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

# Maximum Security in a Modern Society

D. T. JENKINS

*Photographs supplied and reproduced by permission of the Department of Justice,  
Wellington, New Zealand*

NEW ZEALAND is an ideal country to take for the study of penology in a changing society as in a short period of history it has passed through many phases since the first white men landed in the reign of George III and since British sovereignty was declared there in 1840.

Australia and New Zealand developed on very different lines but each had an important effect on the development of the other and on the British penal system. Furthermore, the basis of those countries' legal system is the same, with civil liberty protected by having preserved the best features of English common law when enacting their own criminal codes.

Returning to England in 1770, Captain Cook had reported that Australia was suitable as a British settlement. Britain, however, showed no immediate interest in either Australia or New Zealand and

did not turn her thoughts to those countries until after the North American colonies had won their independence. Up to then, she had deported most of her convicts to work on the American plantations. With that outlet closed, Britain decided to establish a penal settlement in Australia, principally because of its great distance by sea from England, its isolation and non-hostile inhabitants, and the fact that in an undeveloped country the deportees would have to work hard to live. In January 1788 under the command of a Royal Navy officer, appointed to be governor of the settlement, a fleet of nine transports carrying 520 male and 300 female prisoners sailed from England to Australia, escorted by two warships. Crowded into cages and small cells in the holds of the ships under armed guards, these unfortunates had to face the terrible plight of a four to five

months' sea voyage in extremes of temperatures. Many were guilty of only very petty offences, often committed through sheer despair, poverty, hunger and unemployment which, in a modern society, would not even have been punished by a small fine, but given social security benefit; some were merely guilty of having taken an illegal oath to form themselves into a society and petition for a living wage; others were murderers and real hard core criminals. Deportation and complete segregation from the community, however, were equally and indiscriminately applied to all social rejects. On arrival at Botany Bay, New South Wales, the governor did not think the place suitable owing to its shallow coast line and proceeded 13 miles north to Port Jackson, on the banks of the great natural harbour Cook had sighted. The small village forming the penal settlement the governor then established there he named "Sydney".

On time expiry, soldiers sent from England to garrison the colony and act as warders, were offered grants of land to persuade them to take their discharge in Australia and settle as farmers. Convicts who completed their sentence with a good-conduct discharge and who chose to remain in Australia, which most did, were also given large grants of land, and ultimately became prosperous farmers. Many chose to push into the interior to graze their flocks, and without any legal claim, secured for themselves large areas of land by "squatter's rights". Other discharged convicts

worked for wages until they had saved enough to set up in trade and business. In a country where the majority of the population were—or had been—convicts, this fact carried with it no stigma or inconvenience. In the hard struggle to win a living and a secure place in the community, it was what men could do mattered, not what they had been. Forefathers of a proud and independent nation, this golden rule set the pattern for all time. As early as 1830, in the penal settlement days, and bred from sheep sent out from England, Australia began exporting high grade wool to a rapidly expanding European market, despite a four months' sea journey.

On Norfolk Island, 20 miles in circumference, 930 miles north west of Sydney and 400 miles north of New Zealand, and administered by New South Wales, Britain established a penal settlement far more rigorous than the one at Sydney, and it was to there the more violent criminals were sent and subjected to the most extreme punishment, short of death. They were forced to work shackled in irons and any disobedience or tardiness received instant punishment with a whiplash. Death often proved a welcome release from such inhuman punishment.

When in 1850 free European settlers far outnumbered convicts, New South Wales successfully petitioned Britain to cease deporting her convicts to Australia and Norfolk Island and actively encouraging emigration of settlers from Britain, the development

of Australia proceeded rapidly, speeded up by the discovery of gold deposits.

In New South Wales, from the small penal settlement first established there, and the surrounding wilderness and natural harbour, grew the magnificently attractive city of Sydney.

The purpose, however, for which Australia and Norfolk Island had first been used by Britain, the establishment of penal settlements for deported convicts, had serious repercussions on New Zealand, when that country began to move into history.

#### PENAL SERVITUDE

The closing of the penal settlements of the South Pacific again presented Britain with a problem of what to do with her "convicts", being unable to deport them anywhere. The term "convict" has come down through the ages to have a sinister ring about it, but really means "a convicted person", one found guilty by law.

In 1853, the Penal Servitude Act was passed and penal servitude became the form of punishment which superseded that of transportation in English law. It is from that period, over a century ago, many British prison buildings, and colonial ones fashioned on them, date, and are so inadequate to carry out the more enlightened treatment of offenders practiced in a modern society. Imprisonment under the Penal Servitude Act varied from a minimum of three years to life, with a degree of

remission which might be earned by the good conduct of the prisoner, who was then granted a ticket of leave. Prisoners undergoing penal servitude wore the distinctive broad arrow dress and had to do some form of useful work. Penal servitude, abolished in 1949, has been replaced by imprisonment.

Meanwhile, after the missionaries, followed sealers, whalers and traders from Australia in search of timber and flax, whose dubious trading methods with the natives savoured of chicanery and deceit and roused native resentment. An increase in shipping to the coast brought an influx of undesirable Europeans, hard core criminals discharged or escaping from the penal settlements of Sydney and Norfolk Island, thugs, ruffians, marauders and adventurers. Establishing themselves into a lawless community in a squalid village alongside good anchorage, they became the wildest, most wicked, reckless and disorderly society in the whole Pacific, arousing the enmity of the natives whom they terrorised and thwarting the work of the missionaries. Prompted by pressure from the New South Wales Government, who knew the importance of securing the goodwill of the Maoris in maintaining peace and protecting New Zealand commerce, Britain despatched a Crown Representative with suitable naval support to establish order and maintain peace. By then, more than half the Maori population had been converted to Christianity, so that the unique influence of the

missionaries was used in the drafting of a treaty and in explaining it to the natives, then persuading the chiefs to sign it, which they did at Waitangi in 1840. Under this treaty, New Zealand was separated from New South Wales, and became a Crown Colony administered by a governor. The natives were bestowed with full British protection and all the rights and privileges of British subjects.

Organised colonisation then began on a large scale, with the New Zealand Company playing an active part, but unfortunately they favoured a graded society. The rapacity and behaviour of the white land speculators caused the Maoris to become disillusioned with European civilisation and their attitude gradually hardened against disposing of their tribal lands. Resentment grew into hostility, and when official pressure was brought to bear on them, they broke into open warfare against soldiers and settlers and a determination to destroy or drive out the white men from New Zealand for having deprived them of their lands. Capitulating after being besieged in 1865, pockets of native resistance still held out along the east coast, waging bloody guerilla warfare and massacring until the 1870's.

In the meantime, the mission station of Auckland working amongst tribes of friendly Maoris and situate on a narrow strip of land between a large natural harbour and a bay in the North Island, had peacefully developed

commercially, and on the signing of the treaty in 1840 when it had a population of 1,500, became the first seat of government. The Supreme Court was established at Auckland and sentences were carried out in a prison there, built on the lines of the English penal prisons of the period. It was at this prison where captured rebel natives found guilty of killings during the uprising were executed.

When peace was finally established, less than a century ago, New Zealand settled down to the serious business of developing the country's great potentials, making rapid progress industrially, commercially, socially and politically. Nationhood was finally achieved with the complete integration of Europeans and Maoris in all spheres and with Maoris also electing their own representatives to parliament. A department of Maori Affairs was also established to protect native interests, help develop tribal lands and foster their ancient arts and crafts. Education became free for everyone, from kindergarten to university, and every family encouraged to own their own home and garden. Working conditions became governed by strict agreements between employers and employed, through trade unions. In 1893, New Zealand became the first country ever to give women the vote. It also led the world in social welfare, introducing in 1898 old age pensions, quickly followed by pensions and allowances for widows, orphans, the permanently afflicted and free hospital and

medical care. Contributions, supplemented by the government became compulsory for everyone.

It is a mountainous country, with vast bushland, dense forests, glacial and volcanic regions, large lakes and steep fast-flowing rivers, ideal for the vast hydro-electric schemes, but a land which still defies the connecting up of some important centres by railway. To link its widely dispersed community and productive sources, a huge mileage of good modern roads and bridges have been constructed. Along these arteries now operate a growing fleet of 150,000 trucks, and a ratio of one car for every three persons, the highest per head of population in the world, outside North America. A surprising feature is that the Maoris who, a comparatively short time previously had been tribesmen living in the bush, have since proved themselves to be exceptionally capable and skilful mechanics.

From a rather tragic beginning New Zealand had progressed and developed into a modern society.

#### CRIME IN A MODERN SOCIETY

Crime, however, does not cease with a country's emergence into a modern society, but takes on a wider sphere in that the conception of what is crime, can no longer be confined within the limits of the old Mosaic laws. It must also embrace the breaking of laws which society finds necessary to impose to meet the changing ways of life. Poverty was once widely held to be the basic cause of crime, but a more equitable distribution of wealth has

since proved that a fallacy. More pocket money for children, big money for adolescents, high wages for adults, an all-round higher standard of living, luxury goods freely available and leisure time to enjoy them, social security against sickness, unemployment and old age, have all led to an increase in petty thefts, betting and gambling, dishonesty, fraud, shop-lifting, larceny, and robbery with violence. Higher education, relaxing of home and school discipline, co-education and greater freedom between the sexes have resulted in liberty giving place to libertinism, intemperance, venereal disease, higher illegitimacy, drug addiction, petty misdemeanours, vandalism, and acts of violence without regard to the sex or age of the victims.

#### TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS

One hundred years ago, when most of the penal prisons in use today were built, the approach to crime was harsh, without regard to mental and physical differences, or the incidence of the crime committed. Society demanded that offenders be put out of public circulation. Adults and children of both sexes, sane or insane, were incarcerated in the same grim, forbidding prison, and all subjected to the same cruel treatment.

In 1872, two children, one aged six, the other aged eight, were charged before the Mayor of Auckland, New Zealand, with stealing a cash box containing 16s. Without enquiry as to the childrens' hunger or if they had any parents, the

younger was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment and the other to 14 days, and an order made for both to be privately whipped. Completing their sentence they were turned out on to the streets.

Today, such harsh treatment would immediately raise an outcry from Press and public. Modern society is called on to make a modern approach to crime and the treatment of offenders, whilst still expected to ensure adequate protection for the community, its way of life, and its property.

Classification of offenders and offences has now become an established procedure. Before passing sentence on those found guilty, justices must hear any plea in mitigation, give heed to, or order, social, medical or mental health reports, so taking into consideration all personal aspects relating to the offenders, their physical and mental state, family background, work behaviour, and any tendency to, or not to offend. A sentence is intended not only to punish, but also to rehabilitate, and covers a wide field including putting into care and control, psychiatric treatment, approved schools, attendance centres—in New Zealand also weekend work centres—fines, probation, remand homes, disciplinary detention, borstal training, or a suspended sentence. Whilst making the offender conscious of his crime, the aim is to keep him out of prison enabling him to meet his obligations, so remoulding instead of breaking the human spirit and restoring the offender to his rightful

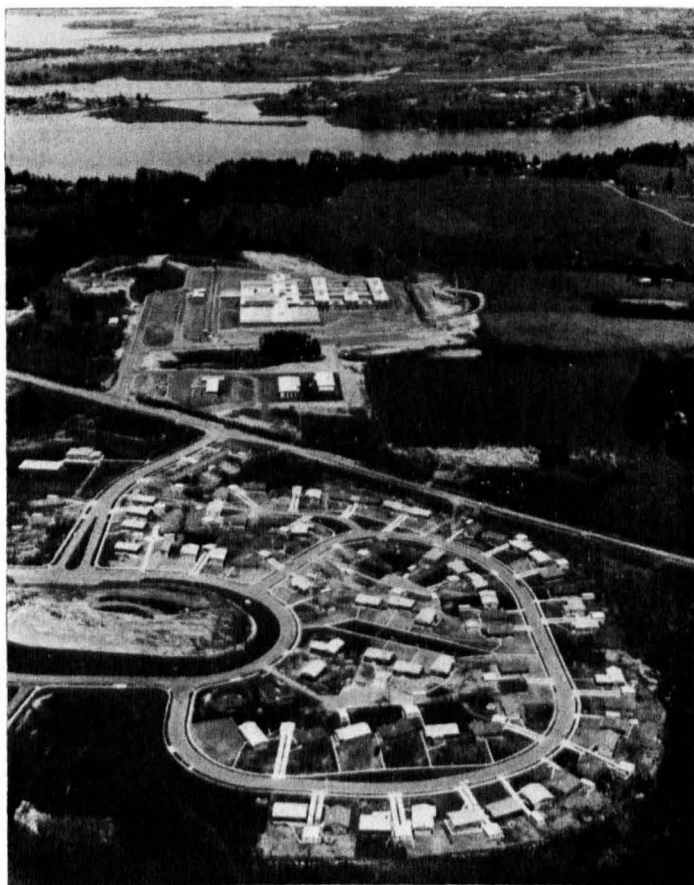
place as a useful member of society. The high percentage of non-recidivists amongst first offenders has justified the procedure.

#### THE HARDENED AND DANGEROUS CRIMINAL

The violent and hard-core criminal raises a more serious problem for society. The abolition or suspension of capital punishment has left justice with no option but to mete out long term prison sentences to keep the offender from committing further serious crimes against society, or, in serious non-capital crimes, to act as a deterrent to others. This, and the increase in serious crime, have put an impossible strain on the many old prisons totally unsuitable for modern requirements, making them difficult for staff to control, and rousing added hostility amongst already violent criminals.

#### THE REPERCUSSIONS OF UNSUITABLE PRISONS

New Zealand had been giving much thought to the problems presented by the old type prisons, as the principal security prison at Mount Eden, Auckland, was over 100 years old, practically spanning their history. It became a matter of extreme urgency, however, in 1965, when suddenly, in the early morning hours, an escape attempt by two armed remand prisoners developed into a full scale riot lasting 24 hours in which armed police, prison officers and military had to be used to contain it. Although none of the 300 prisoners was able to escape, and



AERIAL VIEW OF THE STAFF HOUSING VILLAGE AT THE NEW AUCKLAND MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON. THE PRISON CAN BE SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND

there was no loss of life or serious injury, the prison was extensively damaged by fire. This necessitated the transfer of a large number of prisoners to emergency centres converted into temporary maximum security prisons. The outbreak at Auckland had repercussions at another prison a few days later

when, following the pattern of Dartmoor in 1932, 70 men attending Church service suddenly rioted. An alert prison staff quickly subdued it but not before part of the prison was badly damaged, so creating a further accommodation problem.

Planning of the proposed new



maximum security prison was immediately commenced. Crime being a problem which bedevils all countries, most are only too ready and willing to exchange experiences and experimentations. Taking full advantage of this factor, the New Zealand Government sent a representative overseas to study and report on the maximum security prisons operating in the United States, Sweden and England. Building on this combined experience of other countries, it is justly considered that the new prison recently completed, represents the world's most modern maximum security prison.

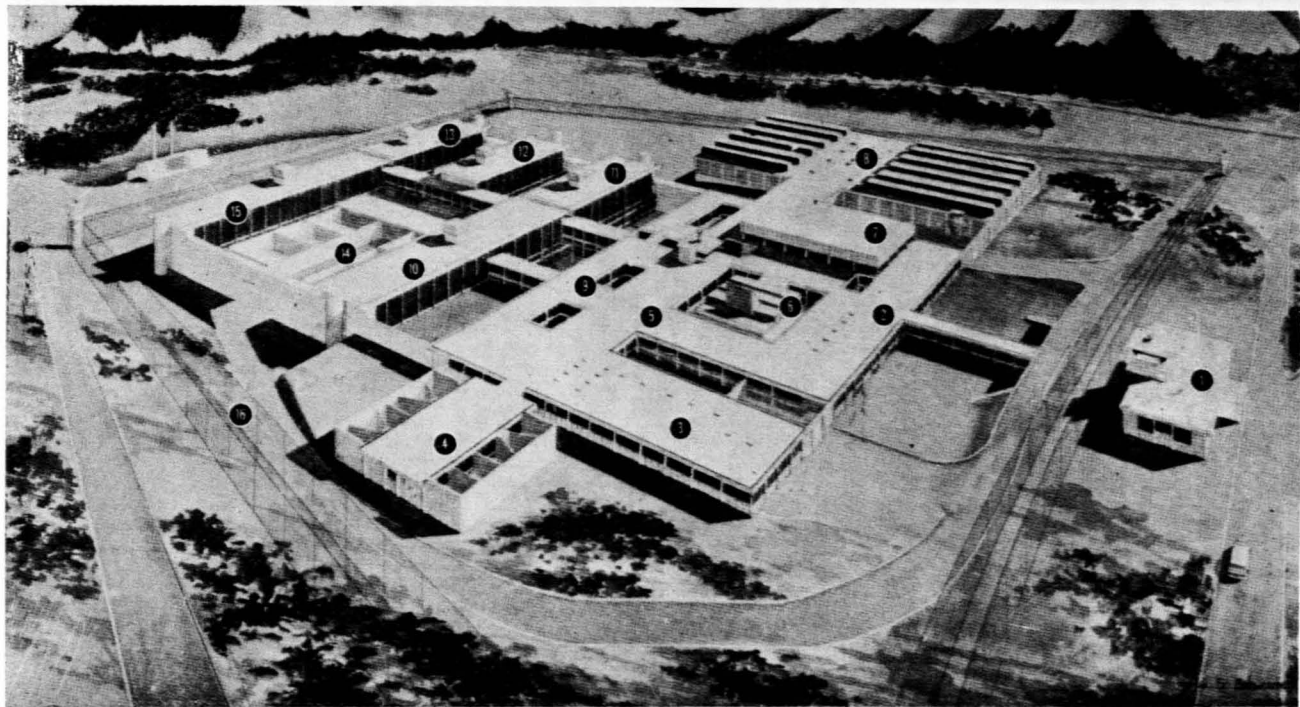
#### AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE NEW ZEALAND PROJECT

As expected of a modern society, design of building, maximum security permitting humane custody, classification and treatment, prison amenities, and preparation for ultimate return to society, were dominant factors in the planning, together with modern housing and amenities for the staff and their families.

The basic aim in design was to get away from any grim, forbidding institutional appearance, so that when viewed from the exterior, there should be little to denote a prison except the security fence and guard towers, and even with these have the appearance of a modern research centre or defence installation. Apart from taking away his life, to deprive a man of liberty is the greatest of all punishments, and the longer the sentence, dictated by the heinousness of his

crime, the greater the punishment and temptation to escape. History has proved time and time again that man will often risk life itself to gain freedom. Accordingly, security had to be planned for at all stages of construction against both individual or collective outbreaks of violence or attempts at escape and provision made for the instant sealing off of pockets of resistance. Both medium and long term prisoners, like all human beings, vary in character and qualities, with redeeming and non-redeeming features, vices and virtues, degrees of willing co-operation or resentful non-co-operation. Accordingly classification on reception is as essential with the hardened criminal as the first offender in the prisoner's own interest, and for purposes of assessment by the prison staff.

The sentencing justice invariably impresses on the offender that he is being sent to prison as a punishment for his crime and for the protection of society. That is never lost sight of by the prison staff and from the moment an offender is received into prison, he suffers loss of liberty for the period of the sentence passed, subject to good conduct remission. The basic aim of the modern prison and its custodians, however, is that confinement shall not be soul destroying, but within the security of the prison and according to the prisoner's degree of co-operation, he shall have access to amenities of a high standard. These include physical and mental activities, work of a rewarding nature, and improved facilities for visits from his family.



KEY TO BUILDINGS AT AUCKLAND MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON

- |                     |                                       |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Entry Block      | 5. Staff Offices                      | 9. Psychiatric Block                  |
| 2. Visiting Block   | 6. Chapel                             | 10. Classification Block              |
| 3. Hospital Block   | 7. Gymnasium and Administration Block | 11-15. Cell Blocks and Exercise Yards |
| 4. Punishment Block | 8. Workshops                          | 16. Double-wire fence                 |

No sentence is ever imposed these days to span a prisoner's expected normal human existence, and one day he will inevitably again return into society which can be either as a hardened and confirmed revengeful criminal, or a reformed character. Bearing all these factors in mind, New Zealand planned to reconcile the two objectives of maximum security and humane custody, so helping the inmates to prepare for their return to society as useful members. Success in this depends very largely on the influence exercised by those in daily contact with the prisoners, and in order to attract and retain personnel of the right type to the prison service, good-class accommodation with modern amenities for the officers and their families must receive high priority.

#### SITE AND SECURITY OF THE NEW ZEALAND MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON

The site is in a pleasant rural setting at Paremoremo, only 35 minutes' car journey from the city of Auckland and on a short by-pass between the two main northern routes. It affords ample room for future expansion, and already a medium security institution is in mind. A gently sloping sunny valley enabled the placing of a 250,000 gallons reservoir on high ground, served with water drawn from bores on the site. A grove of bushes beside a stream gives concealment to a modern sewerage treatment plant and a modern garbage disposal unit. The main buildings are on one side of the road, and in their construction

some 1,600 pre-cast concrete panels were used, cast 30 miles away, transported to site, and lifted into position by cranes, this being New Zealand's first experiment with pre-cast panels on such a large scale. The floor of the prison covers three and a half acres and a 20-foot high security fence of double mesh wire surrounds the building, enclosing about eight acres. It is flood-lit at night and can be scanned from four guard towers, one in each corner. Trip alarms are fitted along the perimeter fence and at the top of walls of exercise yards. A ring road around the whole area facilitates fast access by motor vehicles. Exterior gates are electronically controlled and movement into and out of these is via an outer entry and inspection block.

The central control point, situate within the main building, is the nerve centre of the prison. A system of electronically operated tally points, scanned by closed circuit television, controls all movements and each block can be immediately and completely shut off from the others. The vulnerable areas have armourplate bullet proof glass and manganese steel grills which are tool resistant. Identification at grills and gates is by closed circuit television assisted by telephone confirmation. General illumination is by means of 5,500 fluorescent lights but consistent with security, as much daylight as possible is provided, 400,000 square feet of glass having been used in the construction of the building. Auxiliary services are so



THE OLD MOUNT EDEN PRISON, AUCKLAND

arranged that all removable parts are inaccessible to inmates. Much of the work lies concealed in the half-mile of underground escape-proof service tunnels, or in 40-foot high ducts which form the central core of the building. The boiler house and stand-by power generating stations are outside the security fence. Heating is thermostatically controlled, in addition to which, each area can be switched on or off from the central control desk, the boiler plant responding automatically to such demands by day or night, an important psychological factor in a sub-tropical climate. The emergency diesel generator

cuts in automatically seven seconds after any break in the main power supply. The electrical installation alone is the most complicated ever installed in a building by the Ministry of Works in New Zealand and it is the second largest.

#### CELL ACCOMMODATION

There are five three-storeyed cell blocks, four of which contain 48 cells and one (the classification block) 56 cells. The cells are on the first and second floors and on the ground floor in each block are recreation and class-rooms, a barber's shop and hobby room. The three standard cell blocks and the

classification block also have dining rooms on the ground floor. The cells are ten feet six inches by six feet two inches and each is equipped with a fixed bed, a table, a chair, a stainless steel wash basin and w.c. There is vinyl covering on the floor and all except the detention cells are wired for three choices of radio programmes. The cells are also equipped with a call system to summon a prison officer when the need arises.

Each block is self-contained for dining and sleeping and for daily exercise in an attached yard. A prisoner will spend much of his time in this area, but he will leave his block to go to work, to the chapel, to the gymnasium, to the library and to receive visits.

One of the cell blocks of 48 is for prisoners who are hostile or high security risks. Sixteen of these cells are work cells for those who are thought to be too dangerous to work in association with others but they will nevertheless associate in the exercise yards and at recreation. Those not in one of the 16 work cells will work in either a four- or eight-man work-room in the cell block.

#### AMENITIES

There is a large internal administration and recreation block which is fully equipped with a fine gymnasium, a library, a hospital complete with operating theatre and X-ray unit, a psychiatric unit, administration offices, visitors' area and an interdenominational chapel. A workshop block has joinery, boot-

making, canvas goods and tailoring shops and a stores area. Work is produced for government and public services. Delivery and despatch is carried out during periods when the prisoners are in their cell blocks.

The six main workshops and classroom have plenty of natural light. Each one is independent and fully self-contained with all amenities, including overhead radiant heating, and drinking fountains.

Visiting is in relaxed conditions in a lounge where prisoners may sit and chat informally with their visitors. But for the high security inmates and for those who abuse the open visiting privileges, four secure visiting boxes have been provided.

In the basement there is a large modern kitchen, complete with everything one would find in a modern hotel, as well as a complete butcher's shop, a bake-house, a dry-cleaning unit and a spacious laundry. All these have modern equipment and there are four small cool rooms to hold supplies near at hand. The main bulk supplies are stored in the service area which is outside the security fence.

#### STAFF FACILITIES

The staff village is on the other side of the road to the main buildings but although essentially very close is nevertheless out of view of them. It is pleasantly sited, self-contained, and consists of 100 modern-type villas, gardens, a school, shop, community hall and other facilities. It is in no way an isolated community, the city of



GROUND VIEW OF STAFF HOUSING AT WAIKERIA YOUTH CENTRE  
(A BORSTAL NEAR TE AWAMUTU)

Auckland being only 35 minutes' journey, and there are also several small country towns and villages within a few miles.

#### COST

The total cost of the project, including all buildings, 100 houses, hall, shop, site works and services, but excluding the cost of the land, was approximately £3,500,000.

#### CRIME A COMMUNITY PROBLEM

One day the inmate inevitably passes out of the sheltered protective sphere of prison, with its ordered daily routine and the firmness but unruffled understanding of the effi-

cient prison officer, into the less tolerant and not so understanding community. His entry and preparation beforehand are through varying channels, many of which are still experimental until some form of retribution can be devised for offences against society less costly and wasteful of a nation's manpower than imprisonment. Whilst cost is as important to New Zealand as any other country and carefully watched, the waste of manpower is far more serious, manpower being so vitally necessary to develop its great potentials. If, instead of imprisonment, offen-

ders could be given the alternative of taking, for a specified period, stated public employment in some of the more remote, undeveloped regions, nevertheless of great national importance, both the country and the individual would benefit. The offender would remain a working member of society, responsible for his own and his family's support, paying his taxes and free to manage his own affairs, provided that he obeyed the Court's directions. Failure to do so would bring into effect the suspended sentence of imprisonment. New Zealand is giving thought to such ways in which to broaden the range of penalties available to the Courts.

Meanwhile, the manner of re-entry into society of offenders follows an orthodox pattern.

Subject to good behaviour, prison inmates receive remission of up to a quarter of their sentence and can also now earn a special additional remission not exceeding one-twelfth of the sentence by exemplary conduct or some outstanding service, e.g., helping to fire-fight in prison emergency.

Any sentence of borstal training or of 12 months' imprisonment or longer, is followed automatically by probation for one year. The Court may also order in particular cases a period of 12 months' probation to follow a shorter term of imprisonment. The purpose of having an automatic period of probation following a sentence of 12 months or more is to assist the parolee to readjust to the community from

which he has been temporarily estranged. As human nature varies, and what may appeal to one type of probationer is anathema to another, it is still an open question as to what is the proper approach to this important problem. Many parolees on release feel that they have paid their debt and do not appreciate the purpose of a further period of probation and immediately become antagonistic to it.

Pre-release hostels have been established which are used for selected trainees who are permitted to take private employment during the last few weeks of their sentence. The Prisoners' Aid Society is also taking a particular interest in the field of post-release hostels and care, after institutional restraints have been removed altogether.

Inmates recommended by a Release to Work committee are given temporary parole to engage in employment outside institutions and employers co-operate by giving work to them.

Certain categories of prisoners who are in prison for the first time and usually restricted, other than in exceptional circumstances, to married men, are now allowed to visit their homes once in four months, provided the domestic position is suitable on investigation. Apart from this scheme, selected first offenders and married borstal inmates have been allowed three days' leave at home during the Christmas/New Year period.

Affiliated to the New Zealand Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation

Society there are a number of local societies whose corporate members cover various churches, citizens' organisations such as Rotary, chambers of commerce, trades unions, Y.M.C.A., Toc H and women's guilds and associations, who provide the management and working teams of the local societies. Without religious, political or other persuasion, their activities are in three main fields, prison visiting, home visiting and employment. The object is to make a meaningful contact with inmates while they are serving their sentence. Prison visitors must be nominated by a local society and approved by the superintendent of a penal institution. Family visiting is carried out by selected women who offer friendship, advice, and assistance to

the families of inmates in the numerous practical problems a woman with children faces trying to keep her home up without adequate resources and often ignorant of the monetary benefits available to the family. Children can often best be helped by the woman visitor seeing their needs and meeting them, so easing the family's hardship and also the anxiety of the prisoner. "Employment teams" are composed of small groups of men who are themselves employers or who have close contact with firms willing to accept former offenders.

New Zealand considers crime to be a community problem which can only be attacked by helpful activity in the community.

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Since writing the above article, the author has received the following information of interest from the Secretary of Justice, New Zealand.

The new Auckland Maximum Security Prison was officially taken over by the Department of Justice on the 10th December 1968 by the Minister of Justice, The Hon. J. R. Hanan. The institution was not ready, however, for occupation by inmates until March 1969.

The procedure operating in connection with the printshop at Wellington Prison, illustrates the form of recognition given by trade unions to prison training of inmates. Printing and bookbinding are produced there for Government departments. Inmates working in the

printshop may apply for a correspondence course in printing and although their experience is not regarded strictly as a trade qualification, it does assist inmates to obtain employment in the printing industry after release if they wish. However, if a printing apprentice comes to prison and works in the printshop, he can sit his trade examinations and providing he returns to his apprenticeship after release, can credit the hours he served in prison towards his trade qualifications. If an inmate becomes interested in printing while in prison, and starts on an apprenticeship after being released, he can apply to have the hours he served at the trade in prison accredited towards



his trade qualifications. Much the same position applies to other trades. Men with prison experience have no difficulty joining the appropriate union after release.

Prisoners in New Zealand receive prison earnings of between 1.25 and 3.13 cents per hour, (100 cents is equivalent to 10 shillings), depending on their experience and work. This wage scale has not changed for some years and it is hoped to increase the rate of inmate pay as soon as practicable. Recently some consideration has been given to the possibility of paying inmates the national award rates of pay, but the matter has been

left over meantime. However, many inmates during the final months of their sentences are granted release to work parole, to work in the community where they are paid the award wages. While at work, the inmates pay board to the institution and contribute towards the maintenance of their dependants, and additional sums may also be appropriated for payment of outstanding fines for restitution. At the present time on any one day the number of borstal trainees and adult prisoners out on release to work parole is in excess of 5 per cent of the total prison and borstal population.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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D. T. JENKINS, an accountant, has been associated with the mining industry in South Wales, Yorkshire and Kent, taking an active part towards improving the social and industrial relationships within the industry. War service in Infantry to rank of Major. Justice of the Peace for the county of Kent. Contributor to Magistrates' and Mining Association journals. Family ties with New Zealand and Australia.

REV. ANTHONY CUNNINGHAM is the senior Roman Catholic Priest of the Prison Department of the Home Office. Ordained in 1945, he has had 24 years experience of priestly work, including two prisons and several mental hospitals.

N.B.—THE OBITUARY NOTICE to Dr. H.K. Snell, by Dr. I. G. W. Pickering, in July PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL, appeared by permission of the editor of the "British Medical Journal".

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# \*Pastoral Theology in Prisons

A. CUNNINGHAM

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ONE OF THE most exciting features of contemporary theology is the sight of theologians abandoning the intricacies and casuistry of the schoolmen and looking for new insights in the scriptural sources of the faith. The result of this adventure has been not only to revitalise theology but also to throw a critical and questioning glance at our pastoral methods and the theology underlying them.

In no area of the ministry is this new thinking more urgently needed and more relevant to its special needs than in the field of pastoral work in penal establishments.

Prior to these developments, one of our greatest dangers in pastoral effort, where we deal directly with people, was that our theology was losing more and more of its essential Christocentric quality and becoming too much the fruit of speculation from abstract principles derived from the manuals. I do not mean to suggest that all the conclusions culled by these methods

were erroneous. I suggest merely that they were incomplete. In so far as they have become more remote from the living Person of Christ, they likewise became less relevant to living men and women in the complexity of the human situation. Because, too, the arguments had become stylised and arid, the theologians had been unable to keep abreast of the findings of the modern behavioural sciences, and incapable of absorbing these new discoveries into a living theological synthesis.

The clergy can fail to realise more easily in the parish than in the prison the inadequacy of their pastoral theology. Every parish in this country has a large proportion of people who come to Mass regularly, receive the sacraments with varying frequency and who, as far as one can judge, want to lead good and useful lives. In the task of encouraging these parishoners to advance in the love of God, a great deal of priestly time is spent. Far be it from

me to decry or minimise the importance of this work. However, it is just possible that when the vast amount of time given to this section of the vineyard entails a corresponding curtailment of the priest's ministry to the lapsed, the pastor may well stand convicted, not only of the old siege mentality, but also of neglecting an essential aspect of his priesthood as presented to us in the New Testament. "For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke xix, 10). The priest must come to his parish to do likewise. The sponsoring of many Catholic societies, the encouragement of lay participation in the liturgical and social life of the community are all important works to which the modern priest is being stimulated by modern writers. But the heart of his work and of his priesthood is to bring the Person of Christ to those who have wandered away. Sometimes they have wandered into the penal establishment on the fringe of the parish. The priest's job is not to offer people a set of rules or a code of conduct, although it may involve these things. His job is to bring men to Christ.

It is unlikely that any priest would deny that there is a danger of his losing sight of certain fundamental elements in his pastoral theology.

#### FROM PARISH TO PRISON

The dangers of an inadequate pastoral theology are much more acute when the priest finds himself moved from the comforting security of parochial activity into the alien world of a prison or borstal. I use

the word alien deliberately, since the priest, plunged into this closed community, finds a different ethos from that in his parish. To begin with, the governors and staff are not usually Catholics, though a few are. The priest may well find that he is apprehensive about the value that other people place upon his work. The main life and work of the establishment is not directly or consciously spiritual, despite the fact that some governors and some of their staff are committed Christians. A much smaller percentage of the inmates than of his ordinary parishioners may come to Mass; only a fractional number may seem to want the sacraments or the priest. Religion can appear to mean no more than the denominational colour of the inmate's cell card. The pastoral approach of the priest may be rejected in the majority of cases. When a man asks to see him, the pastor may well be discouraged to find that all his questioner desires is some extra privilege or some material help which the prison welfare officer is more qualified to give. The priest may be forgiven if he asks himself whether he is doing any good. Would he not be more usefully occupied in the parish? Is he wanted, as a priest, either by inmates or staff?

We have reached the parting of the ways. At this point, the priest with an inadequate pastoral theology will begin to opt out. He will continue—though not always—to offer up Mass in the prison and hear the confession of anyone who wants to receive absolution. As for the

rest, he is at a loss what to do. The penal establishment becomes a pastoral nuisance he would gladly dispose of if he could. The incomplete theology which passed muster in the parish breaks down. He has spoken about moral rules to people who are not interested. He has offered a collection of truths which the men refuse to believe. He is empty-handed because he has forgotten that his faith is about a Person called Christ. It is the revelation by a Person about Three Persons to other persons. Christ must come to them through him before they will begin to be interested in laws and truths.

Another priest, whose pastoral theology is rooted in the New Testament instead of the manuals, does not make the same mistake. He is aware that while many of his ordinary parishioners have fairly satisfactory personal relationships in their lives, this is not so with most prisoners. The normal parishioner may not need to be so directly or so urgently reminded that all our revelation is about Three Persons; while our dogmatic statements and many rules are merely means of safeguarding truths about these Persons and a help to our loving Them. When men discard the sacramental system of the Church and scoff at its laws, this priest knows there is still work to do. He knows his job is to love and serve the men in his prison. He knows the greatest damage these souls have suffered is in their personal relationships. If they have rejected the authority of the Church,

its teaching and its laws, it is primarily because they have rejected people and have been rejected by them. The average recidivist offender is a man whose personal relationships are shattered, tragic, overlaid with guilt and often overburdened with disillusionment or even hatred. He has opted out of the normal life of society because of people. Often the roots of this rejection lie deep in his unconscious memory. He does not understand the bitterness that makes him turn like a preying animal on his kind: but, like the preying animal, he is often merely hungry—for affection—and afraid. He needs a person, a good person, a Divine Person to heal him. That Person can come to him in the priest. Only when he knows that Person will he believe him; only when he sees that Person can he love him.

#### FINDING CHRIST

We have now arrived at the notion of the Living God revealed in the Old and New Testament, but so much more in the New than the Old Testament. We can begin to see how futile it is to try and present religion to a prisoner with shattered human relationships as "true", or reasonable, or "because it makes sense", or worst of all, "because the Church teaches it". Like Christ, the priest saturated in the scriptures will make his contact not by demanding a standard of conduct, not by rebuking or by argument, but by compassion and love, even though this love may leave the man or boy far from the normal life of the Church. In the

normal world outside the prison many can come to Christ despite the shortcomings of the priest, but rarely without the influence of a good Catholic. But in the prison situation, where the man has lost faith in the security of personal relationships altogether, the priest is dealing with people who live, breathe and think almost solely on an emotional level—people in whose lives the instinctive response to emotional stimuli is almost the only response they can make. Emotional damage can go a lot deeper than our traditional concepts of human freedom have admitted.

So it happens that a priest may work for years among such men and women with little or no apparent result or reward, while all the time in the souls of these people may be growing a new perception of the Person of Christ. They see in this "other Christ" a kind of love, a fidelity, a compassion that is more than human. They can begin to like, then to admire, then to love and then to imitate. Christ begins to be formed in them silently and unobtrusively as in Mary's womb.

There is a striking parallel between the inadequate pastoral theology causing one priest to opt out of real pastoral work in prisons and that which causes parochial clergy to neglect a continuing mission to the lapsed of the parish. How frequently in a parish, are the families of those who are known to be "no good" left to a perfunctory annual or mission visit? Too often, in the past, has such a visit been in

the form of a peremptory demand to start attending Mass, to rectify the marriage, or to send the children for instruction. How rarely is a living personal friendship built up first with these people who do not understand and are unable to accept these demands.

I do not mean to imply that some priests have forgotten that Christ is the centre of their personal priestly lives. To do so would be an unjust insult to my readers. What I am saying is that many have failed to translate this living truth into terms of their pastoral methods in approaching people. We have too often supposed that the lapsed share our faith and are consciously lazy and neglectful. To begin with, this is psychologically unlikely. It is also theologically untrue in many cases. The person of Christ, who is so real to us, is a dim, semi-historical figure to those who have been baptised and brought up in a lapsed family. Just as our faith would be quite uninteresting to us without this Living Person in our lives, so it is to them for whom he is not a living reality. Secure in this love, we go out and make demands which are impossible to accept without such a love. Meeting Christ so regularly in our Mass, prayers and reading, we suppose that his incipient presence is in their hearts. Baptism, attendance at Mass or being married in Church are important only if Christ exists. Those who do not know him cannot see the relevance of these things to their lives. We must go and meet these people, whether prisoner or parishioner.

where they are, not where we would like them to be. Only by staying with them and loving them can we give them sight of him. Christ cannot come to persons in a depersonalised or dehydrated way. The life of the Church, which we enjoy, is the result of our accepting Christ. Our possession of Christ in faith is not the result of our accepting the Church. Historically, in our own lives, it may have seemed to be this way, if we were born into a Catholic family. But logically and theologically it is not so. We accept the Church, because the Christ we already accept founded her. Is it possible that the accident of being born into the Church by infant baptism, before we could accept Christ consciously and personally, could be responsible for a major defect in our pastoral outlook? The question is interesting. I do not subscribe to the view that children born into Catholic families should not be baptised until they are able to make a personal commitment. However, it is good to bear in mind that it is possible for us priests, born into a Catholic family, to have unconscious assumptions that are not necessarily part of our faith.

A further misconception can sometimes lead to mistaken pastoral methods. We are so used to speaking to those whom we believe share our basic views about the Church, that we may be tempted to think that God's plans for the individuals we encounter are the same as ours. Our efforts are naturally bent towards bringing those we meet into the full fellowship of the

Church. This attitude was, until recently, encouraged by the idea of the Church as an enclosed fortress to be defended. There is no justification in our theology for believing that God wills all those we meet to become practising Catholics. On the other hand there is every justification for believing that God has plans to give grace to all men. Some of God's ways do not envisage membership of the Church, although if one wishes to be theologically pernickety, one can say that there is always some implicit link with the Church, however unconscious. But we must not think that God's designs for his own supernatural action on the souls of men are limited to the particular mission of his Church and to the means he has bequeathed to his Church to achieve that mission. I mention this as just one more reason for not succumbing to the temptation that makes a priest feel there is nothing worthwhile left to do when he fails to turn men's interest towards the beliefs and sacraments of the Catholic Faith. God still has plans for them, loving and redemptive plans. We still have a part to play in those plans. God may well want us to be with these men and to bring his love to them, so that they may come to love him in some way that is possible for them. God's gifts and graces are not evenly distributed. His expectations may be better fitted to the creature whom he has created than our identity-kit picture of the practising Catholic. In a prison, a priest will, perhaps, bring

few men "back to the Church". Equally well, he may sow the love of God and a more adequate idea of God in many of their lives through his own love. This would not be a waste of time. It might well be of greater value than ministering to those whose practice encourages and consoles us. It was Christ, after all, who suggested that the good shepherd would leave the 99 sheep who are not lost in the desert to go and find the one that is lost. The busy parish priest with a penal establishment in his care can hardly regard his good parishioners as being lost in a desert. But he may feel it is more "useful" to spend a greater part of his time with his parishioners than with the lost sheep in his prison.

It is only just, as well as wise, to say here that many of the priests looking after our penal establishments in this country are aware of all that I have written. They see the need of what has been called "pre-evangelism". Unfortunately, there are others who allow discouragement to lead to an opting out, to the no small scandal of a dedicated prison staff. It is a source of great sorrow and bewilderment to witness a scene in which so many outside the Church can see a whole area of priestly work which is not apparent to the priest himself.

Any diocesan bishop is well aware of the difficulties he has in placing the right man in the right place. Probably, only a diocesan bishop is fully aware of the many conflicting calls made upon him for the services of his priests. Despite

this, however, I believe that greater care could sometimes be taken in appointing a priest to a parish containing a penal establishment. Prison work demands special pastoral qualities and a theological maturity not always present in every priest.

The notion that any good priest can undertake any work and that his obedience will win him the gifts, both natural and supernatural, to make a success of his job simply does not work. Indeed it rests upon an inadequate idea of the relationship between the natural and the supernatural in a priest's spiritual life. I think theologians today would reject the attempt to view these two aspects of man's life in the rather disjointed manner of earlier writers. Generally speaking, one can say that unless a priest feels a call to this very special work, with the massive emotional demands it makes upon him, he will not succeed at it. By success in this context, I do not mean the ability to bring prisoners to the full sacramental life of the Church. I mean a capacity to go on loving when it is not returned. It is worthwhile noting that Christ's personal public ministry to his own people was conspicuous by its apparent failure and his ultimate rejection. Yet out of what he sowed, the Church grew.

In claiming that God's plans for his own actions are not necessarily the same as his plans for the Church I am not espousing the cause of situation ethics, nor indulging in the existentialist theology that truth is

relative to the singular needs of each human person. I am stating that God has not revealed the full scope of his divine action in the world to the Church. Linked to this truth is another, which is relevant here.

#### DIMINISHED FREEDOM

Man's freedom, like every human faculty, is limited. We have sometimes spoken in the Church as if man were free, in a sort of absolute sense, to act or not to act throughout the whole range of human moral choice. One of the things one soon learns in prison is the sad spectacle of man who is not altogether free to alter his life. Modern studies of the influence of environment upon human behaviour have highlighted whole areas of human conduct in which the individual's outlook and will power have been adversely influenced by environmental factors of which the person himself is not even conscious. Indeed, he may have the illusion that were he a better man he could offset the adverse elements in his life. He frequently resolves to become such a person. But equally frequently he does not know how to cope with his problems and fails to diagnose the real causes of his problems which are hidden below the level of his consciousness. He is very surprised when he relapses. The complexity of his make-up is beyond him—and others also. Psychiatric medicine has enabled us to see what previous generations of theologians have not seen. It may be objected that moral theology has always recognised the limitations

placed upon human liberty by habit or passion, and that we priests are used to accepting this in coping with human problems both inside and outside the confessional. But I am not talking of these areas where man can be conscious of the causes of his lack of freedom. The psychiatrist can show us beyond all reasonable doubt that man's behaviour can be dictated by unconscious emotional causes. I am not asserting that man's liberty is totally destroyed in every department of his volitional life; but that there are large areas of that life where the emotional compulsions are such that there is no real liberty of choice. Most priests today would see the validity of this observation in the realm of strict psychosis, or, in other words, mental illness. But many might not be so ready to recognise that there are areas like this in every man's life, and particularly in the lives of psychopathic offenders who frequently find themselves in large numbers in our recidivist prisons. If we fail to understand this, we may well be interpreting compulsive behaviour as a rejection of God, the Church and ourselves, simply because the man says this is what he is doing. The truth may be quite the opposite. His angry rejection is more often than not a plea for help, a challenge to understand, a despairing shout for a sign from heaven, even while his words are a rejection of everything divine. The priest who stays with the man while he is being verbally rejected is just beginning to break through the emotional bar-



rier the man has erected to keep out the human race. As these barriers begin to break, the priest can creep through to the man himself. After the storm, the man will begin to see that someone with a most unusual love is still with him. He has probably not met love like this before. He knows it can stand the test. How strange it is that we who are so aware of the limitations and frailties of human nature have taken so long to realise the limits of man's free will!

The sort of situation I have been describing clearly demands of the priest not only great understanding, but great emotional control on his part. In some areas of our emotional life we have been trained to beware of emotion almost before it arises. In other departments we have been urged to ignore. Certainly when I was studying for the priesthood, nobody suggested one could use emotion. It was a word on the fringe of sin. It may well have been a misconceived way of training celibate clergy to cope with their relationships with women. I say this, because so little attention has been paid to the lack of emotional control in pastoral clergy when it comes to anger, impatience or false jocularity in side-stepping the problems of people who come to us in great stress. In a parish one can see much harm done in these ways. In a prison, with impatience and anger much more easily provoked, lack of control can completely nullify all that the priest is trying to do. It is a terrible thing when an angry or impatient priest finishes the emo-

tional damage done to this man by his family and friends.

It is to combat such pastoral inadequacies that varying refresher courses are organised by the Chaplaincy Department of the Prison Department. With other clerics, the priest is given the opportunity to work out his precise role and the tools he needs to fulfil it to the best of his ability. Initial training courses are seen to be insufficient on their own. For this work training must go on all the time. This training must be spiritual and intellectual and be related to the objectives of the service as a whole.

To say that the prisoner is one who rejects authority even more strenuously than the rest of contemporary society may seem like stating an obvious truism. But the matter is worthy of closer examination. We may ask what are the springs of this rebellion. The prisoner's revolt is not an intellectual one like that of the anarchist, nor a political one like that of the agitator whose aim is to disrupt society. The prisoner's revolt is an emotional affair. His experience of authority has been one that saps his belief in its integrity because of the conduct of those who wield it. His first awareness of this has often been the blatant abuse of authority in his own home. Parents who flouted all law, whether human or divine, bullied or shouted him into submission to their momentary whims. At its worst, the parental authority was used to corrupt him and set him on the path to where he finds himself now. The authority of the State, against which he has

grown up to find himself at variance, has from his earliest years been the authority that he has to fight, that will track him down, capture and punish him. He often believes, falsely or truly, that this authority will bend justice in order to convict him. Because, for the most part, he has not been to church since he left school, the authority of the Church and priest is one that his world discarded long ago: it simply has no conceivable use in adult life. While the Church calls and rebukes from a distance, he feels this is because the Church is not in touch with reality. He belongs to the real world. It does not seem to value the things he wants. The things the Church values, he does not want.

The prisoner is not alone in his misconception of the nature of authority. In the Church itself, there has sometimes been quite a warped idea of what is the function of authority and how it should be used. At times, the ecclesiastical authorities have used their power to bludgeon people into submission, as, for example, when it has excommunicated civil rulers. Occasionally, it has acted completely *ultra vires* when it has claimed to release citizens from their allegiance to an erring monarch. In our own time, we do not want for examples of clergy who claim, whether truthfully or not, that Church authority has shown no concern for their personal needs, save the demand to obey. I am sure it is true that some of the factors preventing those in authority from making their concern known to

those under them are more complex and difficult than the fretting cleric may think. My point here is not to justify such complaints, but to state how authority in the Church is sometimes seen by the clergy themselves. If this is the case within the ranks of the priesthood, even on some occasions, it is not surprising that the idea of authority in the minds of prisoners should be even more grotesque.

It may not be an exaggeration to remark that the conception of authority in the minds of those who hold it and in the thoughts of those who are subject to it has not always been the highest or most accurate.

SERVANTS OF OUR BRETHREN

The New Testament must once more be our guide. After washing the feet of the Apostles, Christ turns to the 12 and says: "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (John xix 12-14). Divine authority is revealed to us as a saving action of God. Its rules and laws are given to serve the spiritual needs of man. In the desert Christ rejected the temptation to assume the authority of power. Vainly, he tried to convince the Jews that the Messiah was not coming to set up his rule by force, but by serving and, indeed, dying. Human authority is founded to serve human beings. It is not hard to see that man organised himself in social groups and set up an authority in the groups to preserve

his life, his person and his rights. The source of this authority, humanly speaking, is man's concern for man. Divine authority is the revelation of God's concern for man manifested in his protecting laws and his protecting Church.

Authority will be accepted by the prisoner only if he sees it as serving him and his kind. He is not interested in an authority that lords it over him. The only concept of authority that has any chance of being accepted by him is one that has its justification in his well being.

Thank God, this idea of authority has been vigorously expounded by the Second Vatican Council. After the wonderful chapter II of *Lumen Gentium*, on "The Church as the People of God", chapter III, on "The Hierarchical Structure of the Church, with special reference to the Episcopate", has these opening words:

For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in his Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body. For those ministers who are endowed with sacred power are servants of their brethren, so that all who are of the People of God, and therefore enjoy a true Christian dignity, can work towards a common goal freely and in an orderly way, and arrive at salvation.

That this new statement was hailed as a great reform inside and outside the Council may be a measure of how twisted the notion of authority had become in the Church herself.

The prisoner will come to accept God when he accepts the priest as a loving servant. His instinct is theologically right.

# Pentonville— Yesterday and Today

G. ROSS

IN 1836, WILLIAM CRAWFORD, an inspector of English prisons, visited America in company with other European observers to study their penal system. Crawford was greatly impressed with two recently-built prisons in Pennsylvania. They were the Western Penitentiary at Pittsburgh and the Eastern Penitentiary at Cherry Hill. Both these prisons operated the separate system, which in practice meant that a prisoner could spend years in a cell without seeing anyone other than the prison guards. He would exercise by himself, work in his cell and in his free time read the Bible. Meditation and solitary confinement was considered to be excellent for the reformation of the criminal. Auburn Prison in the State of New York used a somewhat different policy. There, prisoners could work in association provided they observed the strictest silence, but a word uttered meant an immediate flogging.

On his return to England,

Crawford submitted an enthusiastic report to the then Home Secretary, Lord John Russell. There is little doubt that the separate system of Pennsylvania, and the silent system of Auburn Prison proved an inspiration to the then Home Department. The seeds of an idea were sown, and it was manifested by the building of Pentonville; not just a prison; a system; a model prison.

The first stone for this remarkable edifice was laid by the Marquis of Normanby, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the 10th April 1840. The prison was completed in the autumn of 1842, and the first "residents" signed in on the 21st December 1842, just in time for Christmas. Regrettably their immediate reactions have not been recorded!

The prison was designed by John Havilland, who had also designed the Eastern Penitentiary in Philadelphia. The principle was the same, rows of single cells,

arranged in tiers and in separate blocks radiating from the centre like the spokes of a wheel. The total cost of the building was £85,000. It had 520 cells and the furnishings and facilities were considered to be first class. Each cell had a stool, a table, a hammock with mattress and blankets. The cells also had a water closet (no slopping out), and washing facilities; an excellent supply of cold and warm water was always available. Gas lighting was thoughtfully provided in each cell, which lent an air of piety during Bible reading and meditation.

Each cell was fitted out with machinery and equipment to enable the prisoner to work in his cell. Various trades were catered for; they were:

carpenters, joiners, implement makers, shoe makers, turners, weavers, rug and mat makers, basket makers, tailors.

Today, over a century later, we no longer have individual toilet facilities in the cells, but have progressed to the communal recesses that exist in almost all prisons in Great Britain. Pentonville still retains a mat-making and tailoring industry and up to a few years ago, it had basket-making and shoe-making shops.

Naturally the layout of the prison in those early days was vastly different than it is today. Pentonville stood on six and threequarter acres of land, and the front of the building looked down on a terrace

and road 75 feet in width. Entering the prison, the governor's house was situated on the right of the gate, and the chaplain's house on the left. At the rear of the prison was a garden, about two acres. The "warder's rooms" as they were then called, were situated at both ends of the boundary wall. After entering the gate the entrance to the main building was through the basement. In the basement there were 20 cells, unoccupied, which were used for the employment of tinsmiths, blacksmiths, and nail-makers. There were in addition, 12 cells which were used exclusively for punishment. The basement also had two workshops, stores, warders' mess room and a principal officers' mess room. The reception of prisoners was catered for with a ward in the same part of the building.

On the ground floor were offices for the governor, chaplain, medical officer and a special office for the commissioner's use. On the same floor, there was accommodation for the deputy governor, which in the original plan is described as "apartments". It would seem likely therefore, that he was obliged to "live in" at that time. A waiting and visiting room was also provided on this floor.

The upper part of the building comprised the chapel, and a number of convalescent rooms. The chapel, of course, was much smaller than it is now, and accommodated only 256 prisoners. The method of attending the service was drastically different to the system that exists today. In

those days each prisoner sat in a "stall" completely separate from his neighbour; there were 12 stalls in each row, and every row was identified by a letter marked in the woodwork. There were separate pews for the governor and officers, and they were positioned in a manner that ensured maximum supervision for the congregation. An additional refinement to the chapel was the locking of every door in each row by an officer using a "handle and crank". This, a sophisticated method then, would not be considered suitable for holding animals today. There was a service daily, it was, of course, compulsory and indeed it was considered vital for the reformation of the criminal.

The convalescent rooms acted as the infirmary or hospital, but it was said that they were rarely in use. Two years after the prison was built the then principal medical officer, Dr Owen Rees, said in his official report: "General good health which pervades the whole body of prisoners due to the abundant ventilation and equable temperature which reigns throughout the prison".

On the evidence available from that period, it is unlikely that his patients would have shared his view.

Water at that time was supplied by a well, situated between two wings. It was operated by crank machinery running through a series of very small compartments, each one occupied by a single prisoner. This was hard sweated labour and only the very fit could survive this

employment without damage to their health. A second pump existed in the basement and again crank machinery was used. Sixteen prisoners were employed there all working in separate compartments. An official report at the time, which mentions this second pump said: "Affords increased means of giving hard labour in those cases in which it is considered desirable either for health or punishment". If this statement proves nothing else, it does at least make us aware that pragmatism was not merely an invention of the twentieth century!

John Howard's massive and important work, *The State of The Prisons in England and Wales*, published in 1777, was a savage indictment on the penal system in this country. The prisons in England had remained unchanged for centuries and were places of vice, corruption, squalor, violence and idleness. There was little concern from the public or Parliament over prison conditions, and an attitude of indifference from the Church.

Pentonville, therefore, was hailed as a brave new "experiment", and the two inspectors of prisons responsible for its administration, William Crawford and the Rev. Whitworth Russell were said to be men of vision. They were to submit a yearly report on Pentonville, so that both Houses could follow the progress of the "model prison". The principle object of the prison was to put into effect the separate system of discipline. The policy for the reformation of the prisoner was a combination of severe discipline,

instruction in useful trades, and other moral influences. An official report justified the separate system: "the isolation of the criminal from other criminals".

In a statement to Parliament, the then Secretary of State, made it very clear that any prisoner going into Pentonville would be in no doubt that his stay there would be no longer than 18 months, because Pentonville was the "portal to the Penal Colony". In Pentonville he would be taught a trade, which would serve him well in Van Diemen's land, now Tasmania. It was said, that this was a wonderful chance to start a new life, as "the chain of his former habits would be broken". This meant of course, good-bye to family and friends, but this factor was considered to be of little consequence.

The progress of a prisoner under a sentence of transportation was carefully observed and after 12-18 months he was placed in one of three categories. This might be seen as Pentonville's first attempt at "classification"! If his conduct was judged to have been good, then he was certain when he arrived in the colony to be given a "ticket of leave" which meant freedom. If his progress was not up to the required standard, then he would only get a "probationary pass". This meant that he would only receive a limited portion of his earnings and his liberty would be severely restricted. A prisoner with a bad report was sent to Tasman's Peninsula to work without pay under terrible con-

ditions, deprived of all liberty, an abject convict.

Oh, never fear man, nought's  
to dread,

Look not left nor right;

In all the endless roads you  
tread,

There's nothing but the night.

A. E. Houseman's immortal lines might well have been a suitable text for any man sent to Pentonville in those early days. There was nothing to fear physically, if you remained mute and insensitive to a situation, which removed you from any contact with your fellow man; if you could put out of your mind your loved ones and friends; if you were capable of retaining your sanity in the loneliness and isolation that was to be your life in the endless hours ahead. The only certainty at the end of each day was the Bible; the solitude; the night.

The daily life of a prisoner in Pentonville was one of unbroken monotony. They were given their breakfast at 6 a.m. and worked in their cells until 7 p.m. This period was interrupted only for the serving of meals, attendance of the daily church service, and for one hour's exercise.

The meals at Pentonville were as follows:

Breakfast: 10 ozs. of bread  
and  $\frac{3}{4}$  pint of cocoa.

Dinner:  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint of soup, 5 ozs.  
of bread, 1 lb. of potatoes,  
4 ozs. of meat (usually beef  
or mutton) and free of bone.

Supper: 1 pint of gruel, 5 ozs.  
of bread.

Any prisoner on punishment received 16 ozs. of bread and an adequate amount of water.

The kitchen was situated in the basement, and a hoisting machine was used to lift the trays of food to the ground floor. The food was then moved in a small wagon or barrow along the ground floor landings. On the upper landings the food was moved around the cells on a "light trussed iron carriage" which ran along the top of the landing railings. Each man received his meal through a small trap set in the door of the cell. This method of "service" was felt to be admirable by the administration, although this addition to the culinary arrangements was certainly not popular with the prisoners.

Prisoners were exercised separately for one hour, and were locked in their respective exercise yards. At that time there were 114 exercise yards, which could be controlled by one officer. To attempt to talk to another prisoner was a most serious offence, and any such malpractice meant immediate punishment. Any prisoner employed on the crank machinery, pumping water, was not permitted this exercise period: his body was always subject to the rigorous routine of his task and any other exercise was felt to be irrelevant. In all, it took four hours to exercise the prison which is not surprising when you consider that the daily average population in January 1844 was 501.

Prisoners had a bath every fortnight. There were eight baths in the

prison and an official report stated that 32 men were bathed in one hour!

The prison warders, as they were then known, were carefully selected and had to be men capable of the upmost loyalty to their superior officers. They had to rigidly enforce the silent and separate system of the prison and any warder who spoke to a prisoner other than to give him an order, was considered to be guilty of a serious disciplinary offence and could be dismissed from his job. The chief warder was a martinet, whose power was feared by both warders and prisoners. He ensured that the rules were enforced by his staff and he exacted a high degree of discipline from them.

In the first few years of its existence, the gospel of Pentonville was spread throughout Europe, and many eminent persons came to examine the prison. All were greatly impressed with the apparently perfect order and control that it produced. In 1842 the prison was visited by the King of Prussia, the King of Saxony, Grand Duke Michael of Russia, Prince William of Prussia, Prince Alexander of the Netherlands, and observers from Holland, France, Austria, Denmark, and Sweden. Pentonville was a shrine for the progressive thinkers of the day; the in place to visit!

Pentonville was not however without its critics, although for many years they were voices in the wilderness. It was argued that the system, for reforming criminals, only made them embittered, unfitted



for their return to society. Worse, it was alleged that in the first 10 years at Pentonville, there were "upwards of 10 times more lunatics than should be according to the normal rate". There was certainly considerable evidence to support this statement. Indeed, in an official report figures were given which were disturbing to say the least, although many felt it was a conservative analysis. Out of every 60,000 prisoners confined in Pentonville there were: 220 cases of insanity, 210 cases of delusions, 40 cases of suicide. When one considers the total isolation of their confinement such effects on the balance of the mind is completely understandable.

Every century has its reformers, and the harsh and useless system that existed in Pentonville, and other prisons built during that period, was a challenge they gladly accepted. The Gladstone Committee made a number of important recommendations for prison reform, and most of them were embraced in an Act passed in 1895. Change was on the way, although progress was slow at first, but the march to a new era in penal treatment had begun.

A system died many years later, but the "model", as it was often humorously called continued to grace the Caledonian Road. Once it had pioneered an experiment in the treatment of prisoners, and carved for itself a chapter, often black in British penal history.

Pentonville 1969, could still be regarded as an experiment. Built 126

years ago, yet seeking a relevant identity in the penal practice of the twentieth century. Over the years it has been the subject for assessment by a variety of people, ranging from ex-residents to sociologists. Through their eyes the public have seen it as: an expensive dosshouse; a hostel for inadequates; and, less kindly, as the penal scrap-heap. There is little doubt that arguments could have been advanced to support each viewpoint.

Pentonville would certainly be looked at in a different light today. Classed as a "B" minus prison it receives men serving up to 12 months. Apart from a small number of civil prisoners, aliens, and others awaiting deportation, the population is a recidivist one. The average population in April this year was 1,181.

Men serving three months and over are located in the induction unit following their reception, where they will spend up to three days. During this period they will be interviewed by the induction staff, which apart from the uniformed officers regularly employed in this unit, will include the chaplain, or a member of his department, a psychologist, and a welfare officer.

The interviews, which are tactfully and skilfully used, will determine his prison category, suggest his possible suitability for transfer to an open prison, and can reveal valuable information regarding his social situation outside. Where a drink or drug problem is indicated, it will be referred to the medical

officer, or in many cases to one of the groups dealing with this problem within the prison. Particular attention will be paid to the homeless offender, and wherever possible arrangements will be made to ensure that he has somewhere to live on his release. His case will become the problem of the outside hostels liaison officer. This department is under the control of a principal officer, who is assisted by a small team of officers who assist in placement. The department has a close liaison with the wardens of these hostels, who, as voluntary associates are able to interview these men prior to their release.

Similarly, men with serious domestic problems are seen by the welfare staff who, apart from discussing a problem sympathetically, will, wherever possible, attempt to resolve it.

Apart from its essential contribution to classification, the unit is a good example of team work between the specialists and discipline staff.

Industry within the prison varies from the traditional canvas work, to a modern and well-equipped carton manufacturing workshop. This particular workshop carries out high class production work for a local firm. Men who are physically, or in some cases, mentally unsuitable for work elsewhere, are provided with sedentary employment in the textile shop.

Over 80 men are employed on outside working parties, which can mean working on a farm at Epping, to doing semi-skilled work for a

private firm in a workshop acquired by the prison in North London. A modern workshop is under construction in the prison, and is expected to be completed by early next year.

Perhaps the most important development in Pentonville during the last 10 years has been its contribution to the outworkers scheme. "R" wing accommodates over 70 men, who have been selected at other establishments for this scheme. All are in the last six months of a sentence of four years or more. The scheme affords them the opportunity of working in industry outside, earning a normal wage, and more important, enables them to adjust more easily to the timetable of society outside. They are able to renew their relationships with their family and friends through parole at week-ends, an important aspect of this scheme.

The staff employed in this wing take a close interest in the progress of each man, and the regime is very much of a supportive nature. The scheme is designed to help them regain their self respect, and to ensure, as far as possible, that their re-entry into society is not complicated with some of the major problems, which have confronted so many men on their release in the past. Most men finish the scheme with a respectable account in the Post Office savings bank, and a job to go to, and it is hoped a determination not to return.

Education in the prison is provided in a modern education block,

and the programme is under the supervision of the tutor organiser. The evening classes offer a wide variety of subjects, which are taught by teachers supplied by the Holloway Institute of Further Education. The illiterate receive additional help through an afternoon class, where they are given every assistance by the prison library officer.

An inmate may still find a Bible in his cell, but he will also have available to him, a choice of 30,000 books from the prison library. The books are supplied by the special services section of Islington Public Library, whose expert staff maintain a close liaison with the prison library officers, through regular weekly visits.

*Pentonview* the monthly magazine of the prison, is published from the library, and contains contributions from both staff and inmates. A *Daily Bulletin* is also published, which ensures accurate information regarding classes, groups, and any changes in the routine of the prison: it is also noted for its razor-sharp comments on current affairs.

This year Pentonville entered a display for National Library Week, which was shown in the local library, and it attracted many interested visitors. It is considered to be the first time that any prison has entered this event.

The building of a gymnasium in recent years, has made a very real impact on the recreational facilities available to the population. The enthusiasm of two officer P.E.I's,

has resulted in producing a basketball team, which is represented in the first division of the Metropolitan League. At present all games are played at "home" which gives the visiting team a chance to play in one of the best gymnasiums in North London; a walk from the gate to the gymnasium is an excursion through two centuries.

Meals today at Pentonville are served on the cafeteria system. The food can be compared to the meals served in a works canteen outside, as such, they are unlikely to receive a mention in the "Good Food Guide"! However, considering the size of the population the standard is remarkably high.

Dining in association is, of course, limited at present to a few, due almost entirely to lack of space, and the formidable difficulties presented in coping with a population of this size.

The atmosphere within the prison is noticeably good, and visitors are often quite surprised at the lack of tension in the community. This particular factor is almost certainly due to the departure of the traditional methods of discipline, to the present methods which seek to stimulate in the inmate an acceptance of the fact that a reasonable standard of conduct is not incompatible with his present situation. This position is assisted through the present aims of treatment, and the positive involvement of staff at all levels in carrying out this policy.

The possibilities of greater experiment in this area was greatly increased as a result of the security,

classification given to Pentonville following the Mountbatten Report. With a low security problem, Pentonville clearly had to re-examine its general policy in the light of its new situation. This meant a gradual, but marked change in the role of the prison; an emphasis on treatment rather than mere containment: the recognition of the potential of the basic grade officer, when encouraged to develop his knowledge and skills in this sphere.

To suggest that this new role could be immediately embraced by all, would be a denial of human nature itself. Irving Goffman notes this aspect in his essay on the *Characteristics of Total Institutions*: "Professionals, of course, are not the only staff grouping in a somewhat difficult relation to the official goals of the establishment. Those members of staff who are in continuous contact with inmates may feel that they too, are being set a contradictory task". The introduction of in-service training was designed to equip the officer to cope with a new situation, which for him must mean greater responsibilities in a role

that is not without its anxieties.

The views, often rigid, held by the inmates on prison and authority in general, have more often than not, been formed at an early stage in their institutional life. It has proved important, therefore, to make the inmate aware of the role of the prison staff, and the primary aims of the prison. The involvement of staff, both uniform and specialist in the different groups in the prison, the constructive help given by those associated with the outside hostels, has to a great extent created a favourable environment for the present policy of the prison.

The problem of implementing such a policy in a building that was designed for a totally different purpose, with a population figure that threatens to wreck every attempt at individual treatment, remains a dilemma for all who work there. As Pentonville moves into the 1970's, the question which needs to be asked is whether this monument to the Victorian era, can justify a place in the penal system of this century? History will make the final judgement.

# Crimes of Violence

Rev. J. ARTHUR HOYLES

THE INCREASE in violent crime is one of the unpleasant facts which the community has to face. It would appear that for every offence of this kind in 1938 there are now 10. It is easy to become emotional about this trend and to play upon the fears of the community for one purpose or another. Serious though the problem is it must be examined rationally.

It has to be recognised, for example, that there has been a considerable increase in all types of offence and that violence against the person is still well down on the list. It would seem that there is a greater disposition to order our communal life by statute and to bring the police into the picture more often. At one time private fights were common and few people took any notice. Today there has to be a prosecution.

From a survey carried out by the Cambridge Institute of Criminology other significant facts emerged. One

was that firearms were not often used. More than half the offenders examined in the inquiry had used no weapon at all. Another was that the number of victims sustaining *serious* injury had not increased. Only 6 per cent of the injured had been detained in hospital for a week or more, and not more than 3 per cent would have been eligible for compensation.

The suggestion that ordinary people were in mortal danger from hooliganism was not borne out by the survey. In more than half the cases examined the offender and the victim were known to each other and in over a quarter they were either related or well known. Family disputes accounted for a third of the crimes of violence committed.

As far as murder is concerned the records show that indiscriminate killing is rare. About 30 per cent of adult male victims were killed by wives or relatives, over half of adult

female victims by husbands or relatives, and about three-quarters of victims under 16 years of age were put to death by their own parents or relatives.

The part played by alcohol in the commission of violent crime is well known and was clearly shown by the survey. Almost half of the cases studied were committed around public houses and cafes. One in four of the sexual assaults on women were committed by men who had been drinking. Much of the increase in violent crime was found to be associated with drunkenness. These facts are quoted, not to minimise the problem, but to keep it in proper perspective.

Why do people try to injure one another? Have the scientists any light to throw on the motivation of violent crime? The earlier criminologists thought that people behaved like wild animals because they had been born defective and could not do otherwise. The fact that manual workers are the main offenders suggests that low intelligence is a factor to be reckoned with. Many violent offenders are clearly suffering from some form of mental disorder.

Recent studies have thrown light on the emotional drives which have led otherwise normal people to commit brutal acts. One of these was undertaken by Dr. T. C. N. Gibbens, who examined the case histories of 32 men and seven women who had been sentenced to imprisonment for cruelty to children involving violence. The offenders

were interviewed in 20 prisons and all available information about them was assembled.

The conclusion was stated in one short sentence, namely: "It is rejection, indifference and hostility which produce the cruel parent". Other factors were present, of course. Some were of low intelligence, some were drunk, some had difficult or incompetent marriage partners, some of the children had been very provoking, many of the offenders had been severely punished during their own childhood. The constant factor, however, was that the cruel parents had themselves been rejected and unwanted. What is the answer?

The usual reaction to violent crime is that severe punishment should be inflicted upon the aggressor. It is said that brutal offenders only understand the language of violence, and therefore the proper penalties for murder and aggression are capital punishment and flogging.

The lesson of history, however, is that brutal penalties do not stamp out violence. In crimes of passion the offender does not consider the consequences. In premeditated crimes he thinks he can cover up his tracks and evade the police, and he has a fifty-fifty chance of doing so. If he is mentally unbalanced he may actually want to be punished and to endure pain. He may even be defiant and challenge the law to do its worst and then become a hero in the eyes of his fellow rogues. A study of past methods does not

support the theory that violence can be cured by violence.

In the days when boys were birched it was not unusual to find them in Court again, and on more serious charges. It is not difficult to understand why. If you have been brought up to believe that, when a person annoys you and you are bigger than he is, you "knock his block off", and then you find that the law does the same, you are confirmed in your view that violence is justified. It is not surprising that violent punishments breed further aggression. Society has a duty to set an example of restraint to its citizens. By disusing violence as a punishment it will do much to prevent it as a crime.

This does not mean that we should throw up our hands in horror and do nothing. We ought to be applying more vigorously the techniques of correction which science is putting into our hands. Progress has been made in the treatment of mental illness, and while violent offenders who are certified as insane may sometimes have to be detained for life, many are being cured and discharged.

The violent offender offers a challenge to all who work in prisons. To enable a man to understand his aggression, to eradicate the hate and bitterness which have prompted the attack, to encourage verbalisation of grievances and to provide healthy outlets for pent-up emotion,

all this gives a sense of personal achievement and adds dignity and vocational significance to a profession which is becoming more honourable every day.

The problems of the alcoholic call for special attention. It is not sufficient to say that drink was the cause of the violence, for alcoholism is a symptom of a twisted personality. Psychiatric treatment is designed to reveal the stress which has led the patient to resort to drink. Once it is understood that rejection and deprivation of affection are the basic causes of the bitterness which finds expression in violence it becomes clear that social case-work with the family as the unit is the only answer to violent crime.

The chaplain is a member of the team which is responsible for applying corrective techniques. He represents an ethical standpoint which makes non-violent resistance to evil its basic principle. He has the responsibility of inspiring in his colleagues the love which overcomes evil with good.

But that is not all. He has to interpret to the Church and to the public the responsibility of all citizens to approach the subject rationally and positively and to squeeze out of the community the venom of hate. It is a formidable assignment. If it fails, the outlook for society is pretty grim.

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