

VOLUME VIII No. 31

APRIL 1969

PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

Editorial Office:

H.M. PRISON, BLUNDESTON, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK

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Views expressed by contributors are their own personal opinions and are not necessarily those of their official departments

Management in Prison

N. J. TYNDALL

TRADITIONAL PATTERNS

SINCE THE END of transportation prisons have been seen as primarily places of custody and deterrence. Our traditional 19th century prisons were purpose-built and staffed. A maximum security walled radial-type prison demanded a staff primarily concerned with control based on a strictly enforced discipline. The staff structure was modelled on the need to have an officer in charge of each landing, a principal officer responsible for each wing, and a chief officer in overall command of the day-to-day routine.

Traditionally the governor's role was that of decision-maker on extra-routine matters and boundary man, concerned with relations with the community or higher authorities. In addition there were two specialists: the chaplain, concerned with prisoners' spiritual health, operating independently through individual contacts with prisoners; the doctor, concerned with their physical health.

A wide gap exists between the staff world and its values and those of the prisoners. This division has been complicated by the intro-

duction of more positive objectives in penal treatment, with the consequent arrival of a medley of specialists. As Stanton Wheeler has observed¹: "The conflict between inmates and staff has been complicated in recent years by the addition of treatment personnel whose objectives may diverge from those of the custodians. The presence of these sub-units with differing interests and values places severe limits on the ability of the organisation to define or achieve its major objectives".

CHANGING AIMS

The introduction of new penal aims, as summed up in prison rule 1 ("The purpose of the training and treatment of convicted prisoners shall be to encourage and assist them to lead a good and useful life") has not modified the need for maintaining custody. The primary aim of the Prison Service is now custodial treatment of prisoners.

This new dimension cannot be added, though, without questioning many of the traditional assumptions. New policies can be implemented only if structures and

routines established for custodial purposes are modified. Traditional notions of discipline require to be questioned. This was recognised in a recent report on communications in the Prison Service which stressed the need for consultation²: "The principle of consultation is in no way a new or unfamiliar concept. It means, however, a great deal. Its antithesis is the old fashioned military principle of 'theirs not to reason why'. This may still be appropriate in battle or in the kind of operational emergency that sometimes arises even in the Prison Service; but we do not consider it to be the right basis on which to conduct the everyday business of running a penal system".

Policy statements that penal objectives are changing in the direction of treatment also raise the aspirations of prisoners. Fundamental to any philosophy of treatment is the belief that the prisoner must co-operate in his own rehabilitation and have some measure of self-determination. Obviously this need may be in direct conflict with the security considerations of the prison. The resulting gap between the prisoner's aspirations for rehabilitation and the expectations of achievement may, as Cloward suggests³, be instrumental in provoking further deviant behaviour in the prison.

EXTERNAL CONSTRAINTS

For a prison to carry out its task of custodial treatment effectively, there are three important considerations not controllable internally:

- (i) *Size*. Economic considerations have to be balanced against the mutual recognition factor. A prison of 250-300 provides a group in which people can recognise each other as belonging to the same organisation, though Klare⁴ argues for prisons containing 150 men. The prison should be subdivided into groups of, perhaps, 40. Conrad in his search for a rational practice of corrections⁵ examined many penal systems, and felt that the small unit was one of the most significant advances towards penal treatment.
- (ii) *Classification*. Many writers stress the essential nature of a systematised classification system. Without some control over the intake of prisoners it is virtually impossible to establish a meaningful treatment regime.
- (iii) *Parole*. Current thinking points to the desirability of some flexibility in date of discharge, so that it can be geared to the treatment of each individual prisoner. Acceptance of the principle of an indeterminate sentence carries major implications for the role of treatment staff.

WHAT IS TREATMENT?

As more diverse methods of presenting positive learning experi-

ences for prisoners are introduced, the overall control and the setting of priorities becomes more complicated. There are three categories of methods of influencing prisoners:

- (i) Individual treatment: this ranges from specifically medical treatment (E.C.T., drugs, psychotherapy, etc.) to casework or interviews between prisoner and a member of staff.
- (ii) Training process over a certain length of time; varying from trade training or the subjection to a regular work routine, to formal education, physical education, social training through recreational activities, etc., both inside the prison and outside on a hostel scheme or some other form of parole.
- (iii) The creation of a therapeutic community in which an environment is created whereby opportunities are created both formally and informally for maximum staff-inmate and inmate-inmate interaction to achieve treatment goals; this requires skilled control and staff support, and is a more significant activity than haphazard periods of association.

The process of controlling the environment for these activities to exist with minimum of friction in a mental hospital has been termed administrative therapy by Clark⁶:

"I have called it administrative therapy because it combines two activities often seen as antagonistic, namely psychotherapy—the positive treatment of patients by psychological means; and administration—the daily business of planning, conferring, sitting on committees, and dealing with regulations and paper work. I define administrative therapy as the art of treating patients in a psychiatric institution by administrative means or as the art of fulfilling the true doctor's role in a therapeutic community".

Clearly there is a close parallel between the role of a doctor in a psychiatric hospital and of a governor in a treatment prison.

ROLE ADJUSTMENT

This implies major role changes for most staff. It means a complete departure from the autonomous, autocratic structure whereby the governor has unlimited authority, and accepting the fact, as Garrity emphasises⁷, that a prison is not autonomous.

It means, also, acknowledging that in a prison with a treatment primary aim, much of the significant activity takes place at the inmate-junior staff level, that much important knowledge is often available there but frequently not freed or utilised, and that the structure must be reorganised to make most use of both this information and this relationship.

This also carries implications for specialist staff. The doctors and psychologists can no longer see

their prime concern as dealing with individual prisoners in an office. Though individual treatment will continue to be necessary for some prisoners, these specialists must move out into the total prisons to make use of their skills in support of lay staff, so that for the prisoner not just the hour of treatment in the office will be curative but the whole environment for the whole day.

Examining the problems of transition from prison to therapeutic community Spencer has high-lighted the difficulties⁸: "The strains involved in this transition . . . , though different in kind, confront both professional and custodial staffs. For the professional staff there is the unlearning of orthodox professional roles and the absence of support which comes from professional detachment, and the possession of expert knowledge which remains unchallenged within the institution. For custodial staff there are the strains arising from the removal of the formal hierarchical system with its clearly defined regulations and the maintenance of social distance between staff and prisoner. Attitudes of custodial staff in the prison support . . . a self-fulfilling prophecy. Prisoners come to behave as staff expect them to behave But the self-fulfilling prophecy . . . operates only in the absence of deliberate institutional controls. It is one of the primary functions of groups of staff, and of staff and prisoners, to create these controls".

An essential element then becomes the blending of the treat-

ment and custodial functions. Any split will mean that these two grades of staff will unconsciously, if not overtly, work against each other. Experience in America suggests that the custodial staff feel pushed to adopting more and more punitive attitudes which militate against the work of the treatment staff. Inevitably these two aspects have to be reconciled, but it is vital to try to reconcile them in each member of staff. Garrity⁷ is pessimistic about the possibility of achieving this reconciliation, pointing out that the present English penal system maintains the separation as rigidly as anywhere, emphasising the split by wearing apparel, with some of the staff in uniform. Certainly this is difficult to achieve, but several of our treatment-orientated establishments have made some progress in this assimilation.

CHANGED ATTITUDES AND STRUCTURE

Concurrent with changed roles must be changed staff structure. It may be, as Garrity suggests, that fundamental changes are needed in staff ranks and recruitment. Certainly in Britain the presence of two major grades (governor grades and officer grades) creates pressure towards polarisation of custody tasks and treatment tasks. But even if no such restructuring occurs, it is essential to lessen the distance between the hierarchical levels by freeing communications and building in mechanisms for consultation.

In the traditional prison system decisions are made by the governor

often without consultation with those who have to implement the decisions, and the communication system is primarily seen as a vertical one, passing instructions down. This cannot be a valid method of operating a system in which all members of staff, and even prisoners, are involved in the primary task of treatment. The only decisions likely to achieve their objective by being complied with are those which are understood by the staff who have to implement them. This understanding and agreement can only be achieved by previous discussion. In the American prison studied by McCleery⁹, change in the management task was achieved by committal to the following principles:

- (i) The delegation to lower management levels of all possible responsibility and authority commensurate with sound management.
- (ii) A practice of constant consultation, dissemination of information, and discussion of problems up and down the management chain.

MEETING STAFF NEEDS

Such changes bring both enhanced satisfactions for junior staff, but also increasing anxieties. It is imperative that these anxieties are recognised by management, by establishing continuous drills in three areas:

- (i) *Staff Training*. This cannot just be seen as a responsibility of the central authorities or a central training

establishment. Obviously some formal training can most appropriately be carried out, both initially and on follow-up courses, at a training college. But training must both be relevant and be felt to be relevant. To achieve this it must be closely related to the day-to-day life of the prison and the work of the staff in it. One of the prime areas of a governor's responsibility must be ensuring all staff get continuous on-going training to heighten their insights and improve their skills. In a treatment-orientated prison, a main part of this training may be achieved by case-discussion of individual prisoners and of group interaction.

- (ii) *Staff Support*. A prison which has departed from traditional ways of controlling prisoners and dealing with their aberrant behaviour inevitably creates uncertainty for staff, particularly at junior levels. de Berker¹⁰ points out that as "punishment, exhortation example" become progressively leavened with the ingredient "understanding", so more responsibility is thrown upon staff who have to consider the separate needs of each inmate and consider them in relation to the needs of the community

as a whole. As staff face the anxieties of inmates, so they are brought face to face with their own ambivalent feelings about punishment and permissiveness. Further staff stress arises from the "prolonged buffeting by the inevitable anxieties aroused by dealing with aberrant social behaviour which threatens both the larger community and the more immediate community of the institution". Unless these anxieties are met by some method such as regular staff discussions which provide a means of expression of feelings, defences will be built up such as apathy, rigidity or sickness.

- (iii) *Assessment*. The more insecure the environment, the more each individual needs to know how his performance is perceived by those responsible for him. Regular individual assessment is an important means of ensuring praise is given where it is due, counselling as necessary, and assuring each individual member of staff that he matters in the organisation. In the traditional prison, staff tend only to be seen in order to be corrected for some sin of omission or commission. This is bad man management at the best of times. As individual

attention to prisoners increases, it is vital to allocate time for individual staff assessment also, and not just leave it to happenstance.

GOVERNOR'S ROLE

The effects of these changes on the role of the governor have not been adequately documented. It seems worth again drawing on the experience of a medical superintendent of a mental hospital which has undergone a similar process of social change. Martin postulates three main changes in his role¹¹:

- (i) He is much more fully informed from a greater number of sources. Full discussion of any important changes takes place on a much wider front, so he is more conscious of needs and wishes of both staff and patients.
- (ii) He can be more effectively challenged about any action he may take, both at rational levels and at the level of compulsive emotional needs.
- (iii) His isolation is lessened and responsibility is shared by a greater number of interdependent people. This decreases the individual burden carried by the superintendent. In effect, as far as staff are concerned, he becomes more of a *primus inter pares*.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

From being traditionally the main decision-maker based on his

background of technical information and expertise, the governor becomes head of an interdependent staff team with five main management responsibilities:

- (i) *Setting goals and roles.* In the welter of interests in a modern prison there will inevitably be conflicts and competition for resources of time, personnel and money. There is a constant need to define and redefine the goals of the prison and of each department of the prison, to allocate resources and to establish priorities when conflicts occur. Staff roles have to be clarified to carry out these goals, in such a way that each member of staff is used to the level of his capacity. In a treatment prison there will always be a dichotomy between rigid definition of roles which maximises individual satisfactions and prevents overlapping, and maintaining an organic structure in which there is the degree of flexibility necessary for a regime based on personal relationships.
- (ii) *Free Communications.* Communication systems require constant examination to discover blockages and outmoded routines. A set of drills both written and verbal has to be established, but constantly the question must be asked: "Are we achieving

what we set out to achieve?" and, "Is this the best way of doing it?" Meetings or discussion groups set up to meet some need frequently require adapting as the need changes. But it is not enough to set up the best machinery. Communications need to be freed by creating an atmosphere of mutual confidence in which staff and prisoners feel able to express opinions, and are stimulated to produce ideas and use initiative. This can be a liberating experience for everyone in the community. It also helps to integrate the various departments and individual specialists. This process, however, exposes negative as well as positive feelings. As Rice asserts:¹² "Fights are inevitable. But if they are to have constructive outcomes, they must be between the right people and about the right things".

- (iii) *Interpretation.* As there is a need in a treatment orientated prison for the actions of individuals and groups to be dealt with in an insightful way, so there is a responsibility for top management to be able to understand the behaviour and pressures in the prison as a whole. The

final responsibility for understanding staff motivation and behaviour is the governor's, but because of his involvement in the institution, it may be that assistance in interpretation could be part of the role of the psychologist or medical officer. It is a formidable task for a governor to be at the same time subjectively involved in the management of the prison, yet objective enough to understand the dynamics of the establishment and his own interaction with his staff.

- (iv) *Boundary Function.* In any organisation one of the manager's functions is to be on the boundary between his organisation and the environment. A prison is no exception. Indeed the more prisons develop treatment aims the more important is it for the prison to build and maintain links with the external community, to gain the sympathetic understanding of the community and to draw on its resources. This is not to suggest that all prisons should be open establishments or to under-rate in any way custodial responsibilities. For it is as important for both staff and prisoners to forge these out-

side links in a maximum security prison as in an open one.

- (v) *Planning and Research.* A prison which sees security as its primary task has little need for planning. It can exist mainly on day-to-day expediency for there is immediate feedback when security is violated, and though surveillance is essential it is difficult to foresee escapes ahead. The import of treatment aims introduces a new dimension. All training and treatment methods need constant evaluation, experiments have to be undertaken and, ideally, prisoners regularly assessed both during sentence and after release. Such critical appraisal is necessary both for staff satisfactions, for efficiency and for pioneering new approaches. This regular operational research will stimulate the need for planning ahead. An essential management task in prisons then, as in any industrial concern, is to build in to the prison programme, methods of assessment of present practice, and research and planning for the future. For it is only by researching into new treatment methods, and training and preparing staff for increasing responsibilities that prisons will continue to develop in positive ways.

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Recruitment '68

JOHN W. SHARPE

Senior Prison Officer

TOWARDS THE END of June, together with six colleagues from H.M. Prison, Wakefield, I was informed that I had been selected to represent the Prison Service on the recruiting stand at the Great Yorkshire Show on July 9, 10 and 11, 1968. Later we were issued with information for our guidance. This information told us that we must endeavour to interest suitable prospective candidates to join the Prison Service and to present to the public an up-to-date image of the service. In short, our task was to be both recruitment and public relations.

It was with mixed feelings of trepidation and excitement that I entered the show area on the first morning. Two hundred yards from No. 3 entrance and our stand was reached. It immediately struck me that possibly a third of the day's intake of visitors would, of necessity, have to pass by our stand and therefore we could expect to be busy. The stand itself was very eye-catching. A magnificent floral display had been arranged by the garden officer and his party. The stand itself was headed by a sign

announcing H.M. Prison and Borstal Service. Inside it was tastefully arranged with pictures and slogans depicting a wide range of prison and borstal activities.

At about 9.0 a.m. we opened up and stood by to deal with all comers. As the volume of visitors increased, it was noticeable that first they saw the flowers and then the head sign, by which time they were obviously interested. This was very gratifying, because it meant that we had the right type of stand on a well-situated site. There was, however, a slight drawback, for our stand was about 10 yards from the roadway and this seemed to be interposing an invisible barrier between us and the general public. This we solved by having a "frontman" when necessary. The frontman cheerfully and politely asked the visitors if they liked our flowers, this they undoubtedly did. In next to no time they were examining them close up and stepping inside to look at our photographs, particularly those of our patrol dogs. Whoever happened to be frontman was considered by us to be doing

the "Percy Thrower" act. The act was simple, but it worked. We had, it seemed, to meet the people, not to wait around for them to meet us.

The type of visitor we had on the stand tended to vary from day to day. This of course, tended to reflect the different admission charges. It meant that on the first day our work was mainly that of public relations. We had relatively few would-be recruits, but quite a number of magistrates, teachers, probation officers and people of substance interested in social work. Two personal highlights for me on the first day was a millionaire and an ex-Surgeon Commander, R.N. The millionaire wanted to hire as many borstal boys as possible to help get his harvest in. He runs a farm of several thousand acres on the Yorkshire wolds in the best American prairie style. He told me that he had tried Poles, Hungarians, Germans, Italians, the lot, now he was willing to try borstal boys. I gave him the relevant information and wished him success. He seemed impressed and satisfied with our service. The ex-Surgeon Commander, R.N., was interested in how inmates go about committing suicide. He insisted on regaling me with every gruesome detail of how he once extracted a fork from the innards of a naval detainee. All very interesting; all very friendship forming from a Service point of view.

The second day brought us a gentle lady of about 70 years young, who told us that all the inmates should be flogged. It also brought

us quite a number of would-be recruits. Several of these were Army personnel on duty at the show, most of them in their last few months of service. Others included a smart young potential S.F.O.W. with O.N.C. in electrical engineering, and a man who thought he was not tall enough. He was 15½ stone, and we deemed him five feet six inches, gave him an application form, and told him we hoped to see him soon. One or two young women were interested enough to take application forms with them, including one just returned from working with an airline in Canada.

The third day, of course, was children's day. It was like the tide coming in at frequent intervals. We became swamped. "Have you got a wooden truncheon mister?" "Could you knock a man out with it?" and other similar gruesome questions seemed to be the order of the day. On presentation of our staves their eyes lit up; a deterrent effect seemed to be entirely lacking. They descended upon the pamphlets like a plague of locusts. I think we created a good impression amongst these youngsters and just possibly one or two pamphlets finally came into the hands of potential recruits.

To recapitulate for the benefit of other would-be recruiters, an eye-catching stand near one of the main entrances is essential. It is also necessary to adopt a "meet the people" attitude. This needs tact, and some skill, but is well worth the effort. Some effort must be made to sell the Service to visitors'

wives and fiancées. It was our experience that the women-folk were the more practical and incisive in their questioning. This trend was very marked if their husband's future was being overshadowed by the spectre of redundancy. Some of the men, of good calibre, were at present enjoying a basic rate of pay in advance of our present starting rate, and they tended to look askance at what they could expect if they joined. I could not help thinking that a system such as enjoyed by many sectors of the public service, whereby a man can join at a rate several increments above the basic rate, up to a certain age ceiling, would be helpful. Except at very busy periods, no more than two officers should be on the stand at any one time. More than two seemed to have a deterrent effect upon the public. Most important, a standard of the

highest personal smartness must be maintained at all times. One officer of about one year's standing would seem to be essential to more closely relate what the would-be recruit could expect if he joins. Also exhibits of prison manufactures and possibly a mock up of a prison cell would further help visitors to link up what we are to what we are endeavouring to do. This year, unfortunately, the necessary stand space was not forthcoming.

Finally, we were all of the opinion that we had taken part in a richly rewarding human experience. Whether or not we have been successful, from a recruitment point of view, only the Head Office statisticians will eventually know. We are convinced, however, that our public relations efforts were very successful.

APPROVED PROBATION HOSTELS AND HOMES STAFF VACANCIES

Approved Probation Hostels and Homes, most of which are sited in or near large towns, frequently have vacancies for

RESIDENTIAL WARDENS, MATRONS AND ASSISTANT WARDENS'

In boys' hostels and homes the posts of Warden and Matron are joint positions for a married couple; self-contained furnished accommodation is provided. Salaries are in the range £750 to £1,670 per year.

If you are an adult interested in a worthwhile social job for which training is available, write, stating particulars of your age and education to the

General Secretary of the National Association of Probation Homes and Hostels, 78 Stanhope Grove, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 3HP

J. C. W. METHVEN . . .

A Tribute

DR. JOHN CECIL WILSON METHVEN, C.B., M.R.C.S., a former deputy chairman of the Prison Commission, died on 6th August 1968. His career was unique and he was respected and loved by all who were fortunate enough to know him.

Having qualified as a doctor in 1909, he joined the Prison Medical Service in 1912 and served as medical officer at Wakefield, Holloway and Rochester. During the first world war he saw service in France and Flanders with the R.A.M.C., eventually becoming surgical specialist at the Special Military Surgical Hospital at Headington. On being demobilised he returned to the Prison Service as medical officer at Brixton, but in 1924 was appointed as governor of the original borstal at Rochester.

The appointment of Dr. Methven, a medical officer with no experience of handling borstal boys or any other collection of men in the mass, to succeed a dyed-in-the-wool regimental colonel as governor at Rochester, was regarded by many and not least by his predecessor, as a highly unorthodox, not to say, rash gamble. Time, however, was soon to demonstrate the wisdom of

Paterson's recommendation and the then Home Secretary's foresight in making the appointment, for Methven proved to be a most able governor, adapting himself rapidly in what was for him largely unexplored territory. He turned an over-regimented institution into a place of training, where the individual was no longer lost sight of, but was studied personally and in many cases reformed by the governor himself, his housemasters and the staff acting enthusiastically under his new and enlightened leadership. Nor is this to say that general discipline was relaxed; on the contrary, Methven had no time for slackness or sloppiness. He was completely devoid of false sentimentality and he is recorded as saying that the best way to deal with these young delinquents, was to make them work really hard for eight hours a day, so that they sweated "good and hearty" and had no time to think. Where misconduct called for punishment, he punished without rancour and with complete objectivity, and many a boy's change of heart after a spell in "durance vile", justified this

aspect of his applied psychology.

Methven won the allegiance of his staff because he was sincere and utterly devoid of bluff or swank. They knew he would take the trouble to understand them and to support them, and he retained the loyalty of more than one healthily rebellious young housemaster or officer who, under a less tolerant and more conventional leader, might have impatiently turned in the job. "He were the finest bloody old toff that ever was here", is how his Devonian farm bailiff at Rochester Borstal once described him.

Promoted to governor class I at Maidstone in 1929, he became an assistant commissioner in 1930. As such, Methven's influence on the development of the borstal system was as incalculable as it was unobtrusive and, more than any other of Paterson's disciples, he made the way clear for the more scientific approach to the problem of borstal training reflected in modern research and ideas of treatment.

In 1938 he was appointed medical commissioner and during the second world war was seconded for a time to the Civilian Internment Camps Administration as medical adviser. In 1947 he was appointed medical adviser to the Home Office and in 1948 he became deputy chairman of the Prison Commission. He retired in 1950 and in the same year was appointed C.B. in recognition of his considerable services. During his retirement, he acted as medical

adviser to the Czech Refugee Trust Fund.

These various and important appointments, culminating in the official recognition of his services in 1950, are an indication of the stature and the personal development of this young medical officer, called as the years went by to undertake great responsibilities.

It was my privilege to work very closely with Methven for nearly 25 years, first as his deputy governor at borstal, then as one of his governors and finally as his successor as director of borstal administration and as a fellow member of the Prison Board. There cannot have been many days in all that time, when I did not consult him on our common problems. So I suppose I can say that I knew him pretty well . . . yet how well did anyone know Methven? For he was the reverse of the expansive extrovert, a sensitive to some extent an introspective man, on whom heartiness or loudness grated as a coarse file on tempered steel. Yet what a companion! Undoubtedly fond of the good things of life, (he was no mean judge of a glass of "Nuits St. George"!), loyal, subtly humorous with a wry, enigmatic smile ("Happy Jack" the staff dubbed him with affectionate irony!), censorious but with tolerance, critical but with compassion, intelligent, feet firmly on the ground, and the best judge of character I have ever known; thus do I remember him.

I am grateful for those 25 years.

R.L.B.

Changes in Penal Practice *

The International Scene

HUGH KLARE

THERE IS QUITE a long history of attempts to collaborate internationally and to jointly bring about some change in our field. During the last century, the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission held quinquennial congresses which looked at specific problems and often helped to evolve attitudes. These congresses sometimes gave reformers a platform as well as a captive audience; and if one looks through the published proceedings one can sense also that they generated a spirit of compassion. They were, incidentally, a forum in which officials and non-officials met. And this is important if only because, on occasions, either of these two categories comes to feel that the other is a non-person. Any genuine confrontation soon gets over that.

The subject of the treatment of offenders can be politically very sensitive and some heavy attacking, defending and plain speaking went on, for example, in the 1930's. But the quality of the talking seemed to be different from exchanges in the United Nations now, with less

propaganda, less of an eye to general publicity, but perhaps with more individual feeling.

The reasons for this difference in tone may have been that the old I.P.P.C. was a less formal and less strictly intergovernmental set-up than some of the international organisations. In the 19th century and perhaps the early part of the 20th, people had more faith in, but less experience of, international bodies.

Even in the early days of the League of Nations, people were, I think, fairly ready to stick their individual necks out. For example, it was possible for the late Miss Margery Fry to attend its sessions and to put a rather simple proposition, on behalf of the Howard League for Penal Reform. What she did was to produce a map of the world, and for each country three sets of figures were shown: the population; the prison population; and the proportion of the population that the different countries deemed it necessary to keep locked up.

This simple, direct and, you may say, rather naive manoeuvre enabled

* A talk given to a European seminar on "Forces Determining Change in Penal Practice", arranged by the Council of Europe at the Staff College, Wakefield.

her to persuade the League of Nations that imprisonment was a question that transcended frontiers. It was an international problem. Some countries did seem to keep a larger number of people locked up than others. And it did seem as if there might be alternatives to imprisonment that were cheap as well as effective.

Nowadays, and some may feel alas, we have grown more sophisticated. The figures that were produced 40 years ago would today be questioned, analysed, interpreted in various ways, and either the issues would be talked out of existence or they might become politically hot, with accusations and propaganda flying all over the place. The very real human problem underneath might get lost.

The United Nations, embracing a very large number of countries, can really only work if it has plenty of safeguards which enable it *not* to function. The alternative to a veto in the Security Council is the break-up of the United Nations Organisation itself. And if delegates from the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., Portugal and Zambia met on a sub-committee dealing with the treatment of offenders, there would have to be quite a good deal of pussyfooting.

It is the pussyfooting that enables government delegates to make some sort of progress. And is often only after the head delegate of each country has explained how perfect the penal system of his country is, only after the tacit acknowledgement of omissions and distortions has taken part, that some sort of

meaningful exchange of ideas can occur.

But not all the world-wide international organisations are directly political in character; with the weaknesses and the strengths which such an organisation implies. There are the international specialised agencies such as the World Health Organisation, U.N.E.S.C.O. or the International Labour Office. These look at special aspects of the problems we are concerned with. The contribution of the I.L.O. here is mostly in terms of work in prison and after discharge; U.N.E.S.C.O. tends to deal more with prevention and the role of education in prevention and in treatment. The mental health section of the W.H.O. makes some very relevant contributions to the aetiology of criminal behaviour and to the treatment of abnormal offenders. It is also often freer, perhaps because doctors are not always officials or functionaries, and also because psychiatrists see themselves as scientists and as therapists. In either roles they have a particularly constructive and helpful part to play.

Regional organisations like the Council of Europe have the advantage that the countries belonging to them are, on the whole, more homogenous and also more familiar with each other. Even here, however, difficulties arise, because what is on the surface comparable may, in reality, be very different. I shall have more to say about this presently.

Finally, there are the international non-governmental organisations.

If we take the International

Society of Criminology, this body deliberately attempts to be scientific and completely non-political. I was on the council of this body and also for a while on its scientific committee. It was fascinating to see how, nevertheless, criminology itself tended to have a national character. Dominated by lawyers in Europe and Latin America and by social scientists in North America and in this country, notions, concepts and methodology were all different. Differences in legal procedure, in constitution, even in professional status meant that the same phenomenon was looked at from a different angle.

I found the question of professional status particularly intriguing. In Europe and Latin America, virtually all senior civil servants (and many politicians) are lawyers. Law faculties frequently dominate the universities. European criminology used to be a branch of legal and moral philosophy. Penology as such, did not really exist; or else it was something to do with the legal rights of the prisoner, hotly argued over by legal experts in terms of penal and constitutional law. That penology might be something to do with behaviour, with relationships and with learning processes was seldom noticeable.

We in this country do not have a written constitution. We were pragmatists to a fault even *before* the social scientists appeared on the scene. When they did, there was even more questioning of assumptions. We started to measure and to quantify; and perhaps we are now

so involved in better measurements, that it is time we had a few legal and moral philosophers who could get us to lift our eyes to the horizon, to ultimate aims and objectives.

These initial differences between the philosophical kind of European, lawyer-dominated criminology and the North American and English social scientist dominated criminology, are now gradually disappearing. Discussions at the International Society of Criminology, and particularly in the meetings of the scientific section of the European Committee on Crime Problems of the Council of Europe reflect this coming together. Information, findings, research bulletins, discussions do, I believe, influence directors of criminological institutes and research workers in the countries concerned; and this helps to change attitudes and, eventually, policy.

I would like to go off at a tangent here. Some penologists see their attempts to change the behaviour of individuals in terms of helping them to grow. A well-known book by Dr. Derek Miller, for example, is called *Growth to Freedom* and the implication behind it is that immature people with stunted personalities, are imprisoned by their own handicaps (as well as by society's reaction to their deeds). I have a lot of sympathy with this attitude. But I do not believe it is all there is to penology. I think the perhaps somewhat unpalatable truth is that some of penology is concerned with trying to get people whose behaviour is deviant to conform. Most of us here, if we are realistic, have to

admit that we are concerned, to some degree at any rate, with promoting conformity; and with influencing people's attitudes and feelings to that end.

If that is so, then it is surprising that we have concentrated for so long—and, I may say, at so many international gatherings—on the massive apparatus of penal measures, that is, on punishment; and so little on rewards. But we know that behaviour is influenced at least as much by rewards as by punishments. Moreover, punishments usually involve a feeling of badness, of worthlessness; and reward a feeling of goodness, of self-value. And we also know that most offenders feel worthless and that the ability to value themselves may be an important step in their becoming involved in constructive relationships and in giving up crime.

I do not want to pursue this particular red herring much further now. I merely want to leave you with the thought that it is really strange that we have this elaborate social machinery which begins in the Courts and which is meant to frighten and deter us into conformity. But, at least within this machinery, the system of rewards and reinforcement mechanisms through rewards, is rather thin and not often discussed in depth. It is, however, something that is used a lot in education; and we might learn from this.

One other point is perhaps worth bringing out. In discussing any penal method internationally, it tends to be seen against the background of

the criminal procedure of different countries. Everyone here knows that, whatever the individual national differences in criminal procedure are, there are fundamental differences between the "accusatorial" system that pertains to countries like England, the Commonwealth countries and the United States; and the "inquisitorial" system of other European countries such as France, Germany, Austria, Italy or Latin American countries. Put very crudely, the accusatorial system involves a trial designed to establish whether the accused person did, or did not, commit the crime he is accused of. The "why" is relatively unimportant. After the verdict of "guilty" (that is after conviction) there may be a pause during which information on the personality and the background of the guilty person may be obtained. The sentence is very flexible, there is no written criminal code and only the *maximum* limit is prescribed. It is not carried out under the auspices of the judiciary but of the executive—these two arms of government being kept deliberately separate. You can see that this procedure makes for a judiciary with relatively little knowledge of the treatment of offenders; but also for an adaptable system, the changes in treatment methods, such as group counselling, coming about relatively easily and without reference to judicial authority, or penal code, merely by changes in practice or administrative procedure.

The inquisitorial system in which the exact circumstances before and during which an offence is committed

are carefully established, makes for a better informed judiciary. But conviction and sentence are not really divisible, as in the Anglo Saxon model. To put it crudely again, the criminal code might prescribe that, as it were, 10 yards of crime should equal 10 yards of punishment. Much care is taken both *before* and *during* the actual trial to establish motivation, responsibility, extenuating circumstances, etc. The 10 yards of punishment are then divided by all these factors. If responsibility, etc. amounted to exactly 50 per cent, then 10 yards of crime multiplied by 50 per cent responsibility would be met with exactly five yards of punishment. The sentence emerges from the pre-conviction information, the trial itself, and the conviction. Minimum and maximum limits are laid down for the sentence.

In the inquisitorial system, the whole procedure, from the investigation of any important crime by the examining magistrate to the supervision of the carrying out of the sentence is a judicial function. There are ministries of justice and, within them, penitentiary administrations. There might even be judges in charge of the detailed implementation of penal methods. All this makes for a judiciary better informed about offenders and their treatment than our own. But it is sometimes a more closely circumscribed system. Change and innovation operate in different ways, and on different people, than in the accusatorial system. This background is so fundamental to our

understanding of the mechanism of change that I hope you will forgive me if I have dwelled on it a little.

The subject of this talk is "forces determining change in penal practice", with reference to the *international* scene. But it is also useful to look at resistance to change. I can perhaps illustrate the high degree of resistance to change, by referring to a United Nations agency which was specifically set up to overcome the difficulties which developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have, in breaking through the tariff and protective barriers of the rich countries of North America and Europe. The initials of this organisation are U.N.C.T.A.D.—and they stand for United Nations Council for Trade and Development. At a certain point when resistance to change had produced a complete deadlock, one exhausted official exclaimed that he now knew what U.N.C.T.A.D. stood for: Under No Circumstances Take Any Decisions.

The resistances to change in the penal field in an international setting seem to be these:

1. The need to keep face and not to have to admit, in front of an international audience, that there is anything that could conceivably be altered for the better in a national penal administration.
2. The need to keep penal measures in conformity with a basic philosophy. This is, of course, particularly noticeable in Iron Curtain countries, but may also exist where a

very precise penal code reflects a penal philosophy which, in turn, reflects a national attitude to crime, to the liberty of the subject, etc.

As to 1, it is of course useful and, indeed, essential to have factual information about the penal system of different countries; and if legitimate pride shows through, that, too, is acceptable and understandable in an international setting. What *is* unhelpful is when a delegate makes a short and superficial statement that in the Outer Hebrides they do such and such; and this is followed by serried rows of speakers, each claiming, equally superficially, that in his country they do the same; or better; or twice as much.

This tends to happen at big congresses. It gets in the way of any genuine discussion of the advantages and drawbacks of a particular penal method. It can, however, be a most effective way of emptying a big hall. I have often wondered whether the shopkeepers, bartenders and *restaurateurs* have a secret agreement with the organisers of big congresses to ensure that, at certain moments, the debate dies in order that the foreign currency might flow.

On the other hand, it is remarkable how much an honest admission of failure or shortcoming can do to *enhance* a country's reputation. This is as true for nations as it is for individuals. Since we all know, from personal experience, that no human being, no country, no race can possibly be perfect, then the ad-

mission of imperfections is simply the admission of reality. I have known, in small international seminars, some official frankly to admit a difficulty; and I have sensed the respect that this produced for the speaker and for his country, the relief that spread around the table, the willingness by others to meet frankness with frankness; followed by the immediate increase in sympathy and helpfulness, and a more realistic discussion.

This sort of thing cannot happen easily. It needs the right setting—a small seminar like this one is just right—and the minimum of official note-taking. Group dynamics work anywhere, if you let them; even in international meetings.

In this connection, it is useful if the chairman—if you like, the group conductor—is sensitive not only to all the positive aspects of group dynamics but also to the negative ones. One of these is scapegoating.

I remember at one international meeting, a charming and determined man from a small country spoke all "official" languages fluently; but extremely badly. Everyone could unite at feeling frustrated about him. He personified the communication difficulties that always do exist on such occasions; and perhaps also the unwillingness to listen that can occur. He quickly became the butt of the conference, quite genially so that he came to be regarded as a sort of licensed clown. Few paid any attention to him and yet, what he said often contained a good deal of common sense.

As to 2, this may be a very considerable obstacle. National attitudes and philosophies and, say, a Marxist interpretation of crime and how to deal with offenders, are not attitudes that are likely to be changed greatly by international meetings or actions, however skillfully arranged. The major impetus to change is more likely to come from within, and international discussions can probably only touch a minor aspect of something that may be deeply entrenched. In a way, the subject of group counselling is particularly important here for it underlines respect for the individual as someone of value and with a, possibly unfulfilled, potential; and secondly, because it emphasises and builds on democratic processes even in, and perhaps especially in, a penal institution.

For as you know, group counselling is likely to involve not only prisoners in discussions but also staff. And this process of discussion, questioning, voicing of anxieties and mutual support gives everyone concerned at least a little bit of a chance to accept more responsibility for themselves and for others. It provides a glimpse of a potentially helpful aspect within everyone for everyone else, and this applies to prisoners and to staff at all levels. It also applies to whole prison systems which can in this way perceive themselves, and be perceived, as organisations concerned not only with containment and control, but also with support—let me repeat, of prisoner and of staff. Whether or not this pays off even-

tually in terms of reduced recidivism is almost by the way. We hope it might; but even if it does not, it is worth doing for its own sake: For it improves morale, if well handled, and can make all feel they are engaged in something worth-while.

If I were to sum up, I would say that the seminar which has started here is precisely the kind of exercise which makes for, and facilitates, change. Organised by the Council of Europe, it is sufficiently small for it to become a group in its own right. Information about group dynamics, inter-personal relationships and management techniques have been cunningly mixed together by whoever made the detailed arrangements for it to present a coherent whole. You will discuss what you hear, agree or disagree; question; cross examine; give voice to your doubts; reveal your attitudes; get to know each other and each others' thinking and feeling.

Inevitably you will be involved in a process of learning. You will each go back to your country with something you have learned with your intellect, and something you have learned with your emotions.

Because this seminar is held in this country; and at this staff college; you may *think* that you have come to us to learn something from us. You may further believe—I hope you do—that because the head of our Prison Department himself, and other high ranking officials, come here to take part in this seminar, that we place some importance on this occasion and that we value this opportunity to meet you.

But do not believe that you are in this merely as learners; and that we are here merely to provide a setting and some information. Clearly we will learn from you and from your experiences. And we will now become as involved with you as you will with us.

Someone once said that if, in a group setting, prisoner A talks to prisoner B to help him change his attitude, the effect may be greater on

prisoner A than on prisoner B. It may well be that, in having this seminar here, and in talking to you, the effect will be greater on us than on you. It may even be that, in arranging this international seminar here, the Council of Europe is really trying to strengthen the forces determining change in England. The agents for change for *us* may be you; but we hope that perhaps the agents for change for *you* may be us.

Letter to the Editor

An End to Borstal?

To the Editor,

PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

Sir,

Mr. Longley's article* in your January issue contains much valuable discussion on indeterminate sentences. While agreeing with him about their disadvantages, I must quarrel with his conclusion that the principles of justice would be better served by a fixed sentence related to the gravity of the offence and the criminal record of the offender. This revival of the old Mosaic code is quite untenable in the light of current understanding of offenders' needs. To award a sentence on this basis is to ignore the far more important factors of causation and assessment of the offender to recommend appropriate treatment. If one awarded sentences solely on a "just retribution" basis, there would be

no need for the social enquiry and other reports which Mr. Longley suggests should be considered (in an earlier part of the article). Of course, it is true that many factors are considered by those who sentence, and the retributive idea is often invoked in awarding prison sentences. The result is that many prison inmates have been given totally inappropriate sentences, quite unrelated to their treatment needs.

That this happens at all is deplorable enough; to extend the fixed sentence to borstal training would be a retrograde step which ought not to be considered. Far more service could be done by those staff in borstals working to remedy the more obvious defects in their implementation of a quite reasonable indeterminate sentence.

Yours, etc.,

D. CURTIS (A/G.II), (Wakefield).

* "An End to Borstal Training", by D. G. Longley (P.S.J. No. 30).

Helping Homeless Young Offenders

PATRICK N. KIDNER

EVERY YEAR a large number of homeless young people return to London on discharge from detention centres, borstals and prisons. Many, perhaps most, will find themselves in more trouble within months, weeks or even days of their release. The facts are well known but they are none the less tragic for, underlying the bare statistics, are countless stories of loneliness, frustration and repeated failure. As a symptom of some failure or inadequacy in the penal system, it is a problem which demands our attention.

THE LONDON SITUATION

Over the years, attempts have been made to find an answer with varying degrees of success. Some of the most hopeful schemes have been those providing intense support in a residential setting and the Northways experiment* provides a good example. But schemes like this are bound to involve only a select minority. What, therefore, happens

to those for whom there is no room, and to those who, on release from institutions, desire to throw off all restrictions and "go it alone"?

It is, perhaps, an understandable, even praiseworthy, ambition, but one which all too often ends in disaster. In London particularly, it is easy to see why. For the young offender with "no fixed abode" the city has a magnetic attraction; his fantasies of an almost utopian nature are nurtured behind the security of the institution walls and often he emerges with quite unrealistic ideas of how life is going to be. Usually he finds himself in a cheap bedsitter, transport cafe, or even "doss house". He will be exceptional if he can tolerate a hostel with a therapeutic regime or be lucky enough to find a flat and friends to share the cost. Too often boredom and loneliness with the inevitable practical problems and personal anxieties combine to cause his downfall. Good intentions are rapidly dissipated and compensation sought in an underworld of alcohol and drugs, sexual

* D. MILLER, *Growth To Freedom*. Tavistock 1964.

deviance and petty crime.

This depressing picture, supported statistically by a clear correlation between homelessness and recidivism in young offenders, has posed a number of basic questions about the nature of treatment and the process of after-care. How adequate, for example, is the pre-release preparation, both within the institution and by the probation officer outside? How relevant is his orthodox casework approach to the needs of a highly institutionalised and socially isolated young person? And when there is a breakdown during a period of license, is it just the offender who fails? Or is it in some sense also a failure of the wider community in which he could find no place?

THE YOUTH RESETTLEMENT PROJECT

The belief in "community involvement" has played a vital part in the history of after-care and has found expression in a variety of voluntary or semi-voluntary schemes. The Youth Resettlement Project, most recent addition to the London scene, was initiated early in 1968 as a joint venture on the part of the Inner London Probation and After-Care Service and the voluntary body known as Teamwork Associates. The aim of the project was formulated as follows: "to mobilise the resources of the community through individuals and organisations, to provide support and practical help for homeless young people returning to Inner London on discharge from borstals, detention centres and prisons (Y.P. wings) so that they

may find their place within the community".

By April of last year, the after-care of this group had been centralised at the After-Care Registry and Resettlement Unit (289 Borough High Street, London, S.E.1.) where Teamwork Associates were already based. Quite independently, groups of students had, over a period, been visiting a borstal in the Midlands and their warm reception by the boys had been noted by a research worker; here were young volunteers making a valuable contribution to the life of an institution. But was it enough? Was it not possible to make use of such help in the after-care situation?

Teamwork's experience of using voluntary associates with adult ex-prisoners was clearly relevant but the organisation was already at full-stretch and not ideally structured to cope with homeless offenders. Thus it was decided to establish the new project with an independent advisory committee, supported by the Inner London Probation and After-Care Committee and the Home Office (Borstal Division). Two probation officers at the after-care unit were designated as "project officers" and the director of Teamwork Associates offered to act in a consultative capacity both unofficially and as a member of the advisory committee.

Now at the beginning of 1969, the Youth Resettlement Project is still in infancy. Only time will tell whether the approach will be effective, the goal realistic. What is clear is that, to stand a chance of success, the

operation must be fully understood and supported by everyone involved, both within the institutions and outside. Here are then some comments on the methods to be adopted—a personal view, it should be stressed, by one of the project officers.

ROLE OF THE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATE

The use of voluntary associates may be regarded as central to the project. Broadly they may be defined as members of the community who, in their spare time, attempt to befriend prisoners or young offenders during and after custodial sentences. Whilst associates are not professionals, neither are they in any sense "second-class probation officers". On the contrary, with a "caseload" of only one (or at the most, two) they can offer a more personal relationship allowing for much greater opportunities of sharing in everyday experiences. They may be regarded as representatives, not only of a variety of background and experience, but, in a wider sense, of the community's willingness to "let bygones be bygones". For justice demands not only punishment but also a "fair break" for the punished.

In the Youth Resettlement Project, the associate may play a vital role throughout the custodial sentence. Ideally the introduction will be made at a very early stage by request of the boy or girl concerned and after consultation between probation and institution staff. Through letters and visits where

appropriate, a relationship may be established which can be sustained by both parties throughout the critical periods of home leave (in the case of borstal trainees) and immediately after release.

Apart from the probation officer, the associate may provide the only secure relationship for a homeless person at these times. The depressing search for lodgings and work, the frustrations of red tape, the multitude of practical problems, the desperate sense of isolation—all may seem a little more tolerable when shared with a friend who is willing and able to offer time, especially at week-ends.

Occasionally, associates may offer help with accommodation, either temporarily for home leave, or on a more permanent basis; in the experience of Teamwork Associates however, this is understandably rare and it is much more common for homes to be used as a meeting place. Alternatively contact may be maintained outside the home, by meeting in cafes or pubs for example, or by visits to cinemas and football matches. It is in such sharing of experience, both good and bad, that the foundation of a lasting friendship may be laid, capable of withstanding subsequent crises, including further spells of borstal or prison.

ROLE OF THE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

The ultimate success of the Youth Resettlement Project, however, may be measured not in terms of the length of relationship but in the

extent to which this paves the way for wider social contacts generally. As confidence grows between the associate and the person befriended, there may be opportunities for introducing him (or her) to family or friends, or to some local organisation or interest group. In this way the danger of over-dependence on the associate may be reduced and a sense of belonging in the community may be fostered. It will be a lengthy and difficult process, in some cases perhaps even inappropriate as a method of approach. But ultimately this widening of social horizons may have to be made if a lasting change is to be effected.

PREPARATION, SELECTION AND SUPPORT

It may well be argued that damaged and institutionalised young people should not be exposed to the efforts of untrained amateurs, (or vice versa!). Certainly it is true that goodwill is not enough and for that very reason the role of the voluntary associate is seen to be only complementary to that of the supervising probation officer. Additional safeguards are provided by careful preparation, selection and on-going consultation.

Preparation for all those wishing to take part in the project involves some eight evening sessions and visits to institutions. Through talks and discussions, candidates are invited to consider the problems and needs of homeless young offenders and to assess for themselves their capacity to help. Those who subsequently wish to become

voluntary associates may apply for selection by a panel usually including a borstal governor, probation officer, and representative of Teamwork Associates. On the other hand, candidates who feel unable to contribute are free to withdraw altogether.

After selection, "accredited" voluntary associates are allocated to a small group in which a probation officer acts as consultant. Often it will be his own cases who are referred to the group and through monthly meetings, the members will be able to appraise their work, share their experiences, and support each other. In time, they may develop knowledge of particular institutions and derive benefit from their sense of loyalty to them. Above all, the regular contact between associate and probation officer should foster real co-operation and understanding of their respective roles.

MAKING A START

Over the past six months, the first steps have been taken towards translating some of these hopes into real achievements. Carefully directed publicity has produced a steady stream of enquiries from interested individuals and organisations and 32 people enrolled for the first preparation course in September and October last year. Of the 26 who attended most of the nine sessions, 18 applied to become voluntary associates and 11 of the 13 interviewed so far have been "accredited". Most of them have had some previous experience of voluntary work, often directly rele-

vant to their role as associates. Already several are beginning to correspond with young people in institutions and in the meanwhile a second preparation course has just begun.

Another feature of the project in which some progress has already been made concerns a small group of homeless boys from a borstal in the south. Some eight months ago an Anglican minister in South London, himself a voluntary associate, offered to accommodate two or three selected boys in his extensive rectory. With the support of the liaison probation officer, he has succeeded in involving other associates, residents at the rectory and members of the parish so that a real sense of community has been developed. Whilst the scale of the operation is inevitably small and it is early yet to assess "results", there can be little doubt that the scheme is providing for the boys concerned, a stability and range of opportunities such as they have seldom, if ever, experienced before. One hopes it will serve as a model for similar schemes in which the residential setting provides a focus for the work of the voluntary associates.

THE WAY AHEAD

At this stage, the Youth Resettlement Project is inevitably in the nature of an experiment. Some of

its basic assumptions have yet to be tested and this will be done by a systematic process of evaluation conducted by a research criminologist.

But what kind of an experiment will it be? If the result is to be positive, more voluntary associates of high calibre must be found; new ways of involving voluntary bodies at a local level must be explored; imaginative methods of introducing associates during custodial sentences must be devised; above all it is essential that professional staff of all grades, both inside and outside the relevant institutions should be fully involved.

Of course, voluntary associates are still strangers to the system. They will arouse mixed feelings amongst both inmates and staff alike and it is understandable that they should initially be greeted with caution. Certainly they will need help on all sides if their potential is to be realised and this may be demanding of effort and time. But can we afford *not* to use the resources they may bring? Should we ignore such offers of help from the community, which is all too often complacent and ill-informed?

The homeless young offender is the potential recidivist in our midst; the Youth Resettlement Project is a serious attempt to meet some of his needs.

Homeless Borstal Boy

Institution—Probation Service

A Case of Co-operation

A FRANCISCAN

THE ESTIMATED failure rate in borstal training will be familiar to readers of this journal more probably in practical evidence of it in the course of their duty than in theory. Why does Jimmy Bloggs "fail" after all the effort expended on him in and out of borstal by, on the whole, well-intentioned and trained staff and welfare agencies?

It is not a personal indictment on anyone in particular to accept as a fact that the "system" is not working to produce encouraging results and that, therefore, as in other large scale problems, major and radical reform is necessary. But this takes time. And in the meantime what about the lads? Can anything more be done about after-care?

A very great deal is already done by statutory and voluntary agencies: the Probation Service, after-care hostels and the like. But probation officers are overloaded and even the hostel image is beginning to get a bad name, or if not a bad name, is becoming less acceptable to boys on discharge. Is this the fault of the lads or does the hostel idea itself

need to be taken a stage further. Does even the hostel "system" need modifying because of some fundamental defect in it?

To narrow down the problem still further, it is a fact, though exact figures are not available, that there is a hard core of lads who are homeless on discharge from borstal. In the great majority of cases they will be homeless on sentence and will have experienced, over a number of years, serious emotional deprivation which is very likely to be the real cause of their instability and anti-social behaviour. They probably number several hundreds each year. This is neither sentimentalising nor psychologising. If we cannot understand that emotional deprivation is a major factor in the problem as a whole then it is doubtful whether we can learn to understand it at all or make any useful contribution towards alleviating it.

The chances of successful social integration for these homeless lads can be fairly claimed to be very low indeed. They do not take kindly to hostel life. And if they do it is doubtful whether a hostel structure

can really offer them what they need to make up for the deprivation and institutional conditioning that they have experienced. Is there any way of attempting to meet their deeper needs in a manner that will give them stability and fresh hope and encouragement with a reasonable chance of success in terms of realising their real potential as people?

The point must be made that nothing less than a filling of the gap caused by their homelessness is really going to meet the need. It is not a hostel that they have missed out on. It is a home and the security of really belonging which only a home can give and which is the test of a good home however rough and tumble. Therefore, the missing home needs to be replaced not so much by a hostel as by the nearest approach to a family-like unit that is attainable as a substitute. If it can be fairly argued that most hostels, despite all the goodwill and effort they represent, are not the nearest approach to a family-like unit; is a nearer approach really possible?

A borstal governor and a senior probation officer, with a responsible and representative supporting committee, have now been investigating for some 18 months to two years the possibility of creating a small family-like unit that might act as a model for such a further stage in after-care.

Certain assumptions have been made. The first is that the primary and deepest need of the homeless lad is real personal relationship that gives him a deep personal conviction

that he belongs to someone; and that this relationship is infinitely more important than board and lodging, important and necessary though the latter is.

The second is that this relationship with those with whom he will go to live on discharge must begin for the lad by regular visits while he is still in borstal and as soon as possible after sentence.

The third is that the family-like unit must be kept small. An optimum would be six lads.

A house has now been obtained and a staff—two brothers and a sister from Anglican Franciscan communities. It might seem odd to some that this sort of project should be staffed by members of religious communities. But put quite simply, what could be better than brothers and sisters who themselves have experience in family-like community life; who are by the nature of their commitment free to devote themselves to such work as this without any other local priorities; who have varied experience of the problem under consideration; and who will constitute a support group for one another in meeting the demands that it is likely to make.

The first brother to arrive is already visiting a small group of homeless lads in borstal. They will be due for discharge in the spring of 1969 and will be the first to come to live at the house which has been acquired to make a home for them. It is hoped that they will stay for as long as they need to before taking the next step towards an independent social life.

Drinking, Before and After Detention

P. M. SMITH-MOORHOUSE

and

L. LYNN

THREE YEARS AGO, 100 young men in New Hall Detention Centre were asked 20 questions by Dr. P. M. Smith-Moorhouse (medical officer at Wakefield Prison) and Mr. Lawrence Lynn, social worker and lay therapist at the Huddersfield Clinic for Alcoholism.

They were asked:

1. Do you drink alcoholic beverages?
2. When, where and why did you have your first drink?
3. What do you drink—beer, wine, spirits, etc.?
4. What is your pattern of drinking—daily, week-ends only, etc.?
5. Do you drink more now than you did 12 months ago?
6. How long do you go without having a drink?
7. How much do you drink in a session?
8. For how long have you been drinking like this?
9. Was there any particular reason for a change in your drinking habits?
10. Do you drink alone, in company, or both?
11. Do you try to drink more than the other chap?
12. Do you go to dances? If so, do you need a drink to enjoy yourself?
13. Do you usually drink before attending any social function or going into strange company?
14. Do you drink before committing a crime?
15. Have you ever stolen for the purpose of obtaining money to go drinking?
16. Do you lie to your family and/or friends about your drinking?

17. The morning after a drinking session can you remember clearly all that happened, or only part?
18. Does it take more alcohol now to get intoxicated than it did 12 months ago?
19. Do you spend more on drink than you can really afford?
20. Have you ever tried any drug or pill-taking—pep pills, purple hearts, reefer?

The answers revealed that 53 of the 100 had no problems (as far as drink was concerned), that 12 were classed as escape drinkers, 16 as early alcoholics and two as alcoholics.

Doctor and therapist, analysing these findings in an article (this journal, July 1966), believed excessive drinking, and indeed alcoholism was of major importance in this group of young offenders. So on discharge the probation officer involved was asked to report at three months, six months and one year, answering the following questions:

1. How often does he drink? Every day? Occasional weekdays? Week-ends?
2. When he drinks, what does he drink?
3. When he drinks, how much does he drink per session and how many sessions?
4. If drinking, please give your opinion as to why he does drink.

These questions enabled the research team to compare the current daily drinking pattern with

the one they had before reception. If the original survey was accurate, and bearing in mind the slow, progressive nature of the disease of alcoholism, we should not expect to find much change within the period of one year. Those who originally had a problem may show some progression, and some of these may have had a natural remission as a consequence of successful rehabilitation. Some of those who were originally classified as having no problem may now have a problem, but this would be as a direct result of an emotional or psychological trauma.

SIXTY-FIVE ANSWERS

One hundred questionnaires were sent out and 65 replies were received. This 65 per cent follow-up is very laudable when one remembers the lack of time the average probation officer has for doing extra paper work: and we are grateful to the probation officers for their assistance in this survey.

The "No problems" group contained 53 inmates. Reports were received on 35 of these. Twenty-six showed no change at all, and nine showed some change in drink pattern. Of the 26 showing no change, three had, in fact, already been reconvicted to borstal training; of the nine changes, eight had increased both frequency and amount of drinking (one of these had been reconvicted to borstal training), and one who was originally classified as being without a problem, now appeared to have a

definite alcohol problem and he had also been reconvicted to borstal training.

The "Heavy drinkers" group contained 17 inmates. Reports were received on 13 of these. Nine showed no change in drinking pattern, two had improved and two were worse. The two who were worse had started escape drinking, and one had in fact been committed to borstal training. The two who had improved and had cut down on the amount and frequency of drinking, were reported to have been well rehabilitated in their home and environment.

The "Escape drinkers" group contained 12 inmates. Reports were received on eight of these. In all eight, the drinking pattern had remained the same but two had been reconvicted and one had attempted suicide.

The "Early alcoholics" group contained 16 inmates. Reports were received on seven of these. Three were difficult to assess because they

refused to co-operate with their probation officers and their reports were based on the observations of the probation officer and statements by other people. Six showed the same type of drinking pattern (one had been reconvicted). The other one had met a girl who seemed to have a stabilising influence on him, at the three-month point he was drinking less, had stopped drinking altogether at the six-month point, and at the end of the year, being engaged to marry, seemed to have had a remission in the disease process.

The "Alcoholics" group contained two inmates. They were both reported to have the same type of drinking pattern and behaviour.

These results do show that the original survey was reasonably accurate and confirms that problem drinking, and indeed the disease of alcoholism, is a significant problem amongst young offenders. The survey and subsequent follow-up show the urgent need for treatment of this condition.



Your point of view

is always of interest to other readers

Write about it and send your manuscript to The Editor, Prison Service Journal, H. M. Prison, Blundeston, Lowestoft, Suffolk



*"Congratulations upon your successful escape from cell four . . . and
welcome to cell ten"*

Alcoholics and Alcoholics Anonymous in Prison

THE FIRST GROUP of Alcoholics Anonymous of which the members were prisoners meeting in a British prison, was at Wakefield in 1958. At the present time, just over 10 years later, there are almost 40 groups meeting in as many prisons. The obvious question which jumps to anybody's mind is: what is the point of these groups? What function do they fulfil; and of what help can they be to the prisoners, to the Prison Service and to the allied probation and welfare services?

This question cannot be answered without some understanding of the problem of alcoholism both behind prison bars and in the free world. An alcoholic is a man (or woman) who has lost control of his drinking and become a compulsive drinker. He may be able to (but often cannot) control *when* he will drink and *how often* he will drink, but it is quite certain that once he begins to drink he will have no control over how much he will drink, or when he will stop drinking. It is equally true that he is unlikely to have control over what he will do while he is drinking, and probably no recollection of

things he has done when drunk. In distinction to an ordinary "drunk", an alcoholic very rarely passes out; he remains on his feet in a state of temporary amnesia. He may well appear to be reasonably sober, but in fact he is a zombie.

This is not in the least to say that an alcoholic should not receive the punishment due as a result of his actions, but if prison is also to be a corrective, he should, if possible, be induced while serving his sentence, to see that if certain actions of his when drinking lead to certain results, then for him drink itself constitutes a danger which he cannot afford to run, if he wishes to stay out of prison. This is the function of Alcoholics Anonymous. It should also be a function of the Prison Service.

The suggestion is often made by the uninformed that because a prisoner cannot get drink he will, if he is an alcoholic, be cured of alcoholism by the time he is released. Nothing could be less true. There is no need to stress the lengths to which men in prison will go—in order to get a drink. Alcoholism is

progressive; once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic, and no matter how long a recession from drinking he may experience, the moment an alcoholic takes a drink again, he is on his way back to the point from which he started. This is even more true when the recession is enforced, as in the case of a man in prison. The moment at which he starts to drink again is likely to be the moment he is free to do so, and if it is his drinking that has put him behind bars, he might just as well turn round and walk right back through the prison gates. This would save everybody a great deal of trouble, but it would solve no problems.

Although the basic principles of Alcoholics Anonymous remain always the same, the method of application in prison and outside inevitably differs. In the outside world, a member of A.A. very rarely makes the first approach to the drinking alcoholic, because he knows that it is impossible to do anything about a man's drinking unless he himself is prepared to take the initiative. Nobody can make a man in the free world stop drinking against his will. There are several reasons why, in prisons, the initiative sometimes lies with the A.A. sponsor. One of them is the difficulty for the prisoner concerned of finding out anything about alcoholism. Another is the fear of admitting to being an alcoholic and the third is the ignorance, which is shared by a great many members of the Prison Service, of what consti-

tutes an alcoholic. In the final analysis, however, unless a prisoner can be brought to admit, most particularly to himself, that he is an alcoholic, A.A. has failed to do its job in prison.

Nine times out of ten, if a prisoner is asked what an alcoholic is, he will say: "A man on a bomb-site drinking methylated spirits". If it is suggested that he may conceivably be an alcoholic, he will rear back and announce that he does not drink meths; that he does not get drunk very often, or that he is never incapably drunk. It is extremely difficult to get him to realise that it is not what a man drinks, or even how much he drinks that makes him an alcoholic, but what happens when he does drink. If a prisoner can be got to admit a connection between what he does when drunk (or drinking) and the fact that he is in prison, he will be on the way to admitting that he has a problem connected with alcohol.

The resistance to identification, or inability to identify does not make the job of spotting the alcoholic, let alone getting him to admit to alcoholism, an easy one for a member of the prison staff. There is no set pattern of alcoholism; it may be easily seen in the recidivist who is continually sentenced to 14 days for being drunk, but it may equally be present in the man who is doing 14 years for manslaughter, or the long term recidivist who has never been picked up for being drunk. Recent research studies of recidivist prison population has

shown clearly that 30-50 per cent of men have, to some degree, problems connected with alcohol. The curious thing is that the man who can nearly always be recognised as an alcoholic is the man whose record shows that drink has played a considerable part in his behaviour pattern, but who says: "I can leave it alone any time I want". It is highly probable that that man does want to leave it alone and cannot do so and knows it. It is likely to be extremely difficult to get him to admit it.

Aside from ignorance, there is a built-in resistance on the part of prisoners to admitting to being an alcoholic; that is, to being unable to drink. In very many cases the man behind bars has failed in almost every department of life. He is likely to have failed domestically, as husband and parent; he is certainly not looked upon as a desirable member of society and he has failed as a criminal, or he would not be where he is. In asking him to admit that he cannot drink, we are asking a man who has failed in everything else to admit to one more failure, and one, moreover, that affects his masculinity. There is a definite tie-up in most people's minds between drinking and masculinity. Because of the impossibility of preserving any sort of anonymity in prison, we are asking him to admit this publicly, and to exactly the sort of men to whom it assumes an undue (false) importance because of their own failures in other spheres of life.

Finally, because it is impossible for A.A. to function in prisons without a great deal of co-operation with and from the authorities, it is immediately suspect. There is an unshakeable belief among prisoners that authority exists in order to "get at" him somewhere, and never that it could possibly be out to help him. He immediately imagines that A.A. is in league with authority and that the outside sponsor, without whom no prison group operates, is trying to gain some advantage at his expense.

The newcomer to A.A. on the outside has to deal with an immediate problem. He has to stop drinking *now*, when every sort of liquor is easily available to him. The prisoner, having neither the opportunity nor, the immediate desire to drink, says he has no problem. The outside alcoholic must act; the alcoholic prisoner can and does defer taking action with such phrases as: "It will be different this time". or "I can deal with that when the time comes". It won't and he can't. This is one of the fantasies common to all prisoners and to all alcoholics inside and out. "It won't happen again", they say, but it will happen again unless they themselves do something about it. It is A.A.'s main job in prisons to get prisoners to realise that unless they begin to consider the matter of their drinking *now*, they are very unlikely to deal with it *then*.

These are the difficulties which affect the A.A. sponsor and the

alcoholic prisoner. There are other difficulties which affect the staff and administration. The question of security and discipline is, naturally, the first consideration of the governor and his staff, but unless members of the Prison Service of all ranks can accept the facts about alcoholism, A.A. cannot work in prisons as successfully as it might. A member of the staff of H.M.P.S. Training School, Wakefield, recently wrote: "The work which Alcoholics Anonymous has accomplished in prisons has helped *us* to recognise the size of the alcoholic problem and to start doing something about it within the prisons, which we have never done before". That is one man, but until the entire personnel of the Prison Service accepts the idea that this is a problem about which something can be done, and must be done, we shall not get much further.

The same official writes: "Even recovered alcoholics are often suspect because *we* (as a body) feel that alcoholics are untrustworthy *because* they are alcoholics". This is understandable, but it is unrealistic in that it applies to alcoholics when they are drinking. The opposite is more likely to be true of the recovered alcoholic (i.e. the member of A.A.) and unless it is so, the man concerned would probably not be sober.

In one prison, two men, both of whom had served their last sentence in that prison were invited back to speak to the A.A. group. One of them opened his remarks by saying:

"I have been in every nick in this country, but this is the first time I ever got in without going through reception". Both men had been free for the best part of three years; the first time they had been out for more than a short time (in one instance, 24 hours), in a record of convictions stretching back 20 years. They were speaking to the men they knew and who knew them, and in their own language. They were living proof to the men still inside, that A.A. outside works. The impact they made, not only upon members of the A.A. group, but upon prisoners who were not members, and upon members of the staff was enormous.

Most people anywhere, when first they come into A.A., do so in order to find a way in which they can continue to drink, while avoiding the consequences of their drinking. They quickly discover that if they are alcoholics, there is no way in which they can do this. A.A. has a programme of recovery from alcoholism known as "The Twelve Steps". Only the first and last of these mention alcohol; the rest refer to behaviour which could apply to anybody. Many alcoholics decide that this has nothing to do with the problem they are trying to tackle and that the only thing they require of A.A. is that it should show them how to stop drinking. A.A. is quite willing to do this, but its members know from their own experience that though a man may manage to abstain from alcohol for a period, he is unlikely to achieve a permanent,

or a very contented sobriety unless he also takes thought about the things which caused him to drink.

A man who had been a member of the A.A. group in a certain prison for some months, applied for a change of work. He wanted to work outside. He had been known as a difficult and uncertain character and was serving by no means his first long sentence. He was himself so surprised when his request was granted that he asked the officer concerned why it was. The officer told him that it was because it had been observed that his whole attitude had changed. The prisoner himself gave credit where it was due and told the group that he now asked himself if it was worth it—meaning the way of life he had lead for years—and that he had no doubt of the answer.

Most alcoholics use alcohol as an anaesthetic to enable them not to think about their behaviour towards their families and towards society in general. In many cases men commit crimes in order to get more drink to help them to blot out the realisation of what they have done while drinking. And so the vicious circle spirals. After years of this sort of thinking, a man's mind becomes conditioned so that even without his anaesthetic he can always find excuses. This is the state of most prisoner alcoholics, which they use as a defence against any sort of self-examination. They believe (consider)

that they have been badly treated; that they have never been given a chance and that everybody is against them. The A.A. programme teaches them to evaluate these matters and to be honest with themselves. It is only when they are prepared to go at least some of the way down this road that it begins to occur to them that it is not other people's behaviour which gets them into trouble, but their own. If they wish to stop drinking, they must first alter their way of thinking.

While he was serving his last sentence, one of the two ex-prisoners who afterwards returned to speak to the A.A. group, committed an assault upon another prisoner, which landed him up in hospital. Nobody in the whole prison, including the victim, knew who had done it. The assaulter was in the clear, but he was also in the A.A. and taking it seriously. After 24 hours he told the governor that he was the culprit. He could not reconcile his action with the state of mind he knew he had to achieve if—at some time in the future—he was to remain sober, and this he was determined to do. That the whole attitude of mind of a man in prison can change when he is associated with A.A. is a phenomenon which has been observed by only a few members of the Prison Service, but it is a fact that will, sooner or later, have to be accepted by all of them.

Probably the most difficult

moment for any prisoner member of A.A. is when, on release, he has to transfer from the prison group to ordinary, outside A.A. He is apt to feel that the members outside are different; they are middle-class; they have never been inside. He might be surprised. It is part of the job of the sponsor of a prison group to get its members to realise, while they are still in prison, that whether a man has been a bishop or a burglar (and A.A. probably has both), he is still, so far as A.A. is concerned, just a fellow alcoholic. Very few members of A.A. can afford, or wish to criticise anyone else's past actions. A.A. is not interested in the past.

The transition between life behind bars and life in a free community is bound to be hard on any man and

he needs all the help he can get if he is to get through it safely. This is more than ever true of the alcoholic. It is the job of A.A., as has already been said, but it is also the job of the welfare and probation services to help the prisoner to achieve this transfer. Not all institutions have welfare officers, nor are all prisoners released to after-care in which case members of the prison staff itself can, and sometimes do remain a man's only contact. A.A. is doing what it can, and that is a great deal, but it is also necessary that the Prison Service should do its bit. This is a question which every officer and all grades in the Service should consider, for in the final analysis it is a question of individual and human relationships.

F.C., 1969.

Write

NOW

*Letters for publication in the
July issue of this magazine
must be in the Editorial Office
by the end of May*