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Miss Housemaster

H. E. R. WILLIAMS

HEWELL GRANGE, an open borstal for boys, recently welcomed a woman assistant governor as a "housemaster". In these days of male hospital matrons this move is perhaps not as startling as it would have been a year or two ago. Nevertheless it is a situation which is unique in our Service and it is described for you by Miss H. E. R. Williams.

I MUST ADMIT that for some irrational and totally unjustifiable reason I feel something of a latter-day Livingstone returning from the uncharted regions of darkest Africa to reveal incredible tales to the eager and faithful servants of Her Majesty. Continuing in this vein for one moment though, this experiment is still in its early infancy and so, I suppose, one might say that I have glimpsed only briefly into these uncharted regions and cannot yet bring you a report of a complete expedition.

My experience in the Prison Service is limited to less than 13 months so I do not feel qualified to attempt to compare and contrast the role of the female assistant governor in a female establishment with that in a male borstal. I would

feel, therefore, that I could more usefully examine some of the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in these very first weeks.

There can be no doubt that the announcement to the staff of my impending arrival at Hewell Grange produced a considerable reaction which, described in the mildest way possible, might be classified as "gravely reserved". The immediate reaction was a desire to protect the weak, defenceless female who was about to be thrust upon them. What would happen when I wanted to interview a trainee? And great pains would have to be taken to make sure that I shouldn't be subjected to the incomparable embarrassment of seeing trainees wandering about the house landing clad only in their pyjamas. How, the staff wondered, could a woman possibly carry out all the duties of a housemaster when she would, at all costs, have to be protected from the aforementioned horrors?

These then were the types of fears being expressed but, scarcely hidden

beneath the surface, it was apparent that staff were personally concerned with just what kind of ogress was about to be thrust upon them and how said ogress would fit into the hierarchy. Understandably enough, there was considerable concern as to what it would be like having a woman in (dare I say it) "the boss class", when staff had been used to an almost totally male working environment.

However, certain of these fears seemed to loom less large subsequent to a two-day postings attachment which I did some five weeks before taking up my post. It appears to have been very much a case of "better the devil you know than the devil you don't know". So, once they had seen the body, attitudes modified somewhat and I arrived in mid-June to a staff atmosphere which I interpreted as "Well okay, we'll give this crazy experiment a chance but it's up to *her* to play the cards while *we* sit back and watch. In the unlikely event of her being passably good, fair enough; if she makes a miserable failure, then that just proves our point". I felt that it was a little bit like walking on a tightrope with the majority of the spectators waiting expectantly for one to come crashing off.

Surprisingly enough, it was within a couple of days that this attitude changed somewhat and suspicion gave way to smiles, friendly "hellos" and a breezy joke or two. It would, I think, be difficult to over emphasise how quickly and easily preconceived ideas were dispensed with

and the whole atmosphere changed. Within three weeks several of the staff felt sufficiently happy and at ease to carry on informal conversations, discussing with me, in very light-hearted vein, the initial preconceptions. These have become quite a joke already. It would be exaggerating unnecessarily to claim that *all* difficulties are in the past. No doubt difficulties will arise, and be resolved, throughout my stay at Hewell Grange. What it certainly is true to say is that the initial, and perhaps highest, hurdles are definitely spoken of in the past tense.

An area which did particularly interest me was the problem that might arise at principal officer level. The assistant governor/wing principal officer relationship is a delicate one at the best of times since assistant governors often are young and relatively inexperienced where principal officers, by the very nature of the promotion structure, have a very considerable number of years of service to their credit. The arrival of a new assistant governor is always somewhat of a threat to the incumbent principal officer and I rather expected that there would be even greater difficulties in accepting a young woman assistant governor. Admittedly feelings were aroused but when, after the first two weeks, staff changes and leave saw me in charge of the house in which I was initially second housemaster, it gave an unrivalled opportunity to discuss and sort out these difficulties. I feel that we have already established a

very amicable working relationship. My decisions are supported with great loyalty and I consider the house principal officer my right-hand man.

The reactions of the trainees have evolved but in very different ways. One thing that has been very noticeable is that geographical location has played a part, the trainees in my house getting used to me very quickly and those in the house located furthest from mine taking the longest to get over the giggly, whistling, cat-calling stage (although they have done so now).

The trainees on my house went through various stages, first of physical embarrassment when they would lurk round corners, hide in dorms and fairly gallop between dorm and wash-house, when dressed in their pyjamas. However, they got over this very quickly when they realised that I wasn't in the least embarrassed and now I have a succession of pyjama clad trainees trotting in and out of my office during the latter part of the evenings, just as when the male housemaster was in residence!

The second stage was a testing out when I was set trial tasks to carry out for the trainees or was visited in my office and subjected to a sort of interview (talk about having the tables turned!). Next came informal chats with groups in coffee bar, games room or dorm and the playing of table-tennis and darts. After a mere two weeks I was definitely being accepted as a normal part of the scenery and

the novelty had worn off. That advantage was very short-lived and I can't cash in on that any more.

On the casework front developments are encouraging. In the first stages I took over one or two cases who had not responded well with male staff to see if they would find it easier to communicate with a female. Fortunately they are in fact communicating very freely and are getting down to some good constructive work. Now I wouldn't for one moment claim any major success either for myself or for the feminine influence but I do suggest that, even at this early stage, signs are hopeful and some trainees may well achieve better results with female caseworkers.

I must say that personally I am extremely happy with the start and am definitely moving into top gear feeling that "all systems are go". Although it is somewhat of a backhander and rather against myself, I feel I must quote one of the trainees who, in the course of an interview only last night, said: "You know, you're not as dumb as I thought you were going to be"!

In concluding I should like to thank the powers-that-be for the opportunity of pioneering this exciting experiment. I look forward with confidence to a happy and worthwhile posting at Hewell Grange.

If I may end finally by returning to the light-hearted vein in which I began, it gives me great pleasure to report that the natives are friendly.

“The Positive Use of Institutions”

M. JENKINS

WITH SO MUCH literature available that shows how harmful and damaging institutions are, you may well feel that such a title is either perverse or naively misleading. There are therefore two preliminary points that I must make before I can proceed to any discussion of positive values. The first comes as a question: does society (which includes us), so well informed about the damaging processes of institutions, persist with them, especially prisons, because it does not want them to succeed? It may be another example of an ambivalent feeling—the ambivalence about training in prisons is considerable. Prisoners certainly sense that we do not answer with an unequivocal voice the question: aren't you supposed to be doing something for us? and can deny any work we try because they reasonably doubt our sincerity. We persist then in something which we know to be harmful, not only that but, secondly, we persist even with knowledge that

it is cheaper and more successful to treat most types of delinquent in the community. I refer particularly to the work of the California Youth Authority; they took the rough equivalent of our borstal population, excluded those who, because of their offences, society could not be expected to tolerate immediately back in the ordinary community (27 per cent of boys) and divided the remainder randomly between institutional treatment and intensive supervision in the community: the failure rate for the institutional group after two years' release in the community was 61 per cent and that for those who remained in the community 38 per cent¹. A 23 per cent improvement in success rate is very significant. One must conclude that society likes to have a good quota of people behind bars; one can speculate on this but I make these two points because we cannot assess our task realistically if we ignore them. If society is going to send to custodial

care a mixture of those it must have controlled and a number that it fears or wants to see punished, then we still have a care job to do even if society is confused. Our task is twofold—to minimise the negative effects of institutions and to draw out the positives of the institutional setting; I shall go on to expand on the negatives and positives, to give a sample of institutional work that has been positive and to discuss some general principles of institutional care.

The negative processes have been highlighted in many books^{2, 3} and it may well be enough to give a quick review of these. In institutions all aspects of life are under the same authority and in the company of the same other people; all a person's life is under scrutiny, his opportunities for diversity, growth, trying different roles and means of problem-solving are circumscribed. There is an unreal pattern of conformity to the sole end that the basic needs of the people in the complex organisation can be met. The demands of obedience are high and this is most easily coped with by an attitude of dependent despair. Staff and inmates tend to polarise and conceive themselves and each other as further apart than they are; in these circumstances learning a more positive way of relating to authority is made more difficult. This problem is aggravated whenever the insti-

tution feels threatened, for example by numbers, and there is a process where the institution reasserts itself against the inmates for whom it is asked to care. The inmate group is under varying degrees of compulsion to stay and this arouses suspicion of, and resistance to, staff action or results in a state of anomie or resignation. There is further an alienation from the outside world; reception tends to be abrupt and traumatic and the alienation is reinforced by the small number of outside contacts throughout the stay. People entering institutions also tend to go through a "stripping" process whereby they lose not only their personal clothing, effects and smells but they lose the identity and roles which were familiar. This is followed up by the "looping" process; for example one can be punished for showing feelings of depression arising from the institution because it is interpreted as sullenness. In view of all these pressures, one cannot be surprised at the adaptations that are made by inmates, adaptations, however, which are peculiar to institutions and frequently deviant and so inappropriate for real life. This gives a brief indication of some negative effects of institutions and I shall come back to ways of minimising them.

I want to take first the positives and then look at institutions which seem to demonstrate them in action.

Frankly, one of the positives is security; a prison offers inmates security against the pressures of a world which could not be managed without delinquency. Those who have fears of being out of control are able to relax and find relief in prison. Freudians may well point out the dangers of men "returning to the womb" and abdicating their cares to the prison; nevertheless, we can accept this dependency initially provided that our aim is to work through this stage and on to more mature coping.

Secondly a prison offers secure boundaries within which acting out is possible. Acting out means demonstrating in action problems which the more mature have either resolved or can manage in words because they are more articulate. If a man cannot talk about a problem, then he will show it in action; it may often appear in behaviour which society at large cannot tolerate but in prison we and the man have an opportunity to experience problem behaviour, to look at it and stimulate new internal controls. We are only avoiding our task if we say the institution cannot tolerate uncomfortable behaviour. Our fears of problems acted-out are often greater than those of the man whose problems are unresolved; but this is not to say that the work is not demanding. It certainly is, but the exploitation of opportunities often is demanding. Within these

boundaries inmates can be allowed to regress and relive unsatisfactory episodes in their lives, not for their own sake, but to understand and work through unresolved stages and grow, no longer held by the past. If we can provide good experiences, these must challenge and modify some offenders' assumptions that only bad things happen to them so that they are justified in continuing the fight against a society which seeks to deprive them of what little they have.

Inmates, too, often have very strong negative feelings about certain people or people in certain roles; provided we do not fall in against these negative expressions by way of reaction, there is hope also of investigating and modifying these negative feelings. Following from this there can also be experimentation in relationships within the boundaries; staff can take the initiative in offering consistently an authority with whom it is possible to relate. Many other relationships occur and can be structured in an institution to challenge deviant assumptions and modify behaviour. Much constructive movement can be made within the secure boundaries of the institution which would not be possible in free society.

My third point is shorter, it is that prison offers a secure base from which to test reality. We can see this directly in hostel schemes and working out arrangements but it

can also be discovered within the institution. Both staff and inmates bring with them into the prison parts of reality from outside and in relationship and discussion—individual or group—ideas can be tested against these conceptions of reality. Equally, feelings are real and one set of feelings can be tested against others in discussion too. Relationship and communication provide means of discovering reality provided that they are consciously offered as a means of growth and positively used.

Fourthly, our institutions offer a high concentration of both staff and inmates. Everyday interaction is frequent and can be used to forward or retard movement in those under our charge.⁴

Many aspects of the prisoner's personality and social functioning are observable and can be developed. New skills can certainly be taught as part of this concentration of activity. There is great potential for positive movement in all these areas; attitude and maturity scales given before and after institutional treatment indicate that this potential can be realised,⁵ more so when it is conscious and consciously developed. We need to cultivate the positives while controlling and minimising the negatives if this hybrid of treatment and institutional care is to bring results.

If this is the potential, can it be demonstrated in action? A lot of material has been written on correctional communities and we go on to study this and look at

possible application. This is once we have taken one of Polski's⁶ basic points that "treatment", laid on Monday-Friday during office hours is not significant to most delinquents. Treatment or training must be seen to be meaningful to all staff and if we say we care we must be prepared—emotionally, individually, as well as by supported training experience—to have great demands made on us by inmates. We have basically to come across to inmates as people who have a balanced optimism about their ability to move from a delinquent to a non-delinquent means of solving problems, who have faith in them and will work with and for them. This is not easy but its possibilities have been demonstrated by Grusky⁷ in a small study recently and by Aichhorn⁸ at his training school in the early 1920s. Grusky studied Camp David, similar to a small open borstal and was able to show that if staff went all out to help the inmates, they would accept their good faith and identify with the genuine helping regime—with the results that their attitude scales, taken at reception and discharge, showed great positive movement. This study was published in 1962 and shows other interesting features to which we shall return. Aichhorn's work in the equivalent of an approved school shows the huge demands made upon staff who said they cared but also the great strides made by the boys and girls in emotional growth because there was a secure freedom in which

development was possible. Aichhorn wrote: "The atmosphere that prevails in the training school must proceed from the personnel. The optimistic attitude of the counsellor towards life, the cheerfulness with which he works, create an atmosphere in which remedial work can be carried on without great effort. Thus the counsellors are able to approach their pupils in such a way that the latter have confidence in them and feel their understanding. Most of these young people have never had their infantile need for affection satisfied. They have never experienced the happiness of a close relationship to the mother. They need love. This constitutes a great demand on the personality of the counsellor. He must be highly intuitive in order to know the right approach to the child. The science of education has nothing to offer him in this respect. It is not enough to comprehend what the child says and does; the worker must be able to 'live' himself into the situation so that these experiences become his own" (p.152); and: "Through the milieu we created in our institution and through our type of leadership, we had opportunities every day to give the children experiences, the deep effect of which helped to relieve their dis-social behaviour. Often we made use of the mood of the moment or created a situation to produce the desired mood" (p.162).

These quotations give an idea of the depth of involvement needed and this depth seems necessary

for other reasons than just compensation for absent parental love, though this still remains. I would like to draw attention especially to the difficulties that delinquents have in relating to authority and in expressing their problems in words. This relates to Bernstein's work on working-class language and attitudes, discussed in a recent PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL article by Dr. Robinson⁹ and earlier, for example, by Jean Nursten.¹⁰ It is not appropriate to do more than summarise at the moment though the generalisations can be queried and I appear to assume that delinquents are all working class. Bernstein's argument is that "the working class" use a concrete language which is too restricted to develop conceptual or insightful thinking and their authority system is also simple and authoritarian. The result runs something like—"Get yer 'ands off!" "Why?" " 'Cos I told yer too!"

We also tend to believe that delinquency is a means of saying something which the delinquent cannot express in words, though the original message may have become overlaid with habit or the simple gratification of success, hence the importance of being intuitive as mentioned by Aichhorn—we can hardly rely on verbal techniques alone. Our actions must speak as loud as our words if not louder; involved caring is able to give this sort of message, though this is not to say we should not develop the delinquent's capacity to look at

feelings and put them into words. On the second point of authority, Grusky⁷ discovered—amongst others—that his delinquents scored highly on an “authoritarianism” scale. In terms of development and maturity an institutional regime *can* be helpful—if accepted by the inmates—in modifying this all-or-nothing, dependency-producing conception of authority. Where authority is able to demonstrate its caring—“a judicious blend of love and authority” as one psychiatrist described the ideal family—and where communications are open between those who have authority and those over whom it is exercised then there is real hope that the inmates will be able to modify their attitudes towards authority; so often at present they expect the worst and in that belief almost ensure that the worst does happen to them. Where communications are open in this way they will also retain considerable responsibility for their own lives and will also be engaged in the development of other inmates—both of which contributions help to counter the tendency to dependency in institutions.

This leads me to speculate on the degree to which responsibility can or should be shared but yet the original aim was to be realistic for the immediate future! That responsibility can be shared is certain; that appropriate sharing of authority is building of an

individual's personality is equally certain. The experiment on the boys' wing at Grendon, where trainees decide their home leave dates, is a move in the right direction. There may be other examples from within the Service but I draw my other examples from outside—Osborne¹¹ of Sing Sing was warden about 1914, took charge after a punitive regime and engaged the inmates in sharing responsibility. We can also look at Lennhoff's¹² work with maladjusted boys at Shotton Hall in the present day. Aichhorn, Osborne, Lennhoff, Mr. Lyward,¹³ David Wills¹⁴ and others—all are exciting men with exciting ideas which they have put into practice with different groups of delinquents. We can, in fact, look at our own Service and see a number of men who have given much of themselves to their institutions, staff and inmates—have inspired both staff and inmates in involvement and the sharing of responsibility. Many have experienced this personal dynamism. It seems that work of this nature has to be pioneering if it has to have a real dynamic and recent history seems to indicate also that these pioneers succeeded because of their ability to retain final authority and responsibility for change and so keep within bounds the anxieties of staff and inmates. To wrestle with anxiety (at a reasonable level) about oneself and one's development is to enable

change and to offset other debilitating effects of institutions.

We have in this pioneering work reached a position that has many similarities to the "therapeutic community"; this concept is linked mainly with the name of Maxwell Jones¹⁵ and his work in mental hospitals but developed by many others, for example, Denis Martin describes his work to this end at a very large mental hospital in *Adventure in Psychiatry*. This is by no means the first time that the "therapeutic community" has been mentioned in this magazine but perhaps I should summarise some of the basic ideas for comparison with the points raised earlier in my argument:

- (i) the breaking down of the hierarchical authority system and its formalities and its replacement with a large acceptance of shared responsibility;
- (ii) greater tolerance of what is said and done on the basis that if this is how the inmate really is, it is healthier to accept him as he is and not pretend he is something different and to work for growth and maturity from this point;
- (iii) a sharing of resources—specialists, non-specialists, inmates and their families all have something to con-

tribute to the greater well-being of others in the institution; and

- (iv) a constant testing of fantasies—increased contact between members of the community keeps all parties in reality.

In the therapeutic community the main medium is the community meeting but other groups meet as well and communication is always open.

This sort of approach has many advantages, the inmate needs are always to the fore, role-stripping and loss of identity are replaced by a system of contributing so that the self-image is enhanced; the inmate is protected from above and from the dangers of institutionalisation; acceptance allows him to show the less acceptable side of himself and transference relationships, with staff or other inmates, can be worked through. The aims are similar to those I have advanced for our institutions—not without the benefit of hindsight! Methods do not have to be identical. The advantage of a "therapeutic community" is that it does set out its aims unequivocally and its structure gives a consistent message. The ideas are more difficult for us to take up and develop when society, of which we are part, is at best ambivalent about "treating" its delinquents. Our consistent aim must hold out a positive hope of

overcoming the negative effects of institutions and offer a milieu in which changes in relationships and non-delinquent means of problem-solving can be developed both in word and action.

One last caveat: I am not advocating institutional care; rather more treatment in the community. It will remain all too easy for the negative processes of institutions to overwhelm this barely nurtured plant—"the positive use of institutions". More treatment in the community appears to be the aim of recent legislation and reports

on social work.¹⁶ As the effects of these changes reach us, more people who can be treated in the community will have been so treated and we can, therefore, expect a smaller remainder, proportionately, to be committed to our institutional care but they will, on average, show a lower level of maturity and greater disturbance. This process has begun. Institutions will be needed; the pressure on us to produce results will be higher. Will our jobs not also be more satisfying if we are concentrating on the positives?

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All these items, except Grusky's article, are available from the Staff College library.

Two Cheers for Parole

C. H. ROLPH

THERE ARE DOZENS of conflicting views about parole. The only way to achieve a synthesis is to keep on arguing about them, provided both sides do their share of listening. If I now mention a few points of controversy, remember that I'm thereby committing neither the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL, nor the Parole Board (to which, anyway, I don't now belong), nor the Home Office, nor anyone else. Only me.

Here are half a dozen aspects of the system that will go on giving rise to argument. At least I hope they will, for they are the life-blood of the thing. First, the case of the man with only a few weeks of his sentence to go. There were hundreds of these when we started. Whatever date you chose as a starting point, there would be hundreds of prisoners, possibly thousands, who had already passed their "eligibility date" and were well into the second "third" of their sentences. I've seen it suggested, by someone not obviously insane, that a lot of these two-or-three-weekers were paroled just to shove the figures up and make the scheme look daring without actually taking much risk.

Yet other critics were saying at the beginning that they hoped the Parole Board wouldn't go mad and let too many out.

I met a neighbour of mine on the bus. He has a voice like a fog-horn and a capacity, which I miserably envy, for total unawareness of all fellow passengers. (On trains you only find it in first-class compartments.) "I see you're on this Parole Board thing", he said, and the fact that he said "thing" showed me at once what he thought of the Board and me. I admitted the charge, and was just moving on to the mitigation when he waved me down. "Well, if you get a chance", he bawled, "you can tell this Home Secretary, whoever it is" (it was Mr. Roy Jenkins), "that when a Judge sends a man to prison for six years, he means six bloody years". I said he really meant four years, allowing for remission. "And that's another thing", he took me up, and by this time all other conversation had stopped and even the bus engine seemed to be running very quietly, "why remission? Why say one thing and mean another? A prison sentence ought to be what

the Judge says. Good thing I ran into you, there's one or two things about this that you need to know. Now, take this penal reform business . . ."

I got off and waited for a bus with only strangers on it. But there are legions like him. I've been writing about penal reform for 30 years without denting them. Probably they are parole's biggest hurdle.

Then there are those who think a three weeks' parole period (these cases can still crop up, for a variety of reasons) is too short to justify the administrative bother of paroling a man. I totally disagree with them, and incidentally they are nearly always over-ruled anyway. I believe that even so short a time, involving no more perhaps than a few talks with social welfare people *in conditions of freedom*, might turn the tide in a man's life. Others, on the contrary, think that two or three weeks aren't worth keeping a man in for, whatever his record and prospects. I disagree with those too. If a man is unsuitable for parole, he's unsuitable; and to parole him, when you must perhaps go on to the refusal of a better man with a longer period to go, is the height of injustice.

Then there are these men who refuse to be considered, who just want nothing to do with the whole thing. Many explanations have been offered on behalf of these chaps, though nobody knows what they themselves think of the explanations. For example they are said to regard parole as a Home Office

trick to get a lot more people under strict supervision when they come out. Better to do a month or two extra bird and come out with no ball-and-chain to drag around. If you get picked up by the police while on parole, what chance have you got? "You have betrayed the confidence reposed in you. It is men like you . . .", etc. Well, they can keep it. And if you happen to be a four-year man, what about the hostel scheme? At the least that does send you out with a little money saved—and a stamped card. Parole sends you out with Sweet Fanny Adams, except the obligation to report . . . , etc.

There are some other reasons—men unwilling to face any change in the routine they are accustomed to, men who have "grassed" and are scared of going out anyway. But there are two that never get a mention. First, the national Press must be credited with a real hatchet job on the parole scheme when it started. God knows why, but the *Sunday Times* led the pack by calling it "a cruel hoax", and most of the others joined in. Here was a new idea—kill it, somebody. There was much jocosity about Lord Hunt's having been the leader of the successful 1952 Everest expedition, fun about mountains and molehills, nudging references to rock-climbing and prison walls. (The newsmen never got around to the concept of John Hunt as a distinguished soldier with long experience in the knack of handling men, a born youth leader, and a man who will sit beside a prisoner

on a workshop table and listen to his worries.) All these newspapers go into the prisons nowadays.

Some prisoners, reading them, concluded that parole was indeed a hoax and that the Parole Board could go to hell. Secondly, when you put a man in prison you strip him of every conceivable initiative except two: whether to write a letter home and whether to sit on his pot. If you then suddenly confront him with a choice that is truly momentous, like whether (and why) he wants parole, you are presenting him with a marvellous and luxurious chance to gum up the works by his own deliberate election. Some men will snatch at this, and then turn their backs on the Judas-hole. It's fine while it lasts. It doesn't last long, but it should never be misunderstood. You can't chuck a man out on parole with conditions he won't undertake to observe; but such men may come up again for "second review", and I believe that if anyone takes any notice at all of the earlier rejection of parole, it's only to note with satisfaction that the man has "developed" and may now be better material.

Then the appallingly difficult question of "giving reasons"—should a man be told exactly why he has been refused parole? Ideally, yes. He ought to be given a full and careful explanation, assuming (and it's quite an assumption) that he is in a mood to listen. And you could do this if the number of people in the prisons of England and Wales

at any one time was not more than, say, a hundred. But it's 35,000. The number refused parole in 1969 was 5,032; sufficient to ensure that "giving reasons" would be like reading out an Army field service postcard. "Well, Brown," the governor would have to say, "I see that the Parole Board have put ticks against 5, 11, 18, 24 and 32. You'll see what they mean. It's all been very carefully assessed. Keep trying". I myself would utterly distrust, on the other hand, any narrative or colloquial method of conveying reasons. I don't know anyone, I have never met anyone, who could put this kind of message on paper without the danger of driving its recipient to angry despair. I'd rather leave it to the governor, even allowing for the difference between governors.

By the same token, I myself distrust the stereotyped phrases in which a prisoner's "progress" and parole-worthiness are assessed in the various reports on his file. One tries to look behind them, to see if there are any other phrases, non-jargon phrases, that artlessly reveal something. Occasionally there are, though what they artlessly reveal may be about the man writing the report rather than about the prisoner. Do you realise that, in its first 12 months at any rate, the parole system was virtually carried by the people who compile and collate these reports and the Local Review Committees who study them? I've never served on a Local Review Committee, but I

have now met hundreds who do. With rare exceptions they have seemed to me exactly the right people for what, after all, remains the key job in the whole system; and I can number off the exceptions on the fingers of one hand (I'd love to be able to sack them rather than just count them). It's the Local Review Committees who still turn down three out of every four men eligible.

You often read or hear angry comparisons between the numbers recommended at one prison as against another. Leyhill, for example, recommends 67 per cent in the first twelve months, and Manchester only five per cent. The comparison has actually been made in public speeches and at informed seminars, perhaps it would be tactless to say where and by whom. Yet the comparison is absurd because of the nature of the two prisons and of their inmates. But as it happens you don't need to compare an open with a local prison to get ridiculous results that are gravely damaging to the parole system. You could compare Leyhill's 67 per cent with the 28 per cent at Spring Hill (they're both open prisons). Why that difference? What's gone wrong? Or you could compare Manchester's five per cent with Cardiff's 35 per cent (they're both local prisons). It was this kind of thing that helped along the decision that the Parole Unit at the Home Office should send the Parole Board a selection of the cases turned down locally.

How should these be selected? In effect, the Parole Unit acted as a kind of subsidiary Parole Board. It has been called a "filter", but would more aptly be called a safety-valve, since a filter is for keeping things in and a valve is for letting them out. But it made no radical difference to the final figures. Some other method might? It was time to try "prediction" methods, on a statistical basis. By sending to the Board all men with a "probability of reconviction"—within two years—of less than 35 per cent, a start might be made in levelling out local differences. By December 1969 it was possible to say that in any one year about 700 cases, turned down locally, would be sent on to the Board and that about 150 of these would, without increased risk to society, get parole despite their local rejection. That system looks like developing. It is distrusted by some people who have a pathological dislike of statistical inference. Myself, I find that dislike entirely human and understandable. But all the time the Parole Board is going to quote figures in its annual reports, percentages paroled, percentages recalled or reconvicted, percentages refusing to be considered, percentages of this and that, no one can pretend to disengage himself from statistical inference. It is easy, and very human, to see each prisoner's file of papers as showing that the man is an exception to the law of averages, but every man is an exception to the law of averages. It would be very hard to suggest

any other yardstick; too hard for anyone, so far as I know, to have even tried.

When the parole system started, the "documentation" was awful. Governors of prisons knew almost nothing about their inmates and had grown perplexedly (and sometimes resentfully) accustomed to not knowing. Compiling prisoners' files was almost like producing rabbits from a hat. As the reports began to appear they were photocopied in such numbers (often from carbon copies done on the typewriter—have you ever seen how photocopying falls down on *that* job?) and so illegibly that Parole Board members began to look like squinting, round-shouldered antiquarians. They would have been better off with reports and recommendations in Braille. All this is now slowly improving, and no one outside a handful of moiling clerks, to whom I touch my forelock, will ever know at what cost in toil,

tears and sweat if not actually blood. Inexorably, and with the speed of an infirm snail, we are moving towards a simple device that I remember Frank Dawtry urging upon me, hopelessly, 25 years ago in John Vidler's office at Maidstone Prison. "We want", he said, "one short document on the front of every prisoner's personal file, summarising his whole story—what the chap did, what his family difficulties are, what jobs he can do or learn to do, who knows what about him—the lot". If Frank were alive today, it would be nice to stand with him and see this snail just appearing round Tattenham Corner. But only the parole system could ever have got it into motion. Two cheers, accordingly, for parole. But moderate ones, for fear of rekindling the interest of the Press, who have mercifully become more preoccupied with cursing the National Health Service and the open university.

CONTRIBUTORS

HILARY E. R. WILLIAMS, a Durham graduate (Hons. in Psychology) worked in the construction industry until joining the Prison Service at Bullwood Hall in 1968. Since May 1969 she has been an assistant governor at Hewell Grange.

NAN MACDONALD worked for several years with problem families and disabled home-bound people in London's East End before becoming social worker at Haslar Detention Centre in 1962. Six years later she moved to the Probation Service.

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Reviews . . .

A New Service for Readers

DO YOU READ many books about penal matters? Perhaps you have a good local library and occasionally look round the 365 area where sociology and other similar words stand out rather grimly: you see a book mentioning prison, take a look and then borrow it.

You may be a keen type, browsing carefully through both new and second-hand issues whenever you see a book shop.

Or you may see prison problems mentioned in your daily or weekly paper and following what the critics say you may decide to buy or borrow a particular book.

Again, you may feel the need to keep abreast of modern developments but your local library may not have a good selection (though you would be surprised at their interest in your interest if you sought their advice), or you may distrust the reviewers . . . or you may not have the time or inclination for close study or selection but still feel you should keep up to date.

The PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL whose book reviews for the past seven years have acquired a healthy reputation for fair and full treatment, offers you a new service.

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Case Conference, *Social Work*, *Management Review*, *Management Today*, *Federal Probation*, *The Howard Journal*, *British Journal of Sociology*, *Social Science Quarterly* and *The Journal of Offender Therapy*.

Radio and television will also be covered. Our reviewers include (in this issue): Tim Cook, warden, "Rathcoole" and former welfare officer, Blundeston Prison; Michael Jenkins, Ian Dunbar, John Cape, Social Studies Department, Staff College, Wakefield; Leslie Laycock and Mark Beeson, both of Leeds University; John Lee, formerly deputy governor Hindley Borstal now warden in the Canadian Department of Corrections; Ronald Brown, senior psychologist, Staff College; A. R. Dollery and M. Stevenson (both on P.E. staff at the Officers Training School); A. B. Davenport, N.A.C.R.O. representative in the North of England; and G. G. S. Chambers, Governor, Durham Prison.

In this way the Editorial Board hope that the needs of all readers will be met, whether the reader-interest be intensely professional, busily preoccupied or merely casual.

Books and journals reviewed are on free loan from the Librarian, Staff College, Love Lane, Wakefield.

We welcome letters on this subject.

L. LUMB, R. TAYLOR,
J. ST. Q. ROSS, D. ATKINSON,
M. WINSTON.

The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System

DAVID GLASER. Bobbs, Merrill Co., 1964 (80s.)

WHY IS A BOOK published almost six years ago only now being reviewed in an English prison service journal? The cynic might say it is because American research is not generally seen as relevant to the English penal scene. I would hope Glaser's tome finally dispels that conception. Possibly, however, the true answer is that friends of mine in the Prison Service have tired of my constant reference to the book and my extravagant claims for it—hence I have been given an opportunity to state more publicly what hitherto I have only shouted in bar-room conversation.

For me there are two main reasons why this book should be the bedside bible for anyone interested and concerned with prisons. The first is that it is a vivid example of what the preface terms “a lively partnership between the social scientist and the correctional practitioner”. Such a partnership seems rare in this country and one wonders why. British research into penal institutions seems piece-meal and rarely instructive to the practitioner dealing with men in or out of prison. Glaser's work is of immense value for the field worker. Further it has given us so much information to work with that further research

at this stage seems a serious misuse of resources.

The second reason for recommendation is that it frequently confirms my own intuitions (and no doubt other peoples' too). Now my intuitions are not going to shatter the modern penal system, nonetheless I treasure them because they derive from face to face contact with offenders and because they seem to run contrary to official pronouncements. Two things have always struck me about prisons from my earliest of contacts. One is that prisoners are very isolated from each other and do not form a cohesive inmate culture. The other is that “red bands” almost always fail on release and therefore it may be we actually harm men by making them red bands. Glaser shows that voluntary isolation of prisoners from each other is high at the start of a sentence, decreases towards the middle and then increases near release. With the men we would term red bands or trustees Glaser found that they had the highest failure rates. Clerical jobs in prison tend to attract inmate politicians, the “pseudo-social”, “men of extensive criminal experience who know how to do time by serving the officials dependably”.

However, one doesn't read a book of nearly 600 pages merely to have the satisfaction of finding one's few intuitions confirmed by impeccable research. There is far more in it than that. Before I look at the findings in more detail I would like to make a few general observations on the total impact of this mammoth piece of research.

Firstly it seems to me that this is a very hopeful book not so much because of what it reveals but more because of what it points towards in terms of action and methods of helping prisoners. Surely now some prison programmes can be developed which draw on the fruits of Glaser's labours. For example one of their conclusions which the author says merits further testing is: "the co-operation of inmates with staff and inmate identification of themselves with non-criminal persons are enhanced by treating inmates as though they were subordinate members of a single staff, sharing with employees the task of running the prison for the maximum long-run benefit of all".

Secondly, some of the conclusions at first seem obvious and one wonders whether all the research was worth it first, for example, to discover that "the flow of inter-inmate advice is predominantly from older to younger inmates". Then one links this up with another finding that the older a prisoner the less likely he is to return to crime. Is it always wise, therefore, to separate young offenders from older offenders?

Thirdly, the research looks closely

at the post-prison problems, with especial emphasis on the released prisoners' economic resources and the ex-prisoners' social world. It links this in with the role of the parole supervision officer. This part of the book is valuable and refreshing as it shows how prisoners' expectations and attitudes prove unrealistic, something the prison regime has done little to combat. For example Glaser states: "prisoners have expectations of extremely rapid occupational advancement during the years immediately following their release, expectations which are unrealistic in the light of their limited work experience and lack of vocational skills".

Lastly, one feels that if one could absorb the findings presented here into one's emotional and intellectual blood stream one would not just be better informed but able to help more people more effectively. Of how much research can that be said?

What then of some of the details that Glaser and company unearthed? My own work in prison as a welfare officer and my after-care work subsequently have made me a harsh critic of prisons. Nonetheless, I have to admit that in Glaser's work all is not dark. He is concerned to show when, where and how prison and parole can be effective. He is not concerned to castigate the system (which is easy enough as Morris' "Pentonville" showed) but to encourage us in what we try to achieve and show how possibly even more could be achieved.

It was found, for example, that about half of the successful releases interviewed said that their change from criminal interests occurred while they were in prison. About half of these—or one-quarter of all the successes—credited one or more prison staff members as being major influences in this change. In turn, half of the latter group—and about one-eighth of all successes—cited a particular work supervisor as a major reformative influence. Very few successes cited the caseworkers and treatment staff as having influenced them! In other words there is great potential amongst the general prison staff rather than the treatment staff to help men change. This may be old news but an increasingly pessimistic English Prison Service seems very slow to act on it.

In the whole area of the prison caseworker, Glaser has some hard things to say. They are salutary rejoinders at a time when prison welfare staff are seen alternately as devils and saviours. Two main criticisms made are: firstly, that the caseworker randomises the case load so that inadvertently he reduces the chances of knowing the social environment in which his clients live. Secondly, they observed that "some caseworkers seemed to conceive of their work as evaluated primarily by the skill and sophistication which their reports displayed, rather than by their actual knowledge about inmates or influences on inmates". The file is interviewed not the man! The first criticism is crucial and pain-

fully obvious. Why are men allocated to welfare officers on an alphabetical basis and not a wing or shop basis? Why are welfare staff not involved in work allocation?

Change in men can be achieved in prison but there are many obstacles as Glaser also shows and when out of prison some problems may only just be starting. It is interesting to note that some of the staff expectations are as unreliable as the prisoners. For example, pre-release arrangements of a parole job is not associated with markedly greater rates of success on parole than release or parole without a pre-arranged job.

On release it was found that economic problems are often crucial and that their solution should be given much higher priority both before and after release. This I think is a useful corrective to some current thinking which almost seems to view economic problems of after-care as unworthy of consideration by a professional case-worker. Again it is valuable to learn that 90 per cent of discharges return to the communities in which they previously resided—do rural open prisons help if men return to dockside Liverpool? Living alone on release is highly associated with failure though men who return to parental houses rapidly move out of them, usually within months of release. The unreality of many family relationships when divided by a wall is a factor we should all note but which we can too easily forget.

There is much more I could cite but the greatest challenge for after-care is Glaser's finding that 90 per cent of American prison releases seek legitimate careers for a month or more after they leave prison. What does go wrong? Who fails whom? What use will we make of this information?

The challenge of this book is inescapable for anyone remotely connected with prisons and pri-

soners. It should be welcomed and read. Nowhere does it blame prison staff. It states that facts of failure must not be hidden if improvements are to be made. Yet it does not allow us to wallow in failure. The research material is there for us to work with. Please do not let us say more research is needed before we act or that all this is only relevant to America. After all we used to defend the treadmill.

TIMOTHY COOK

Cottage Six

HOWARD POLSKY. Russel Sage Foundation, 1962

"COTTAGE SIX" is not new; the book was first published in 1962 but it has not been reviewed in this magazine and it has much to say that is relevant to the Prison Service in the 1970s.

Polski is a sociologist and he was particularly interested in the dynamics of gangs and sub-cultures—where do the values and attitudes come from, how are they passed on to new members, etc? He studied the most delinquent "cottage" in an American approved school, for here he found an anti-social sub-culture existing within a wider social community, a "therapeutic milieu" in which individual therapy was the main tool of change. While his main study contributes to the knowledge of gangs and

inmate roles, it is what he notes about the impact of treatment within the institution that will haunt us if we take no note of it. I hope references to some of his conclusions will encourage you to read this compactly-argued and rewarding book; we have certainly not resolved the issues it raises.

"Cottage Six" was one of 11 cottages at "Hollymeade"; three cottages were for girls, eight for boys and the most difficult boys went to "Six"; some were direct allocations on arrival, others were transferred because they were disruptive in other cottages. The cottage was in the charge of cottage parents, who were untrained and not supported by professional staff; they were expected to run the

cottage so that it did not disturb the equilibrium of the therapeutic milieu. The boys were interviewed consistently by social workers in their offices but they "departed with the setting of the sun"—and a little earlier on Fridays! Polski draws a large number of relevant conclusions, for example, status is important, both to staff and inmates, and if opportunities for inmates are lacking they can only seek status in the deviant system—and this only comes with accepting deviant values; also that staff reinforce the deviant sub-culture by colluding with it or by ignoring the total culture to concentrate on work with individuals.

Polski argues that those responsible for treatment must not be detached from the daily lives of the inmates but must accept the involved position, significant to both cottage staff and inmates.

They must help train and support staff if their potential is to be realised in achieving a treatment process throughout the institution. They must intervene significantly in the inmate culture, offering alternate models for identification and new ideas and means of problem-solving which can be tested. They must offer many and varied means of achieving status, other-

wise the sub-culture may well remain as the only source of status among the inmates and so reinforce in them its delinquent norms.

It is, of course, very easy to kick those who subscribe to treatment and leave at five o'clock; this is not to say that they should not be kicked! We have a large staff of governors, assistant governors, discipline officers, psychologists, welfare officers, chaplains, tutor-organisers and many other specialists in treatment work and administration; but unless the whole staff is prepared to step out of its office and into significant interaction with and responsibility for the culture we cannot expect inmates to try the non-delinquent ways of problem-solving that society expects them to have incorporated from us. In our institutions we have the inmates, by and large, all day; we can reinforce the delinquent sub-culture by over-controlling, by collusion, by deprivations and denials of opportunity or we can help to offer fresh hope of coping to those who can be seen to have failed. We have not certainly chosen the second more optimistic path; Polski's argument is still compelling, especially when the Prison Service appears to be splitting control and concern.

M. D. JENKINS

Parental Deprivation: a Study of Delinquent Children

T. GRYGIER, J. CHESLEY and E. W. TUTERS. *British Journal of Criminology*, July 1969, vol. 9, No. 3

A NUMBER OF STUDIES of paternal-cum-maternal deprivation have followed the publication of Andry's pioneer work, "Delinquency and Parental Pathology" (1960). The latest is reported by Grygier and his associates, and their paper incorporates a useful survey of the literature to date. Its effect will be to strengthen the reaction against the more extreme "maternal deprivation" theories originally linked with the name of John Bowlby and to support recent theories which stress the equal, if not greater, importance of paternal deprivation, even in the case of children under five years of age. It will do nothing to impugn (nor is that its intention) that part of Bowlby's hypothesis which states that it is essential for the mental health of an infant or young child to experience "a warm, intimate and continuous relationship" with the mother or permanent mother-substitute, particularly during the critical period of the first 6-18 months. The Grygier study deals with the first five years as a block and does not attempt to break it down into phases or part-phases.

The report is based on two pieces of work on juvenile delinquents carried out at the University of Toronto. Each is an analysis of data taken from the records of Canadian training schools. The subjects numbered 105 girls and 183 boys. The four main variables investigated were: (1) death of the parent; (2) permanent separation from the child other than death; (3) temporary separation from the child; and (4) faulty image of the parent. The first three of these were clearly matters of fact and the fourth a matter of interpretation of the evidence; when this was questionable, judgements were pooled.

Interest focussed initially on the relative incidence of maternal and paternal "pathology", i.e. deficiency in "parenting" for whatever reason. The analysis itself revealed the comparative unimportance of either *except* when accompanied by one of the four variables of pathology in the other parent. Thus for boys "mixed" cases of deprivation predominated overwhelmingly over "pure" cases (involving either parent) in every

category except "death", and for this the numbers were very small. For girls the same held good, at least as regards maternal deprivation. As regards paternal deprivation, it is true that "pure" cases appeared to predominate in two of the categories—temporary separation and faulty image—so that in fact this would give little comfort to extreme maternal deprivation theorists, if the figures could be taken at their face value. However, the authors themselves are dubious about the authenticity of the "pure" cases in any of the groups, believing that on the limited evidence of the case records many mixed cases are mis-classified as pure (mis-classification could hardly go the other way).

As the authors truly say, their study really has negative rather than positive significance. "It tends to disprove the relative importance of the mother rather than prove that the father is more important". They might have added likewise, had they wished, that it tends to disprove the relative importance of separation rather than prove that a faulty image is more important. Assessing what weight to give to different criminogenic factors must be left to future studies. The authors themselves refer many times to the multi-factorial nature of delinquency and point out that

other factors than their four kinds of parental deprivation might be even more important. Thus their own data show that 21 per cent of delinquent boys appeared to be totally free of parental deprivation. However, on the question, what factors lie hidden in this figure and how far those factors were also present in the 79 per cent remaining cases and what weight might be accorded to them by comparison with deprivation factors, the authors are of necessity silent.

Can it be said that this study is any advance on Andry's? The fact that it lacked a control group would seem to put it well behind. On the other hand, it was not confined to a sample of delinquents from unbroken homes, as Andry's was (for quite respectable methodological reasons). Perhaps its main value lies in the fact that it supports the earlier findings about the comparable significance of maternal and paternal deprivation for a much more representative delinquent population than Andry's, that it does this for girls as well as for boys, and that it is a little more objective about deficiencies in parenting than Andry's study was, not being concerned with the subjective perceptions of the delinquents themselves.

A. L. LAYCOCK

Culturally Deprived Children

HARRIET WILSON (Centre of Child Study, University of Birmingham).

The Howard Journal of Penology and Crime Prevention, 1969, vol. 12, No. 4

THIS ATTEMPT to broach such a large subject in one article comes off. Although much can be said in only very general, descriptive terms, some of the material stimulates as well as being instructive.

The starting point is the proposition that our society can be still fairly described as an achievement society, and achievement is described in terms of ambition, thrift and industry combined with a healthy respect of property. The aim of parents and educators is to enable children to fit into this society. Many studies tell of the different ways of child rearing according to class, with the general theme of greater tolerance towards and concern with the child as compared with the more authoritarian attitude of the '30s. Specifically related to class differences and indeed the general development of children towards becoming a member of the achievement society is the use of language.

In the lowest classes conditions obtain which do not aid personality development, such as very large families and generally overcrowded

living conditions. Aggressiveness is seen as necessary for survival. Trust in authority is undermined by parental threats either never substantiated or plainly false. Real poverty in terms of very low wages leading to genuine physical hardship is still a large problem. Children living in these circumstances, learn from painful experience either to clamp down their feelings or else to express only anger and hostility. As far as possible demanding situations are evaded, but if not, then an ability to conform to the adult world is displayed, showing a very different side to their personality. The ability to conform in institutions can apparently be not only due to the nature of the institution but a skill learnt early on in life to cope with authority when this is unavoidable.

The final plea is that before more money is poured into the penal system, research is necessary to find out more of the complex pattern of deprivation which produces misfits and failures.

J. W. T. CAPE

Institutional Treatment of Young Offenders

V. P. HOLLOWAY. *Howard Journal*, 1969, vol. 12, No. 4

VERNON HOLLOWAY's article "The Institutional Treatment of Young Offenders" discusses the ever relevant problem for all staff of residential institutions—that of maximising all resources in a custodial correctional setting, and deserves further prolonged study and discussion at every level by all staff.

From recent literature the article draws out a problem we all know, of varied cultures in both staff and inmate worlds, and suggests the very real managerial responsibility for uncovering and resolution, through staff development, communication systems and effective use of authority.

From "Cottage Six", Holloway indicates the power of a sub-culture to subvert the reasonably well motivated—this could apply equally to both a staff or an inmate ethos. From "Defences of the Weak" he highlights the dichotomy of staff attitudes about treatment, highlighted by the problem of the integration of the professionally-trained with other staff. This applies to the many professionals joining the Prison Service—probation offi-

cers, industrial managers, psychologists, assistant governors—as well as the newer recruit to the officer ranks.

He then considers newer adjuncts to the armoury of institutional training, showing how skills as well as people tend to disrupt a structure. Achievement orientation *a la* Huntercombe, group counselling *a la* Pollington, casework *a la* Hewell Grange, treatment specialisms; all these Holloway discusses from the viewpoint of integration into a system of people and of techniques.

"The problem is one of successful penetration into the basic powerful relationships and cultures within the institution": this, the basis of his paper, defines the managerial problem, often seen but rarely successfully handled: this paper deserves careful and deeper discussion at all management courses in particular and on all other staff development courses. It has certainly helped me to see why and how we so often fail to optimise the resources within staff and indeed the resources within inmates.

JOHN LEE

Mediatory versus Total Institution: The Case of the Runaway

S. G. LUBECK and L. T. EMPEY. *Social Problems*, Fall 1968, vol. 16, No. 2

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT paper which tries to test out the belief of a growing number of sociologists that many of the difficulties attributed to the personal pathology of criminal offenders are also the products of the organisational character of the correctional and legal system. The very labelling of the offender making him conscious of being a deviant may reinforce such behaviour. Indeed we may have to look at the concept of "secondary deviation" which posits that the offender may be made worse by his "correctional" experience.

The authors' attempt to explore these concepts by looking at the prediction and control of escapers from two institutions for delinquent boys. One appeared to have been an isolated, self-sufficient and fairly traditional total institution, the other, a "mediatory" or treatment institution located within an urban community whose major task was to reverse the processes of stigmatisation and to prepare the way for the offender to be reintegrated back into society with non-delinquent status. Both institutions were "open" in our sense of the term.

Boys were randomly allocated to each institution and absconding recorded over nearly three years. When physical controls over offen-

ders are decreased the potential for absconders is increased. But the authors point out that if open treatment institutions are to be effective, perhaps even to survive, they must find non-physical (i.e. organisational and psychological) means for preventing escapes.

Unfortunately most studies of absconders concern themselves purely with the backgrounds of offenders paying little regard to the organisational characteristics of the institution or indeed to the interaction between personal and social systems. It was the aim of the authors' research to do just this.

Statistical analyses pointed to a highly complicated interaction between the social organisation of the two institutions, the personalities of inmates and the occurrence of escapes.

The authors question whether escapes can be predicted solely on personal knowledge of the offender and his background. The structure of the organisation and changes within it are also important precipitative factors. They highlight that offender behaviour is very much a function of the character of correctional, as well as personal systems.

When both institutions were stable, for all its apparent unsophistication, offence history was

of greater predictive value in relation to escapes than a knowledge of background history, peer influence and personality characteristics.

When change was induced in both (and stress and uncertainty produced) psychological factors became more important. This manifested itself differently. In the treatment institution, change produced escapes among the new boys, in the traditional, total institution, both old and new absconded.

The research establishes a relationship between the running of an organisation and the behaviour within it, using escapes as a case in point. We have known this for

some time though it is information which is difficult to analyse and therefore to use.

It is sobering in its observations on the constraints on open treatment situations suggesting that disadvantages may outweigh advantages. [Attempts to improve rehabilitation may cost too much in terms of loss of control.] This is tendentious; [what isn't is that sudden change induces stress not helpful to the long-term custodial or treatment aims of the institution and there is a lot to be learned here in terms of our too frequent staff and consequential policy changes.

I. DUNBAR

Hooligans: Soccer's Resistance Movement

IAN TAYLOR, Assistant Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Glasgow University. *New Society*, vol. 14, No. 358

THE GAME OF SOCCER has been with us for centuries. The records show such information, that in 1287 the synod of Exeter banned unseemly sports in churchyards and the list included football; in 1349, Edward III threatened to imprison those who played football in preference to archery practice, and there are many such references.

We don't know how the rules of the game adopted at Eton and

Charterhouse come to be accepted by the working class, but we do know that by this time, the 19th century soccer was a central activity of the English working class. A great number of our present teams were formed at this time from these working-class communities, such as Everton, Fulham, Barnsley, Manchester United, Tottenham, to name but a few, and a proletarian sub-culture of players and sup-

porters grew up, providing not only relief from work but also a set of standards and values.

In the 1920s and 1930s, and perhaps this can be linked to the solidarity of mass unemployment, the supporter saw himself as responsible for scouting for players, helping the progress of the club and approving the manager's choice of team and tactics. Although there was a large amount of myth in this relationship it was not threatened by the large financial distinction or social distance that exists between player and supporter today.

Again more and more covered seating is being provided at grounds and this type of accommodation was originally looked upon as middle class. Whilst it is true to say that the working class has itself changed there still remains

a residue of the old soccer sub-culture and it is this residue that feel most strongly the loss of the illusion of participation and closeness to the club.

And so given the emergence of middle-class domination of soccer clubs, and their culture the hooligan who invades the pitch, fights with the policeman, etc., may, however, be fighting against, and obstructing progress that threatened his social world. The wrecking of public property and trains after the game is a continuation of the obstructive direct action.

In a narrow sense, like other forms of social deviance, the soccer hooligan is a reactionary.

It depends on where you stand.

A. R. DOLLERY and
M. STEVENSON

British Prison Custodial Care and After-care

MALCOLM J. BROWN, Lecturer in Applied Social Studies, University of Bradford. *Federal Probation*, June 1969, vol. 33, No. 2

Prison After-care—Public Responsibility

JULIE HOLBORN, Department of Social Administration, University of Manchester. *Howard Journal*, 1969, vol. 12, No. 4

IT SEEMS PROBABLE that uncertainty about the future of the Probation and After-care Service has led to feelings of insecurity amongst some officers, but Mr. Brown's article

in *Federal Probation* leaves a rather discouraging impression.

Probation and after-care officers should, it seems to me, be taking stock of the way in which they

expend their time and energy; it is inappropriate continually to lay blame on magistrates for the demands made upon them.

Mr. Brown describes at length the unwelcoming attitude of society to the ex-prisoner, but then devotes only one brief paragraph to the volunteer helper. Serious consideration should surely now be given to ways in which the volunteer can help, under the guidance of the professional worker. This problem has so far been tackled on far too timid a scale; the subject of volunteers should be a focal point for future development and not a novelty for spare time, if there is any. One welcomes, however, the advance made with volunteers in some probation areas.

It is encouraging that more thought is now being given to alternatives to prison. The very concept of imprisonment imposes severe limitations upon the most progressive reformer, but there is more scope for imagination outside the prison walls.

Julie Holborn makes a very useful contribution to *The Howard Journal* with her review. She is cautious in reaching conclusions

and makes only tentative suggestions about change. No doubt she is influenced by the unreliability of national statistics arrived at from varying procedures in different areas.

The review is based on a study of six probation areas carried out in 1966-67. It attempts to answer three questions: firstly, what should the Probation and After-care Service be doing? Secondly, what is it doing? Thirdly, what are the problems preventing the theory being put into action? And fourthly, can anything be done about them?

This review makes interesting reading and the section on volunteers highlights the urgent need for a clarification of the role of the volunteer.

Both contributors tend to support the creation of a central body with responsibility for after-care alone—along the lines recommended by the Memorandum of Dissent to the A.C.T.O. Report (1963). This is surely an admission that the Probation and After-care Service has failed to come to grips with the task set six years ago. Can this be true?

A. B. DAVENPORT

Correlates of Attitudes to Group Work

B. MARCUS. *British Journal of Criminology*, vol. 9, No. 3

"IT IS A GOOD THING for officers to take groups of inmates". This is one of 50 statements that the author used in a questionnaire filled in anonymously by 92 per cent of the basic grade officers at Grendon. Two-thirds of this group agreed with the statement.

This article describes a preliminary analysis of the questionnaire responses, and looks at what statements "pro-group" officers agreed with which the others did not. The focus is on how Grendon officers see their relationship with inmates, with professional staff, and also how much they identify with the institution's official aims. These are key areas because Grendon policy is that treatment is not confined to the doctors, but is the business of all grades of staff and inmates.

Pro-group officers did not think inmates over-familiar and indicated that they did not want to keep a distance between themselves and inmates. The majority of the sample answered questions on this topic in a "liberal" direction, but most of them, including those who were pro-group, thought that the Grendon atmosphere encouraged unacceptable inmate behaviour.

Officers who were pro-group were more likely to share the same

values as the therapists, and to be much less conscious of the obvious differences between therapists and officers, e.g. in education and income. These officers were also less liable to the view, common in this type of regime, that only the patients are loved, and that the staff do not count.

The pro-group officers had a greater degree of identification with the ideology of the institution than did their colleagues. "They . . . feel that they are engaged on a common purpose with (the professional staff). This latter seems to prove Conrad's point: . . . if a correctional staff is given a professional task, it will begin to act professionally".

As all good researchers should the author examines other possible interpretations of his findings. Perhaps the respondents were showing little more than an authoritarian acceptance of the official Grendon view. The pattern of responses shows this to be unlikely. In their responses on the questionnaire the pro-group officers were no less critical of the institution's administration than anti-group officers. That they are pro-group officers perhaps gives their criticisms added weight.

R. BROWN

The Dangerous Offender

The Fourth Frank Newsam Memorial Lecture given by Professor L. Radzinowicz, LL.D. Publ. *Police Journal*, 1968. Price 5s.

PROFESSOR RADZINOWICZ has propounded nothing new in his lecture but what he has said is nevertheless of great interest and value to the student of penology and criminology. He has indeed said nothing of which most such students are not already only too well aware.

There must, however, be unstinted admiration for the masterly marshalling of historical facts and the clear and unemotional picture he presents of the dangerous offender to-day and the growth of organised crime.

Those parts of the lecture dealing with the prevention and detection of crime and the reform of criminal trial procedures to ensure that "a trial is not a game but an attempt to get at the facts" are matters of profound interest to all but particularly to police and members of the legal profession. The particular interest of the readers of the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL will lie in that part of the lecture concerning the treatment of the ultra long-term category A prisoner.

The Prison Service is committed to the policy of dispersal. So be it. We must use all our endeavours to make the policy work.

I confess, however, to a feeling of unease at the presentation of Alcatraz as an encouraging example of the success of dispersal. The circumstances are not the same. The

Alcatraz prisoners were dispersed to federal prisons with existing populations serving, in many cases, sentences as long as the Alcatraz prisoners—hence the diminished risk of the newcomers forming a power group. In contrast, the prisoners for dispersal in this country, particularly those presently held in special security wings, are serving sentences generally of much greater length than others in the dispersal prisons are serving. The formation of power groups in these circumstances seems only too likely. We can but wait and see. The Alvington project is officially dead. Perhaps it does but sleep.

Professor Radzinowicz looks back as far as the 16th century in his review of the historical dangerous offender. We see that the form changes but he is always there. Perhaps we can derive a crumb of comfort from the lament of an earlier professor whose gloomy forebodings were surely unrealised.

To whom can I speak to-day?
The gentle man has perished,
The violent man has access to everybody.

The iniquity that smites the land:

It has no end.

There are no righteous men:
The earth is surrendered to criminals.

The time? 4,000 years ago in the time of Egypt's middle kingdom.

G.G.S.C.

Prison, Problems and the Mass Media

IN "NEW SOCIETY"

New Society now carries recruiting advertisements for the Prison Service. Whether it is an effective place to advertise or not, it is a good place. Over the years, *New Society* has established itself as the painless way to find out about what "they" and the rest of us are doing to society. Practically every issue carries *something* that ought to interest a good many of those in the Service.

While *New Society* provides this background, it also features pretty regular articles that are directly important. Since last May there have been:

"Prison and Rehabilitation",
Nicholas Swinger, 1-5-69.

"The Depraved are not just Deprived", Richard Sparks,
24-7-69.

"Soccer Hooligans", Ian
Taylor, 7-8-69.

"Holloway from the Inside",
Pat Arrowsmith, 4-9-69.

"Police Discretion",
J. Lambert, 18-9-69.

"A Guide to the Children Act" (Editorial), 1-1-70.

"Why Risley should be closed",
Clive Davies, 8-1-70.

"I Give Them Money",
Geoffrey Parkinson, 5-2-70.

The point about these articles is not that they necessarily deal in fundamental truths, but they do represent contemporary points of view. It would be a funny kind of social worker who could feel that he could afford to ignore what other people are talking about.

Of course, *New Society* has irritating habits. One is that the titles of articles are not good guides to what they are about and they're not the same inside as they are on the cover. But this means that it pays to go through the thing each week. Another irritation is the ludicrous illustrations, but these can be forgiven if they employ struggling artists.

Anyone who did go through the last 10 months' issues would probably find as much payoff from the less directly relevant items. Dennis Marsden on "Mothers

Alone"; Bernard Davies on "Non-swinging Youth"; H. J. Eysenck on "Therapies for Neurosis"; Joel Richman on "Busmen v. the public" and Ruth Adam on "Project Head-start". But the article most likely to change any reader's way of life is Kenneth Pease's on "The Great Evaders" which is about the sort of communication which actually takes place between political representative (Harold or Ted) and television interviewer. Readers within the Service have probably already contributed to a fund for a series of silver cups to be awarded to those colleagues who come out highest in the "Evasion Ratings".

In judging the importance of *New Society* for the Service, the book reviews cannot be ignored. The reviews are a lot prompter than those in other publications and there is a refreshing tradition of polemic against very bad books. In these days of over-publishing it pays to know what can be avoided.

I can't vouch for every issue of *New Society* since it started, but I have the impression that it has never carried any authoritative article by a member of the Service. If it hasn't—and even it has—it is perhaps time it did.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

The listener and the viewer enjoy an enormous privilege over the rest of us. While we make do with a flat and frozen Miss World the next day, all the others have seen her live and move and have her being. Much the same applies to *People in Prison* (Cmnd. 4214)

published on 26th November. While we read about it the next day, radio listeners could hear the Home Secretary talking about it. To hear him speak, with earnestness, about the 9,000 two or three to a cell lends a pungency to the numbers, the bleak numbers. But out there, among the public, maybe the same sort of point is more effectively made by Sheila Hancock on "Petticoat Line", speaking with exaggeration and profound, if instant, pessimism.

It seems as if the interests of the "correctional" services have to be satisfied with the meagre crumbs that fall from the rich table of the entertainers. Mitchell Raper had a rather irregular series of programmes on Radio 4 on Tuesdays or Thursdays. On 21st October he produced one on "Crimes of Violence". A fortnight earlier he produced one on "Women in Prison". Obviously, it started on the roof of the prison, which is, after all, a fairly prominent place to squat. There was a pretty good round-up of contributors, the staff having their opportunity and taking it well. Lustgarten as the "front man" wears rather badly on me and there was something grossly synthetic about the way the tape was edited. But the point seriously is that the producer does have access to a chorus of people who couldn't be assembled in any other way and provides a vital montage of views which can, done well, convey a tremendous amount of information. A later programme in the series on "Battered Babies"

was on at 4.15, so I suppose it was only for the ears of wives.

How far, though, how far does this mild endeavour off-set the Kray TV spectacular, watched by at least one of its stars. Hot on the heels of the appeal decision, so hot that it upset schedules for months, came this extravaganza. In the worst of parboiled tastelessness it leapt into a peak viewing slot like a hasty obituary. (Recall the censure of George Brown's emotionalism at J. F. K's assassination. It revealed a quality of the man rarely visible. So the Kray programme revealed a power within the B.B.C. rarely so rampant.) There was such a fairground dressing, such a parade of exhibits as has never been seen before. It was possible to wind up feeling that the Krays might well have been left a little longer to rampage on among the worn-out wide boys. The only virtue of the programme, as it was presented, was that it showed this side of auntie's character.

The same character is there, but skilfully disguised, in that swinging "World at One". Their item on the opening of Coldingley had to be corrected (belatedly) by the Home Office about the absence of armed guards on the perimeter of the prison. But nothing could stop the "talking for talking's sake" that Ian Scarlett indulged in in the same item. Nor, it seems, can anything be done to stop contributors who ought to know better talking about "warders". All the same, it is a very good thing that the

media do cover this kind of event, and it is highly creditable that someone at the Home Office was on the end of the 'phone to correct the item. That there are liabilities in opening up institutions must be obvious from "The Observer's" use of Parker's "The Frying Pan". But in the long term the tradition of Howard, Fry and Hobhouse and Brockway is one to be developed rather than denied.

Up to a point, the media can be safely relied upon to make sufficient fools of themselves as to need no help from critics. This came out in the Terry Seeney affair and, more recently, in the instant coverage of the Pudsey shootings. It is a bit reassuring when they do manage to hit the target, as "Man Alive" did with a report on shoplifting.

As for I.T.V. I may be right in my prejudice that they are beyond redemption. I watched the start of at least three "World in Action" programmes on a tip that Hull Prison was due to feature. I didn't see anything worth staying out of bed for. Yet, it seems to me that we have to come to terms with the fact that the public watch a lot of stuff which helps to form and maintain their stereotypes. Someone somewhere ought to be cultivating Lord Hill. An active secondary adjustment is called for.*

*A "secondary adjustment", as I understand it, is Goffman's way of labelling the sorts of things people do when they're stopped from doing the things they'd dearly like to do and think they're entitled to do.

"No Easy Road"

NAN MACDONALD

THIS IS A BOOK for anyone interested in "prison" from the inside. It is refreshing to read of the experience of a prison social worker, written by a woman. Whilst of a serious nature, it is easy to read and enjoy.

Sallie Trotter was senior prison welfare officer at Wandsworth Prison from 1960 to 1962—a pioneer in this field, and one who without doubt paved the way for her successors.

This book is written in three parts. The first part covers her own experiences there, and deals with the prison, how a pioneer post raises problems (reactions in prisoners), prison welfare, obstacles and the prison hostel and hostel scheme.

The second part discusses differing views on voluntary or professional after-care, the prison officer, employment in prisons, future of research in criminology, what is involved in parole, and other subjects.

In the third part she develops in

greater depth her own ideas regarding the offender, problems of rehabilitation (illustrated by a typical ex-inmate "Bill") and the underlying moral considerations. There are three appendices which fit into place after one has read the book.

H.M. Prison, Wandsworth, is a vast Victorian prison, its walls grimed with nearly one and a half centuries of London soot, sprawling behind a 20 feet high brick wall. The forbidding and awe-inspiring gate, with its steel studded doors of blackened oak and portcullis effect in its Roman archway, certainly make one wonder what happens on the other side.

Built in 1848 for about 750 men and women, it housed up to 1,800 men whilst Sallie Trotter was there. Many spent the major part of their imprisonment three to a cell, a cheerless brick-lined area, 13 feet long, seven feet wide, and eight feet six inches high, with a small window seven feet up with tiny panes, barred and cross barred. The steel door has no handle, but in the middle is an inch-wide hole with a

No Easy Road by SALLIE TROTTER,
George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 42s.

cover, which can be slipped aside to keep the occupants under observation.

Fortunately, not all the buildings are so depressing. The administrative block with its spacious hallway, has walls and doors painted in pastel colours, far different from the grim exterior.

Of all the senses, hearing and smell are those most assailed by Wandsworth Prison, and this aspect of prison life is enlarged upon by the author.

A pioneer raises problems, and this Sallie Trotter did by her appointment as senior prison welfare officer. She had had experience as a governor of a women's prison in Canada, and this she says, taught her she had little to fear from the men in Wandsworth, who held no terror for her. Her personality as well as her qualifications played an important part in her acceptance. She also had a sense of humour and admits to using the power of being a woman to great advantage. There is no doubt that the prisoners were glad she was there and soon began to realise and appreciate the help and attention she could give them.

However, the staff were more complicated. She was fortunate in being accepted by the governor as one of his senior staff. She was given the status and privileges of an assistant governor on a par with the other heads of departments, the medical officer, psychologists and chaplains. Had she not had an understanding governor, life would have been very different for her, and the work she was trying to do

less effective. She won over the chaplain and his staff, and most of the assistant governors.

She set out to gain the respect of the prison officers, because she knew that their active hostility would slow down the work she wanted to do. She found that her main difficulty was the fact that a small section of the prison officers had been taught to regard themselves as social workers, carrying out the functions of probation officers in the prison, and aiming to guide, assist and befriend prisoners. They were obviously afraid of losing this part of their work, but they were unable to appreciate how much the prisoners could gain if they, the prison officers, were prepared to accept guidance from a trained social worker.

Sallie Trotter was also fortunate in having a staff of two male prison welfare officers and three secretaries. Even so, they were unable to help all men as they would have wished. Many men preferred to talk to a woman—they felt, they said, that as a woman and mother, she would be better able to understand their wives' attitudes. Her presence was also a safety-valve, of which the prison staff gradually became aware.

The question "what is prison welfare", is answered at some length, and the necessity for welfare officers to be fully trained is emphasised. Each prisoner must be considered as an individual with mental and moral, as well as material and economic, requirements. With large numbers, therefore, a satisfactory

form of welfare for prisoners must include work and educational projects which are, together with highly skilled psychological and social case work techniques, geared towards the man's future place in society. Prison welfare can also be regarded as something of a limited function, applied principally to the needs of the prisoners, while they are incarcerated. It can be a concern for their food, their living conditions, their clothing, their opportunities for religious observance, what they can do with their leisure hours; or it can apply to their requirements after they have been released, and to help them find a place to live, a job and money. A somewhat wider view would include efforts to ease a man's anxieties about his family.

After a year of preliminary enquiries and discussions with prisoners, the governor and the tutor organiser, Sallie Trotter commenced a course of after-care pre-discharge classes. These were much appreciated by the prisoners, some of whom attended for two terms. Later, too, the Blackfriars Associates (voluntary workers) took part by attending the lectures. Afterwards they held small group discussions in the welfare office with the men they had adopted.

In time, as more intensive and detailed plans for the men's discharge developed, the committee of the local discharged prisoners' aid societies realised that their officers were more urgently needed to do outside work than to work in prison. They were asked to make

home visits and after-care arrangements.

Prisoners, not unnaturally, had a great many domestic and marital problems. They were often alleviated by special supervised welfare visits. If time had allowed, this valuable part of the work would have been increased.

Accommodation—a grave social problem, and one of the most difficult and pressing of all after-care functions—was handled more intensively by the prison social worker than in previous years. Even so, out of a total 2,203 men discharged, 992 were of no "fixed abode"—a still far from satisfactory figure.

No picture of Wandsworth would be complete without a description of the prison hostel scheme, one of the greatest potential "open sesame" to the outside world for some of the prisoners. The hostel is a single-storeyed building opened in 1959 which houses 12 men. Outside, the paintwork is a grey colour. Inside, though not exactly home from home, the hostel is a considerable improvement on the wings of the main prison. It contains a small kitchen where the men prepare their meals, a cosily furnished living room with radio and television, the usual offices and a large dormitory. Within nine months of their discharge, selected men with sentences of four years or more were transferred from the rehabilitation wings to the hostel to enable them to go out daily to work on parole. The senior assistant governor became the warden, assisted by

an enthusiastic and efficient principal officer. Much preparatory work was done by the prison welfare officers before men went before the hostel selection board, and eventually those serving sentences of three years or more became eligible.

The fact that men went out to a job daily, earned a weekly wage and paid their way, should have made the scheme successful. Unfortunately, this was not always the case and many failures were due to bad selection for the rehabilitation wings.

For voluntary or professional after-care, Sallie Trotter graded the workers into three groups: (1) professionally trained social workers who may work for either a statutory or a voluntary organisation; (2) amateurs (full or part-time welfare workers, sometimes salaried) who may be attached either to a voluntary society or to a statutory body; and (3) individuals who have come to be known as "do-gooders", not usually holding any social work appointment and without practical or academic experience in this field.

In many instances, those in the first two groups interweave and complement each other. The practical experience acquired by (2) is valuable and if they work in co-operation with (1) they may have a function almost indistinguishable from that of the professional in certain fields. They are, however, excluded through lack of experience and training from establishing a deeper case relationship, which is necessary for effective social work.

The third type are sometimes

well-meaning, but because of their inexperience, ambitions and the insecurity of their position often resentful of (1) and (2). Often too, different members give contradictory advice. This makes a confused and worried man more distressed if his desire for help is genuine, and makes his insecurity and dependence worse if he is a scrounger. The chapter on this subject is of especial interest, and one which should provoke considerable discussion. I am very much in agreement with Sallie Trotter when she quotes as sound commonsense part of official reports, as follows: "It is necessary to stress that this is not work for inexperienced amateurs. It requires a warm heart, but also a clear head, compassion combined with insight, lack of illusion and preparedness for disappointment. . . . Training is essential if voluntary workers are to give their services knowledgeably and acceptably, and training can help them to feel an integral part of the service. It is important if they are to recognise when the situation requires a professionally trained worker or a different service".

There is a chapter on employment in prisons. Most advocates recommend this active form of rehabilitation for two reasons. It is economically good in that it saves the taxpayer money, and it keeps a man from degenerating. The trouble is that this has not always worked out in practice in Britain, particularly in big local prisons, where the largest percentage of the prison population is housed. As well as the administrative and disciplinary

difficulties involved, the type of work has to be limited to jobs which require a minimum of skill and training. Thus it is surprising to learn there are no fewer than 56 forms of employment available; nor is vocational training omitted. Sallie Trotter makes proposals for improvement, two of which, the parole system and the reduction of the short-term prison population, have since been adopted.

A chapter on the value of research in criminology is of great interest, giving percentages and details of different types of crime and age groups when series of offences are committed. Sallie Trotter also writes of the research worker, and concludes with a suggestion from C. K. Morrison: "We consider that research done within the prison field by prison personnel in contact with offenders and experienced in the understanding of their attitudes and behaviour is a really urgent necessity".

Those of us who are aware of the parole system, now introduced, will enjoy the chapter on "What is involved in parole". Space does not permit adequate comment on this, which is a subject in itself, but the last paragraph is well worth quoting. "A candidate for parole ought to appear before a board consisting of persons who have known and worked with him throughout his term of training and of those into whose care he is to go. It should consist only of those trained in asking relevant questions which will not terrify him or discourage him or arouse his

resentment. Thus much of the nervousness and hostility caused by the bungling of amateur board members will be eliminated."

The third part of the book deals mainly with "The offender". Those of us who work "inside" have all known the habitual drunk, the alcoholic, the inadequate, the confidence man, the homosexual, the problem family offender, and many others Sallie Trotter mentions. We are familiar with the sort of preparatory work done by the prison welfare officers in Wandsworth and the importance of co-operation from the probation service who undertake the rehabilitation of the men when they are released. We can share their hopes and fears for these men, knowing that so much more must be done to prepare them to fit into the outside world.

Although *No Easy Road* tells of the role of the prison welfare officer between 1960 and 1962, I feel that here little progress has been made since then. Probation officers are now seconded into the prisons, giving them the opportunity to work with the inmate from the beginning of his sentence. They are also, of course, the professionally trained social workers of whom Sallie Trotter writes. I feel sure, however, they are still looked upon with suspicion by some members of the prison staff. They must often feel frustrated and long for a system which would give them time and freedom to do their job more effectively.

There is no doubt that a woman

social worker is essential in prisons, both male and female, and this has been proved by Sallie Trotter and others like her.

Fortunately, progress has been made in the prison regime during the last seven years, suspended sentences have been introduced and the use of the parole system is now commonplace. Prison staff are also receiving training in different forms, and the prison officer is able, if interested, to spend time with the prison welfare officers

and probation officers, gaining knowledge of the work they are doing and making him aware of the ways in which he can help them and the inmates.

There is, however, much to be done to make the work of the prison welfare officer more worthwhile, and less frustrating. If they read Sallie Trotter's book, maybe those with the power to do so may find ways in which this can be achieved.

No Easy Road

SALLIE TROTTER

A Study in the Theory and Problems Involved in the Rehabilitation of the Offender

The first woman social worker ever appointed in Britain to work inside an all-male prison—Wandsworth, Sallie Trotter was made responsible for the welfare and rehabilitation of over 1,500 men, none of them first-offenders. This book is the product of an experience that is quite unique. It considers the theories of others with regard to the treatment of the criminal, the author's own attempts to analyse them and her ideas, for instance, on rehabilitation, the moral issues, and the factors that turn a man into a criminal

42s.

Allen & Unwin

July's

PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL
has news of Mr. Gordon Hawkins' book (with Norval Morris) called

**THE HONEST
POLITICIAN'S GUIDE TO
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“He Beareth not the Sword in Vain”

SERMON PREACHED TO THE MAGISTRATES' ASSOCIATION
BY THE RT. REV. THE BISHOP OF EXETER AT YORK MINSTER
SUNDAY, 27TH JULY 1969

“But if thou do that which is evil be afraid: for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”—Romans 13, iv.

DO YOU recognise yourselves in that description? Yet it is the traditional Christian attitude to the law and to punishment. It is the function of law to administer just retribution for wrong-doing. The two essential requirements are, first, justice: it must be established that the wrong has been done by the individual accused, and the punishment inflicted must be generally thought to be commensurate with the crime—neither too severe nor too lenient. And second, the punishment itself. There must be some punishment: otherwise the law is deemed to have failed in its duty.

This predominance of retribution in the theory and practice of the administration of justice still retains

its force. The public demands it. Indeed, it probably has its roots in the community's demand for protection in return for the surrender by the individual of the right to avenge his own wrongs. I am sure that magistrates are constantly aware of this pressure from society to give the offender “a taste of his own medicine” and to exact from him a proper reparation in the form of retributive punishment.

There is also a hint, here, of the element of deterrence in the theory of punishment: “Wilt thou not be afraid?” This also retains its force. The need to make an example of offenders whose crime is becoming too prevalent. Notting Hill, capital punishment. And sometimes this element infringes justice, and a culprit is required to suffer a penalty which is more severe than strictly he merits *pour encourager les autres*. This also probably has its roots in society's demand for self-protection, by preventing

the repetition or spread of crimes.

Over the years of history, society, Christian society, has thought it right to inflict many penalties which we should now regard as savage—the stocks, and public ridicule and buffoonery, the ducking-pond, physical mutilation, and above all capital punishment, publicly executed. And during the last hundred years or so, for all of these have been substituted fines or imprisonment. It is as well to remember that imprisonment as a punishment—as distinct from the keeping of a potentially dangerous political enemy out of harm's way, is a comparatively modern idea. It is due to a revulsion from the savage penalties of earlier generations.

These savage penalties were possible because of the concentration in the theory of punishment on the elements of retribution and deterrence. There is nothing in my text about the needs of the offender, still less about reforming him.

Now the pendulum has swung all the other way. The talk is all of rehabilitation and the protection of society through deterrence, though this with more doubt and hesitation. Retribution is almost a dirty word. The reasons are not hard to find. Retribution smacks of vengeance, of the satisfaction of anger, of "getting one's own back". Yet the essential element in retribution is the element of justice, that the retribution which is exacted should be the retribution which is due, neither more nor less. And it is my belief that if the idea of retribution is totally removed from

the idea of punishment and the administration of the law, justice goes too.

But the idea of justice is bound up with the idea of responsibility. If a man is not responsible for his actions, he is not to be blamed for them. If he is not to be blamed for them, he deserves no punishment: if he is not fully responsible, he is not fully to blame then not deserving to suffer the full consequences of his wrong-doing. But how are we to measure a man's responsibility? How much allowance should be made for his physical or psychological handicaps, or for his environment? How far is Society itself to blame for his condition? In a word, how do we assess guilt? And when or if we have, who are we to cast the first stone? And so, in this century, you get a mood almost of resignation and despair—"Better leave all that to God, He alone knows the secrets of men's hearts. Let Him administer strict justice". But this is not right. Though we cannot equal the exact justice of God, we must do the best we can, for "the powers that be are ordained of God", and justice in some form is essential to the fabric of society, and it is the duty of man to be as just as he can. All the same, the temptation for honest, humble and humane men to concentrate on deterrence and reform is strong. And even deterrence is losing its appeal. For deterrents do not seem to deter, unless you are prepared to go further in savage repression than the limits of normal humanitarianism will permit. And

so we concentrate on reform.

The question, perhaps the only question now which a magistrate consciously asks himself as he considers sentence is: "What sentence is likely to make this man a better citizen, or at least not make him a worse one?" First he considers all the possible non-custodial sentences—a suspended sentence, a probation order, a fine, a probation hostel order, for a custodial sentence is a last resort. But if it must be prison or borstal or detention centre, then he hopes and prays that the Prison Service has established such a regime as will not further harden and confirm a man in his criminal tendencies, but will in some way change him for the better. And the Prison Service, for its part, has the prisoner's rehabilitation as its primary objective. Life must be as normal as possible consistent with security: habits of constructive industry must be formed, attitudes towards authority must be changed from fear and suspicion to trust and respect. Public criticism that the Service is going soft and that criminals are being pampered must be firmly resisted. So magistrates and Prison Service work together in this effort to reform and rehabilitate the criminal.

But it is disheartening work. The failures are at least as numerous as the successes. For, after all, what can you do with people who go in for deliberate, organised crime, or with the ineffective, irresponsible, incompetent recidivists who constantly appear and reappear before

you? So there you sit on your benches; you cannot forget retribution and the claims of society and of justice: you cannot forget deterrence: you are anxious above all for reform, for the sake of the individual and in the interests of society—for the surest way of preventing crime is to make the criminal no longer want to be a criminal. And there lies the rub. Law cannot do the work of grace. Law can, to some extent, control actions; law can, to some extent, induce conformity; law can arouse feelings of guilt such as felt by the recidivist who knows himself to be one of society's rejects. But law cannot change the man nor alter the course and direction of his secret hopes and sinful affections.

So there you sit, trying to balance the claims of retribution, deterrence and reform, hoping and praying that as a consequence of your sentence, somehow something will happen to release the springs of renewal, to turn the man round to face in the opposite direction, to convert him, in fact: hoping and praying that the good offices of the Probation Service or the Prison Service will, at least in this case, prove successful. You know yourselves to be the officers of God, appointed to do this very thing, to minister God's justice, who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live. There is no selfrighteousness in you, no moral superiority, no censoriousness, but only a desire to help. In an ideal world perhaps there would be an unspoken dia-

logue between the magistrate and the prisoner whom he is sentencing on some such lines as these: the magistrate would be uttering a prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses",

whilst the prisoner, deep down below the level of consciousness, utters a plea for help: "Lead us not into further temptation, but deliver us from evil".



"HONESTLY SIR, I'VE TRIED TO GET A JOB BUT THEY SEEM TO SENSE THAT I'M ON PROBATION AND THEY WON'T EVEN LET ME IN FOR AN INTERVIEW"

*Letter to the Editor***Link-up, Probation and Prison***To The Editor,*

PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

Sir,

Having recently attended an annual branch conference of the National Association of Probation Officers I wonder how many prison officers had ever been to such a function and also how many of our staff would like to be asked to meet not only probation officers but magistrates and other social workers in a Friday/Sunday setting such as we enjoyed at Keswick under the auspices of the Lakeland Branch of N.A.P.O. Certainly as far as my colleagues from Bela, Lancaster and Preston and myself were concerned we did enjoy meeting them and we did a lot of hard work in talking to other people about prison, discussing the speakers and generally putting the penal world right.

Dr. Whittaker, medical officer at Durham, began on "The Role of the Prison Doctor", dealing with normal duties of reception, sick parades, reports to courts, assessing prisoners for types of establishment and he also told us about the work of Grendon and the alcoholic treatment unit at Wakefield. It was

obvious from the questions that many magistrates and indeed probation officers were very much in the dark on what goes on in prison and the medical problems involved in dealing with every type of personality.

The ex-governor of Blundeston on "The Role of the Prison Governor", described the relationship between governors and the Home Office, between governors and prisoners, and between governors and the public, emphasising that all powerful as a governor might appear to be (in some people's eyes) he was only as powerful as the Home Office and public opinion allowed him to be and in the final analysis it was the support of his staff which gave him confidence and the power to attempt the dual task of controlling and caring.

The second day began with Iain Scarlet, ex-prisoner and now editor of *Link-up*, aptly dressed in a bright scarlet shirt. He spoke on his own feelings and experiences as a prisoner and how he thought there should be an agency Press reporter attached to each prison to report on the full facts of happenings there. This of course had disadvantages, as was pointed out to him

afterwards. I was not sure whether Mr. Scarlet had sufficient insight into the problems of both prisoners and the Prison Service; my impression was that he was inclined to see no view other than his own. This was a talk that quite a few prisoners or ex-prisoners could give, given the chance.

Later we heard from Mr. Merfyn Turner, founder of Norman House on the problems of the homeless and how Norman House had set out to solve some of these problems. It had enabled many inadequates to go straight but there was still a great deal to do. Mr. Turner said he sometimes felt inclined to scrap the present penal system and to have two punishments or sentences based on the present hostel system with parole on merit after one year,

or longer sentences at a place such as Coldingley.

The conference ended with a summary from Mr. A. Bannerman, principal probation officer of the West Riding, bringing in the views of the Probation Service and emphasising, as so many speakers did, that the utmost co-operation was necessary between the prisons and the Probation Service if after-care was to be a reality.

May I say again that I consider it is a great pity that more prison officers are unable to attend this type of conference with its cross-section audience as I think a great deal of knowledge can be gained and be given to the benefit of all the individuals concerned.

Yours etc.,

J. W. GILMARTIN,
Hospital Officer, Wakefield.

Contributors—continued from page 17

M. D. JENKINS joined the Prison Service in 1956 and was an assistant governor at Portland and Hewell Grange until becoming a tutor at Wakefield Staff College in 1967.

C. H. ROLPH, former chief inspector, City of London Police, writer and broadcaster on penal matters, was a member of the Parole Board from its inception until July 1969.

THE BISHOP OF EXETER, the Rt. Rev. R. C. Mortimer, was the chairman of a sub-committee set up by the Advisory Council on the Penal System to review the operation of detention centres.

A. TAYLOR, whose cartoon appears in this issue, is an officer at Onley Borstal, near Rugby.