) an inability to achieve normal commercial speeds and master even elementary techniques; (2) inability to tolerate instruction or even mild rebuke; and (3) fear of competition.

The author identifies two employment groups: (1) inadequate workers, men for whom commercial achievement was an unrealistic ambition; and (2) competent workers whose emotional vulnerability allowed personal crisis to obtrude into the work situation.

Although little control was exercised in the hostel the increased freedom and responsibility did not have encouraging results. It might well be that real responsibility can only emerge when men are motivated and encouraged to live without resident staff while retaining the security of the hostels' "institutional norms". The staff would then only be visiting support or "ego stokers" rather than anything else. It is in this context that the effect of the visiting liaison probation officer and a female probation officer was particularly significant.

We often feel we are giving men something—"a chance"—when they are placed on the hostel scheme, but Mr. Griffith's paper suggests to me that it is probably the most demanding and anxiety-provoking situation which most recidivists will meet in their whole lives. I do not think we always appreciate this.

J.W.

Family Visits to Prison

A Survey by N.A.C.R.O.

too many prisoners' wives feel that they are regarded as a nuisance by those involved in the penal system.

This emerges from a survey by The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders on "Family Visits to Prison". Yet it is essential for a family to keep in touch through regular visits. A good family relationship can be a positive influence in helping an offender to avoid further crime.

This survey of the views of prisoners' wives—giving a consumer's view of their visits to prison—shows that visiting can be really distressing. Natural

emotional tension is made worse by security requirements, archaic buildings, shortage of staff and overcrowding.

Particular difficulties arise for the supervising prison officers whose task is unenviable. They have to maintain control over what is often a highly charged emotional situation which may involve them in preventing husbands and wives from displaying their love, anger or distress. Prison officers have been known to express feelings of insecurity about this part of their job and the need for more training, support and professional advice.

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The Media and the Message

ALAN RAYFIELD

Seasonal pressures

THE late summer months are usually described as the "silly" season by exasperated news editors faced with a nation on holiday and determined to ignore the world. It is in August that the Loch Ness monster takes up its traditional place in the sporting calendar and newspaper headlines compete to report her (?) non activities. Failing this, the weather and holidays are a good standby. "Phew, it's warm!" ("Ugh, it's cold!") says the popular Press, or "Traffic Nightmare on By-pass".

This may have been the case in previous years but this year Ulster and the Middle East situation have taken care of the headlines whilst, in our own sphere, the Parkhurst trial and its aftermath provided a rich feast for the newspaper and magazine world. Strangely enough, the television companies did not seize this opportunity even though "Panorama" was still alive and well amid a welter of repeats.

TV coverage disappointing

The main B.B.C. TV contribution this summer has been the "Man Alive" team's reporting to the nation on its borstal system. This programme summed up all the strengths and weaknesses of television as a communication medium. On the one hand it was able to present a wealth of material in a very short time but on the other hand it showed it in such a subjective way that I found myself mentally shouting: "Yes, but . . ." at the box for much of the time. For this viewer it demonstrated the danger of accepting what one sees and hears on television as the factual truth and left me feeling uneasy about all these other truth-revealing crusades that regularly appear on all channels.

Tale of two borstals

Briefly, the programme contrasted the workings of Portland and Hatfield borstals and discussed whether borstal training can cope with today's needs. Whatever may have been the original intention Portland was shown as an oppressive, doom-laden place, forever shrouded in mist against a visual backcloth that would have done credit to a Hammer Films production. One shot showed James Astor interviewing some boys digging a trench with

the foghorn booming out at regular intervals. The only missing ingredients were the baying of hounds and the clank of chains. Hatfield was seen as a cleaner place with a relaxed regime. It was interesting to note that the Portland boys were shown in their working clothes whilst the Hatfield boys wore their evening clothes and generally seemed to be more civilised. However, the attitudes of both sets of boys were basically similar and both complained of being treated like children. The boys' subjective criticism was not balanced by objective reporting even though some staff were given a lot of screen time. Skilful editing of film and leading questions by the interviewer created a subtle feeling of disquiet after staff had spoken. At no time did one feel that society had any responsibility for the way our borstal system operates.

After this experience one faced the second programme with some pessimism. It opened with a filmed report of the discharge of one Hatfield boy and his contact with his after-care officer and erstwhile family. The usual pious "What can we do?" type of question was put to the after-care officer but he gave some very uncompromising replies which was cheering. The programme then became a live discussion in the Hatfield Chapel between an ex-tutor organiser, Geoffrey Parkinson, wearing his crusading, anti-institution probation officer hat, Desmond Wilcox, the producer, and James Astor versus (or so it seemed) Tom Hayes on the platform with the governors and deputy governors of the two institutions plus Frank Foster sitting in the body of the hall. The whole tableau made one think of a Christians and lions production with Desmond Wilcox as Caesar and the Hatfield boys as the dutiful plebeians.

As is usual on these occasions the discussion was bitty and disjointed but the high spots were Tom Carnegie's refusal to become lion fodder and the obvious discomfiture of Desmond Wilcox when the Hatfield boys loudly supported their governor over his reply to the compulsory church attendance chestnut. On balance the programme was not too bad but it suffered from the usual "Man Alive" complaint in that a great deal of emotion was spent over the plight of the supposed underdog

against their oppressors coupled with a steadfast refusal to admit that society is responsible for the actions of its agents. If the programme sought to inform then it did not: if it sought to reform then its targets were the wrong ones.

Tough or tender

On 24th August, the "Late Night Line-up" team created a discussion group to look at T. Murton and J. Hyams' book about the Arkansas prison farms scandal. The group consisted of Douglas Gibson, C. H. Rolph and Ian Scarlett but they soon left the subject of the book to look at the English prison system. All three of them made very sympathetic noises with C. H. Rolph saying that "We don't deserve the Prison Service we have", Ian Scarlett attacking the implementation of the Mountbatten Report and how it stopped prison officers seeing themselves as social workers and Douglas Gibson remarking that the public has a need to punish its offenders and has an emotional investment in keeping prisoners down and in. He also commented that prison staff get bad publicity regardless of what they do and will always be criticised by one section of the community as being too harsh and by another as being too soft. The discussion was low keyed, reasonable and helpful but it was noticeable that they made a distinction between prison and borstal staff, who were praised for doing so well in spite of their difficulties and the Prison Department of the Home Office who were given very poor publicity. It would seem that the price of promotion is infamy.

"NEW SOCIETY" LOOKS AT PARKHURST

New Society for 18th June has an interesting article by Stuart Hall called "A World at One With Itself" in which he examines the concepts that underlie news presentation on radio. He looks at the way in which the Great British Public is treated by those that know best and asks: "Do the media help us to understand the significant real events in the real world?" The instant judgemental style of many of the news programmes is called into doubt and Hall criticises the media for reporting "violent" events like Ulster or Stop-the-Seventies-Tour without going into the background detail which makes these

events understandable. At the moment they are presented as a "meaningless explosion of meaningless and violent acts" in a style which can only be compared to a *Daily Express* front page. The B.B.C. will say that these events are covered in depth at the week-end by their foreign or local correspondents, but as Hall says, this is like telling a *Daily Sketch* reader to take *The Times* should he wish to be better informed. In view of this, what hope has the prison officer of losing his "warder" label?

The issue for 4th June gave us a piece by Michael De-la-Noy about a transvestite homosexual written in a style which owes a lot to Tony Parker and the edition for 11th June has an article by Moses Laufer which examines the problem of severe mental stress amongst adolescents. He pleads for earlier recognition of stress amongst youngsters since if their symptoms are ignored when they first appear it will be much harder to help them later on.

An important article

The irrepressible Geoffrey Parkinson appeared twice in July: on the 2nd July when he mentioned the existence of Recidivists Anonymous at Pentonville and on the 30th July where he pointed out the obvious implications of the N.A.C.R.O. report concerning the visits of prisoners' families. However, an important article by Professor T. C. N. Gibbens appeared in the edition of 3rd September in which he asked: "How should we treat violent offenders?" Having made the point that we are all potentially violent, Gibbens partly answered his own question by saying that we must consider violent situations not people. For example a potentially violent man may present no problem until he is drunk or in love (the juxtaposition is unintentional). Evidence shows that it is a myth to think that there is a small group of individuals who are responsible for the great majority of serious aggressive offences although it is difficult to convince the general public of this. It is sometimes difficult to convince prison staff of this as well and one wonders how often we fail to see a potentially violent situation arising because we need the explosion to take place just as much as the inmates do. In these cases can we be sure that we, and the other prisoners, do not unconsciously fix certain inmates with a label marked "violent" and expect them to act out their violence for the therapeutic good of the rest of the prison? Gibbens gives credit to the prison and medical authorities for their

treatment of violent offenders and concedes that this is not appreciated by the public. But we are only just beginning to understand the real nature of the problem. Read the article.

Depressing

For me, and I suppose for most members of the Service, the most depressing item of news during the summer was the Parkhurst trial and its aftermath. Its day to day proceedings were covered in detail by radio, television and the Press and its implications were discussed in magazines and newspapers long after the judge had passed his sentences. The best analysis of the background to this riot was by the "Insight" team in the *Sunday Times* for 2nd August, although James Morton's article "Parkhurst and After" in *New Society* on 6th August was also very good. Both articles looked at the details leading up to the disturbances and traced the source of the trouble to the implementation of the 1966 Mountbatten Report and the subsequent growth of the siege mentality at the Home Office. The failure of the administrative headquarters to understand the reality of the operational situation makes almost classic reading and one hopes that its implications will not be lost to the training field. However, throughout all the Press comments runs the implication that it is the administrators who failed whilst the men on the spot did their best in a hopeless situation. Of course it is not that simple and the question "What should the Home Office do with its violent offenders?" remains unanswered especially when one appreciates that at least three of the riot ring leaders should have been in a mental hospital. Professor Gibbens' article takes on a new urgency in the light of the Parkhurst affair.

But when all the talking and writing was done there came another question. For years conditions in our prisons have been known and deplored yet society does not feel that the urgent necessary actions should be taken to cope with these problems. To blame the Home Office rather than the prison staff is just as pointless because it is clear that the Home Office can do little without money and resources. The real question is: "Does society want its Prison Service to succeed in its given task?" and the answer seems to be that it does not. The sociological and psychological reasons for this are deep and well hidden but surely Douglas Gibson has a point when he talks of the public's need to punish. However, not only must criminals be punished but so must those who deal

with them since these are the agents of punishment. When these agents refuse to accept their role it forces society to examine the darker side of its nature. If the Parkhurst riot can help us move towards a healthier and saner society then all the suffering and squalor will not have been in vain. I wonder if this point was made after the Dartmoor riot of 1932?

A.H.R.

FAMILY VISITS TO PRISON

Continued from page thirteen

Wives complained of lack of information. Although prisons are instructed by the Home Office to prepare "Notes for Visitors" on how to get to the prison, three out of four wives say they have never received this.

The journey to prison can be really grim with young children. At the end there are usually no facilities to feed, wash or change babies and in some cases wives have to wait outside in bad weather with youngsters before they are allowed into the waiting rooms.

Wives in receipt of supplementary benefit are entitled to monthly financial assistance with visits. But several complain of delays and difficulties in receiving this and of feeling humiliated by having to visit social security offices.

N.A.C.R.O. believes that these difficulties and discomforts could be lessened by practical improvements in the visiting arrangements and greater use of voluntary helpers. Specifically we would like: more information for wives about journeys and facilities at prisons; issuing of travel vouchers with visiting orders; better provision for children; if rest and refreshment centres near prison gates are not possible, then at least bus-type shelters for wives waiting outside; and more flexible security arrangements—several incidents were mentioned where small children have been prevented from giving their father a sweet or sitting on his knee. Politeness and patience from officials are appreciated by wives as helping them maintain their personal dignity and respect in these difficult situations.

N.A.C.R.O. will be following up this survey by making detailed recommendations to the Home Office departments concerned.

Some of our Contemporaries

FROM Warsaw comes *Przegląd Penitentiary* (1970), loosely translated as "Penal Review". It has articles mostly written by university lawyers and psychologists. Some are on fairly familiar subjects such as "the structure of criminal behaviour", "informal aspects of penal establishments", "parole", "alcoholism amongst recidivists" and, more unusually, there is an article on "victimology", looking at a means of classifying victims of crimes.

H.O.A.S. publication has new look

Community Schools Gazette (May 1970) is, of course, the new title of the former "Approved Schools Gazette". An editorial says that, despite the proliferation of commissions, papers, bills and acts, facilities are still very unsatisfactory, thus leading to many children going to borstal. The presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Heads Association talks of changes that have taken place over the years in approved schools, often unappreciated by critics. As an aside the president treasures an example from a punishment book of 100 years ago: "teaching the superintendent's baby a rude word". He feels that current attitudes against putting young people in institutions have been reflected in increased difficulties in the running of community schools. There is also a report of a conference on teenage violence with summaries of addresses from a psychiatrist, a borstal governor and a police officer. Finally, "Miss Housemaster" is reprinted by permission of the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL.

An enviably ample correspondence column on readers' reactions to previous articles with comments by the editor gives a very pleasant personal touch to the gazette.

Probation (July 1970) is the journal of the National Association of Probation Officers and this means there is comment on the problems of probation officers and their relationship with the Home Office from a representative point of view. The articles are fairly widespread

including Hugh Klare writing about the probation expansion in California, referring to interesting experiments on typologies of offenders. There are articles based on research by prison welfare officers and by M. Davies of the Home Office Research Unit, and also articles of a descriptive nature, such as a critique of a report about homeless offenders, with pertinent comments on hostels and "Impression of Probation in Nigeria". "The Use of Professional Resources" by W. B. Utting, lecturer in social studies at Newcastle University examines the Probation Service, taking the two aspects of professionalism and administration, and this is a most useful article. Finally, there is a review section.

Dutch "House" journal

Balans is the magazine of the Netherlands Prison Service. It takes its title from the symbol of justice. Presentation is on the lines of a "house" magazine. There are features on personalities and sport; including lists of those awarded long-service medals as well as a photograph of the latest class to pass out of the officers' training school. There is a report of a new advanced course for physical training instructors and of a conference on alcoholism at Amsterdam University. The June issue includes an article on a new method of teaching social skills to adults. The whole presentation is attractive and sells at 1 guilder 20 per annum, which is probably good value.

A newcomer

Case-Con (June 1970) makes its debut. The first page cartoon strip might make one wonder whether *Private Eye* has a new competitor, and certainly seems to indicate a specific attitude towards the "establishment". But on turning over to read the editorial, the initial impression is modified: "there is a clear need for a form of the way social work is being used in our society. *Case-Con* will hopefully be of support to the isolated radical who hitherto has all too easily been incorporated into the dominant ideology of the profession". From

articles with such provoking titles as "S.S. Stands of Social Security" and "The Warfare State" a basic message seems to emerge. Social workers should not continue just agonising over their own relationships with clients, but turn to challenge society, not only, as the editorial states, in its use, or, more pointedly, abuse of the role of social work, but also to look to its responsibility for the creation of the plight of the "clients". To risk exposure to these deviant writings costs but 1s.

J.W.T.C.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE PENAL SYSTEM

The Treatment of Young Offenders

THE Home Secretary's Advisory Council on the Penal System are undertaking a review of the treatment of young offenders aged 17 and over. The terms of reference for this review are:

To review the arrangements for the treatment of young offenders aged 17 and over with particular reference to custodial methods of treatment (including after-care arrangements) and the powers of the courts; and to make recommendations.

Matters within the scope of the review will include: what special arrangements there should be for the treatment of young offenders and what is the right age range (at present 17-20); the borstal system (which has not been comprehensively reviewed since it was set up in 1908); the pattern of sentencing arrangements for young offenders, the case for indeterminate sentences, the balance between custodial and non-custodial treatment; and after-care arrangements.

The Council have already written to a number of organisations known to have an interest in the treatment of young offenders, inviting them to submit evidence, but they will also consider written evidence submitted by other organisations and individuals. Anyone wishing to give evidence should first write for further details to the Secretary, Mr. S. G. Norris, Home Office, Whitehall, S.W.1.

The Prison Community

GUNNAR MARNELL, Director of a Correctional Region (Swedish Prison Service), sent to the Journal an account of the proceedings of a Scandinavian Criminological Seminar

It is reviewed by David Atkinson

PEOPLE who work in institutions are like the inhabitants of Plato's Cave—information reaching them (and transmitted by them) tends to undergo a process of distortion, reflecting off all-too-absorbing occupational and political realities. "The field" is often not so much an arable expanse as a series of mine-shafts of varying depth. In many, coal of a familiar quality goes on being churned out by well-tried (and uneconomical) methods; in a few, technology has come up with some short cuts to production; here and there, somebody stumbles on a diamond. It does no harm to be reminded occasionally that the world is changing overhead, if only because more of us are ritualists than innovators, all too anxious to be assured that our problems are insuperable, and that the only possible and loyal thing to do is to carry on digging.

Gunnar Marnell's article is about therapeutic communities in penal establishments, but he arrives at his main theme locally via a thoughtful review of the major theories advanced in justification of prisons over the past 100 years; in a sense, he *derives* the idea of a community which is structured to care, support, educate and rehabilitate, by a process of elimination. Although not a new concept (religious orders have been familiar with it for thousands of years) the idea is peculiarly apt to the problems of the second half of a twentieth century which is recognising slowly and painfully that the price of material progress can be the breakdown of social life.

There is little future in being "anti-prison"; prisons are going to be around for a long time. But there is a lot of point in trying to separate the necessary aspects of custody (for those who constitute a physical menace) from incarceration with a different purpose. It is the confusion, conscious and emotional, in this area which has resulted in prisons becoming overcrowded, strife-ridden and destructive.

A considerable "literature of dysfunction" in recent years has revealed the confusion and self-defeating effects of institutional treatment, and in turn has focussed new attention on the search for alternatives to the sledge hammer

(a report is due from the advisory council at this moment on the subject). But much has also been written in support of the potential goodness of institutions which are clear in their aims and intelligent in their selection.

"Conservation" of people?

To put it bluntly, if the wider community could be equipped and educated to consume the least harmful bulk of its waste products on the spot, the sanitary services might be freed to do a better job of conversion with the really noxious elements. Or, less fancifully, if the society which is frantically creating inadequate and petty deviants now at a greater rate than its institutions can ever keep up with could develop the resources to contain them within its fold, we might have a chance of doing something at last with the minority which really needs a more intensive controlling experience. What about a conservation year for human beings?

Marnell deals with work as therapy, and points out its limitations—not enough of it, not sufficient choice, uninspiring rates of pay. But more significantly he stresses the imbalance between work and leisure, in terms of resources, staffing, encouragement, and asks: "when very little, perhaps nothing, is expected of him in his leisure time, is it not understandable that the inmate should question whether the institution is only interested in him as a factor in production?"

Round-the-clock support

On the third acknowledged element in treatment—therapeutic support—he traces the development of this idea from its roots in fourteenth century "moral reform" via the introduction of specialists (psychologists, social workers—but what happens in the other 23 hours?) to methods of group work, involvement of basic grade staff, and finally the concept of the whole institution, *qua* community, exerting through a consensus of attitudes by trained personnel a total approach which is based on individualism and works through the democratic process.

This is surely Mecca in institutional terms. There can be little doubt that an

establishment which works in this way is maximising its effectiveness, because nothing is wasted, there is no inconsistency and no self-defeating contrasts. How does one achieve it? Firstly, by limiting the problems to manageable proportions—nothing worth calling a real community can probably be created with numbers in excess of 100 as a unit; nor can such a community tolerate too great extremes of personality disturbance and behaviour. Secondly, by clearly defining the task and stripping out all the old apparatus of confused motives and para-military attitudes; this institution exists for treatment, and its staff are treatment personnel from top to bottom. Thirdly, by adopting the recognised techniques of limited self-government and group management in which there is a considerable literature extant, not to mention some good practical working examples.

It is important to recognise that this is a natural and logical development which prisons and borstals have got to follow if they are not to become complete anachronisms in a world which is beginning to see much "delinquency" for what it is—a response to social breakdown. It is also important that this development is not seen (and hence written off) as a minority specialist activity, a toy for the Grendons and Hendersons to play with in isolation. There need be no question of an "all or nothing". Some prisons will not for many years, perhaps ever, operate as therapeutic communities, but many or most could operate *partially* as such, and achieve something. Marnell quotes R. L. Morrison as emphasising that you can have some of the benefits of the healing, educating community and apply many of its principles, in *any* setting if you are willing to try. There is no institution (except possibly a remand centre) where this extremely practical, positive and constructive method cannot be pointed to as an ideal, in contrast to the worn-out old detritus of past eras of non-reform. It is a question of education and training—first, of the the managers.

Finally, Marnell points out what is perhaps the most significant aspect of the whole thing—the community is not a closed shop, it is open to the wider community. Its roots lie where its inmates spring from, and as they pass their period of temporary estrangement, short or long, within its bounds, its branches are reaching out and will ultimately return them to the place where they belong.

D.A.

Critics of present-day penal conditions say that while we are trying to use modern methods we are still working in "Victorian" buildings. They cite Pentonville, Parkhurst, Armley. . . .

At the same time there is a school of thought, vocal in many areas of concern, which suggests a return to some of the Victorian ways of looking at criminals would not be as backward looking as might be imagined.

Charles Dickens, to many people a typical Victorian, had much to say about prisons.

Now, at the end of the Centenary Year, Dr. J. J. TOBIAS, Senior Tutor of the Special Course at Bramshill Police College, presents a pen picture of . . .

People in Victorian Prisons

THE Editor's request to me to write something about Charles Dickens and his views on prisons, to mark the centenary of his death, came just as I had finished reading the White Paper "People in Prison". The White Paper had indeed already turned my thoughts towards the nineteenth century by the passing references which it makes to the penal systems of the Victorian period. I had been left with two ideas. First, the authors of the White Paper, doubtless because their thoughts were elsewhere, had been less than fair to the prison administrators of the nineteenth century. For example, they speak a couple of times of "solitary confinement", whereas the Victorian administrators of English prisons had rejected solitary confinement in favour of *separate* confinement—a system in which prisoners were indeed kept apart from other prisoners (to avoid what the authors of the White Paper refer to as "the pressures for a collective and unreasoning hostility to the staff" and other bad influences as well). In this connection, Victorian administrators would have been startled to find the Home Office claiming as a virtue the fact that "people in custody may now talk freely to each other"—that had been one of the criticisms of the old, unreformed prisons before the Victorians got at them! Secondly, the thought came to me that the differences between our modern approach to prisons and those of the much-maligned Victorians were not, after all, so great. Just as we put great emphasis on the work of the psychologist and of group therapy, so the Victorians put great

emphasis on the work of the chaplain and the reforming power of religion, and created conditions in which, they hoped, reform could be brought about by this means. No doubt the experienced prisoners who pulled the wool over the eyes of Victorian chaplains (as portrayed for example in Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of His Natural Life*) would have been able to do the same for a twentieth century psychologist!

It is not to be thought, of course, that all was perfect in the Victorian prison system. Even if we judge it as it ought to be judged, by the standards of the day, there was much that could be criticised—indeed *was* criticised frequently at the time. For much of the nineteenth century, indeed, controversy raged between the Separate System and the Silent System (in which prisoners worked and often slept in what we should call association, but were forbidden to communicate with one another), and the protagonists, if prone to exaggerate the advantages of their pet system, did not neglect the disadvantages of the other! Charles Dickens was a supporter of the Silent System. He thought very highly of the two London prisons which were conducted on this system, Coldbath Fields and Tothill Fields, and their respective governors, G. L. Chesterton and A. F. Tracey. Moreover, when, in the course of a visit to America, he visited the leading prison conducted on the Separate System, he was so horrified by what he saw that he published a bitter attack, in which he described it as "a most dreadful, fearful place". (I quote from Philip Collins's



Dr. J. J. Tobias, B.Sc. Econ. (London), Ph.D., joined the directing staff of the Police College in 1959 and became Senior Tutor of the Special Course in 1964. Educated at Lindisfarne College, Westcliffe-on-Sea and at Leeds College of Commerce, he joined the Civil Service, serving in the Colonial Office and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. He took the external degree of B.Sc. Econ. of the University of London. His doctoral thesis was published in 1967 as "Crime and Industrial Society in the 19th century". He has continued his research into the history of crime and the police and has written a textbook ("Against the Peace, 1970") and contributed to the "Police Journal", "Police", the "British Journal of Criminology", and the "Dickensian". He has broadcast two talks on 19th century criminals, one of which was reprinted in the "Listener"

invaluable *Dickens and Crime*, which contains much information about nineteenth century prisons and what Dickens thought of them.) Dickens's criticisms started a long debate about the virtues of the Separate System, which attracted so much attention that one prisoner whose case Dickens had examined in detail became something of a celebrity and all visitors to the prison wished to see him. It is important to remember, however, that the English version of the Separate System was much less severe than the original American version. While the American system could justly be described as solitary confinement, in English prisons a determined attempt was made to provide the prisoners with constant contact with other human beings, if not with other prisoners; the chaplain and the schoolmaster were to visit each prisoner every day, and account was taken of the frequent visits of the warders as well. That at least was the theory—and if practice did not quite live up to theory, this is a failing from which our own times are not exempt.

Dickens also took part in the debate about another problem of Victorian prison policy, that concerning the

relationship between the conditions in prisons in comparison with those in workhouses or amongst free labourers. There were many in the nineteenth century who felt that conditions in prison were so favourable as actually to induce crime. Sir Robert Peel wrote of prisoners in the General Penitentiary on Millbank in London having a lot which "was thought by people outside to be rather an enviable one". Fifty years later, a journalist quoted a youngster who said on leaving gaol, "It's the most comfortable crib as ever I was in. I wish I'd a got three months 'stead of three weeks. I'll do summat wot'll make it hot for me next time, no fear". There seems little doubt that prisoners were very often better fed than free labourers, and very often had to work less hard as well. Moreover, prisoners usually fared better than people in workhouses. The new Poor Law of 1834 had established a system of workhouses all over the country, workhouses which were conducted on the principle of "less eligibility"—that conditions in them should be less satisfactory than those of the poorest man living by his own labour outside them. In the impoverished world of the nineteenth century, this meant that the standard of living in a workhouse was very low indeed, and quite definitely lower than that in prison. One prison chaplain tried to persuade an old woman to spend her last days in a workhouse rather than in the prison to which she was a constant visitor: "Excuse me, sir", she said, "have you tried both places? No? Well, I have, and I know where I am best off". Dickens sided with those who believed that the inmates of a prison should be worse off than honest labouring men, believing that their life should, "in no particular, present a favourable comparison" with the poorest life outside. He objected to men being taught trades in prison, because they were not taught trades in workhouses. (As Professor Collins points out, Dickens could well have met this difficulty by advocating occupational training in workhouses!) All in all, Dickens was a man for stern solutions in the prison field. He favoured the use of the treadmill, even preferring that version of the machine in which the prisoner's labour was used merely to turn wind-vanes rather than to grind corn or perform some other useful work—he felt that the knowledge that the effort was merely beating the air was a valuable part of the exercise. Even so friendly a critic as Professor Collins, a devoted student of Dickens's work, has to conclude that Dickens showed no

real sympathy for the adult criminal.

If Charles Dickens was, on the whole, prepared to criticise the prisons of his day for their laxness, there were many others who were prepared to criticise them for being too harsh. Yet I think we must give the men of the nineteenth century credit for the great improvements they had wrought over the unreformed prisons of the Howard era which persisted well into the 1830s. The Separate and the Silent Systems represented the first attempt to apply rational thought to the problem of imprisonment. Without being able to use

concepts such as that of the "inmate culture", the men of the nineteenth century knew that criminals often exerted a bad influence on one another and sought to prevent this. We may not think much of their attempted solutions—just as we should not think much of their solutions to medical problems or of their modes of transport. However, we ought in all fairness to recognise that in the field of penal administration, as in so many other fields, they fashioned the first pioneering measures on which subsequent generations have been able to build.

Future Role of the Prison Officer

D. W. MANNERING

D. W. MANNERING joined the Prison Service in 1965 at Leeds. He trained as a hospital officer and served at Manchester before transferring, in 1969, to Grendon Prison where he lives with his wife and two children. His spare time interests, apart from studying for examinations, include motoring and helping in the local hospital's casualty department

OUR prison population, in 1970, rose to over 40,000. Most of these prisoners are still housed in 19th century buildings which were designed for correction by oppressive means.

Today, in a more enlightened world, there is much said and written on freeing the minds of our law-breakers from their delinquent habits. This is a splendid ideal, but it is rarely supported by realistic suggestions on how it could be realised, especially at a time when we in the Prison Service are constantly reminded that the Chancellor's purse strings control the rate of our progress.

During the past 50 years, prisons have offered convenient employment to men leaving the armed forces. These men have given the Prison Service a distinct military character; a character whose rigidity is still very much in evidence in local prisons throughout the country today.

Prison officers who are so closely connected with the running of penal establishments, can help seek solutions to the problems involved by examining their experiences and analysing themselves. In the past, and to some extent still, we have been suspicious and defen-

sive towards outside criticism, this is both unfortunate and unnecessary. Liberal minorities alone brought about a change of attitude towards delinquents after fully understanding their role, men serving today could have considerable influence on any future changes.

Reduction of "authority"

Although an authoritarian regime might be necessary for the day-to-day running of our overcrowded prisons, it is, I think, totally undesirable in a system where treatment is the first essential. It is in this area where great difficulties arise. Can a man, for instance, whose whole background and training has been based on implementing strict rules, be considered suitable to staff a clinic for delinquents where therapeutic knowledge is needed? Are such men fitted for a treatment role? An officer from a discipline prison seeks authority through a rule book and uniform and is dependent upon these things to carry out his job. But surely, in attempting to rehabilitate offenders it is necessary to reduce this kind of authority to as low a level as possible. A quiet self-assurance is needed, certainly, but one based on different assumptions altogether.

Self-discipline

What is the alternative to reduced discipline? It would be essential for staff to attempt to induce self-discipline in their charges, a discipline I can only liken to that which good parents endow on their children. Criticism should be reasoned, effort and talent looked for and encouraged; but equally vital is the need to show that abuse of persons, and the property of others will not be tolerated. The officer is well placed in his daily contact with prisoners to explain certain socio-economic facts, or anything else which might awaken interest or a social conscience. For example, to describe how living in an advanced society demands that we conform to certain rules; the more complex society is, the more rules there are to adhere to, and increasingly, we rely upon each other to enjoy life. I have found that many borstal boys who confess to having had little or no interest during their school years, listen intently when some historical or general topic is explained. I would suggest that here is an area where more could be done to reduce suspicion of authority.

In an attempt to reduce the "them and us" syndrome, which serves as a constant reminder of institutional authority, it has been suggested in Grendon staff-room discussions, that prison officers in a treatment role should wear civilian clothes instead of uniform. As the prime objective of all officers (according to prison rules), is to encourage "a better and useful life", all officers play a part in treatment, therefore, all uniforms should be discarded. Opposing argument gives the ease of identification as a good reason for the retention of uniforms. At present, this point is valueless owing to prisoners being dressed according to their category. This argument seems to point to the question before of the use of uniforms to assert authority, which has proven largely unsuccessful in reducing prison tensions. Abolishing all prison dress must surely be inevitable, for it is incompatible with enlightened practice.

How often is it suggested that prison security stands in the way of rehabilitative training. Surely security consciousness need not be divorced from the modern prison officer's work? If he follows the behaviour pattern of those he is responsible for closely, he will be aware of the atmosphere which hints at a breach in security. But also the question of security can be overstated, as happened when panicky action brought about by public alarm at newsworthy escapes, resulting in some unfortunate

recommendations in the Mountbatten Report, being implemented. Vast sums of public money have been spent on containing the inmates of our closed prisons. Television cameras are a very expensive way to watch a man escape. Is it really necessary to use so much of our limited resources to keep petty criminals from running home when we urgently need a more constructive programme of community responsibility? Security risk prisoners are quite another matter, with a lifting of blanket restriction covering most men in prison, special attention could be given to men considered dangerous.

Recently, the Association of Probation Officers declared they would like to see after-care hostels and community work projects replace traditional methods of imprisonment. If such a scheme were to be implemented, it could very well widen the possibilities for prison officers to extend their modest start in the after-care of offenders; a start which has produced encouraging results. However, there exists a situation in the Probation Service where officers admit to not being able to do justice to their clients owing to more pressing duties. Prison officers could very well be helpful here in carrying out specific tasks in co-ordination with the Probation Service.

Staff training

Staff training needs to be looked at in the knowledge that officers must be better equipped for the specialised work envisaged. Perhaps a two-tier training programme might have advantages over the present "Introduction Course"; the first could retain much of the present syllabus, but include subjects with social implication, in order that an enlightened attitude be encouraged towards difficult and sensitive topics. Social and economic history could be an appropriate additional subject offered by the training schools. On successfully completing the probationary period, a more academic course, dealing with the aspects of social work a prison officer would be likely to encounter could be arranged either through the Staff College or by an officer's secondment to diploma courses at technical colleges.

As a hospital officer, I have personal interest in seeing nursing training for us extended. Although the hospital officer's course gives a good general outline of the basic concepts in caring for the general and psychologically ill, three months' study in a prison hospital does not equip a man to undertake the responsibility at times placed upon him.

It is not uncommon for officers to undertake work normally done by a casualty officer in accident departments. The initial handling of a mentally disturbed person often falls to the "sleep-in officer", a situation demanding a man's best. In the large establishments this night duty also entrusts us with assessing special sick complaints, in order that the duty medical officer is not disturbed for trivial complaints. These are some of the realities of our job, whatever the official manual states! Many of the smaller institutions of the Service have only one hospital officer on its staff complement, and men in these posts need to be medically aware, and sound in judgement, as the isolated situation of such places demands; part-time medical officers are not always available when required in an emergency. Such responsibility is readily accepted by most officers and indeed enjoyed, there are hospital officers only too willing to extend their knowledge and satisfy State registration standards.

Here again I feel that change needs to be brought about by education. Without this stimulus, the hospital officer will find it difficult to acquire a professional place in tomorrow's Prison Service, a Service geared increasingly to medical care, ever seeking to improve prognosis of delinquent behaviour.

The ball has been set in motion, today I read of an advisory council on the Penal System which is to urge Mr. Maudling to extend types of punishment other than imprisonment for certain categories of offenders. Lady Wootton's team is known to have looked at weekend prisons in Holland and Belgium. The sub-committee may recommend similar establishments in Britain. The Howard League for Penal Reform plans to hold a major conference entitled "Penal Policy at the Crossroads", partly to stimulate public debate on penology. It has been forecast that our prison population will rise to 50,000 by 1980, prison officers must be trained now to play a major role in preventing such a rise, these alarming figures emphasise that the problem is reaching crisis proportions; the day of the uniform clad ostrich is over!

The Prison Service needs to keep in line with the rapidly changing world; the whole philosophy of life is altering and it is in this context that we need to adjust our attitudes. Unsuccessfully, human beings have been asked to adapt themselves to the prison system, when what is required is for the system to be adapted to the needs of men.

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