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# PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL





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# PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

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*The editorial board wishes to make it clear that the views expressed by contributors are their own and do not reflect the official views or policies of the Prison Department*

## EDITORIAL

The report of the Advisory Council on "Young Adult Offenders" seems to have been received like the curate's egg—everyone (more or less) acclaims the broad principles of this first fundamental attempt to rationalise the treatment of juvenile crime in 60 years; equally, almost everyone has picked on some "not so good" part of the recommendations from a sectional interest point of view, and some of the criticism has achieved quite emotional heights. It was inevitable, but it is perhaps just as well most of the kids can't or don't read this kind of thing, or they might be more confused and cynical than they are already.

It is a situation which calls massively for the will to combine and make remedies work. The whole world, with Britain no exception, faces an explosion of adolescent aggression at once challenging and frightening. It is not a phenomenon which can be explained away in moralistic terms, nor do comparisons between generations prove anything; though it is fairly certain that "the mass media" today tend both to make us more aware of group behaviour and to turn isolated incidents into self-fulfilling prophecies. What we are really seeing, of course, is the product of a materialistic and almost entirely selfish society's neglect of its children, which can no longer be concealed and therefore can no longer be contained by the traditional adult sanctions.

Any solution, therefore, short of a complete restructuring of our cultural and economic values, can only hope to succeed if its application is wholistic, and if each worker can be brought to see the place of his contribution in the continuance of care. We shall once again miss the boat, and to our peril, if we do not seize this opportunity for a massive assault on some of the divisive myths which have for years dominated the "delinquency" scene—the good fairies in the field, the wicked uncles in institutions, for instance. There is a job of conversion to be done—on public attitudes, on community resources, and on individual professional prejudices. We in the Prison (and Borstal) Service would want to make a significant contribution (but *not* in isolation any more), and we should be prepared, as many believe we are, to accept change, some of which will be painful. But the stakes are high, and though the following articles add something constructive, we hope, to the great debate, it has really hardly yet begun.

# Young Offenders at Wormwood Scrubs

In this article we conclude Peter Leonard's historical account of the development of Wormwood Scrubs up to the present day. It provides an appropriate starting-point for discussion of the A.C.P.S. Report which forms the main theme of this issue.

## THE 19th CENTURY BACKGROUND

FOR much of the nineteenth century working-class children were condemned to the repetitious squalor of industrial servitude by a society more concerned with economic expansion than social conditions. England was establishing herself as the leading industrial nation in the world and the roots of her dominance lay in the large pool of cheap labour provided by men, women and children who undersold their services or starved.

Most detected crime of the period was committed by the urban poor and little thought was given to the rehabilitation of offenders. Crime was simply punished and children convicted in the courts were subjected to the same harsh sentences of hanging, flogging or transportation as their elders.

During the 1820's several reformatory schools were opened by philanthropists who hoped to persuade the courts and Parliament of the benefits to be gained from training rather than punishing young criminals. Some courts were sympathetic and committed young offenders to the new schools but where courts were stubborn, and funds allowed, the young inmates were hired from local gaolers and subjected to

the "reformatory" influences of the school staff.

Although independent of central government control the private reformatory schools were afforded some official recognition after 1838. It was in that year that the first government reformatory for young offenders was set up at Parkhurst on the Isle of Wight. The Act establishing the Parkhurst Government Reformatory allowed for offenders under 18 years to be sent there for a period of correctional training followed by release on licence to the colonies or to one of the private reformatory schools.

According to the *Gladstone Committee* the government reformatory "died a natural death" in the 1850's when the private reformatories were legitimised under the Reformatory Schools Acts.<sup>1</sup> Two types of correctional school emerged from these Acts. Both were under private sponsorship but subject to regular inspection by an officer accountable to central government; at first the officer concerned was an inspector of prisons but later the office was retitled and the officer made independent of the prison authorities. The first type of school,

the industrial schools, was founded mainly for the industrial instruction of children under 14 years from deprived backgrounds "... who would today be described as 'care or protection' cases including those beyond the control of their parents".<sup>2</sup> The second type, the reformatory schools, on the other hand, were established primarily for delinquents under 16 who, it was hoped, could be saved from a life of crime by exposure to moral and religious instruction.

Industrial and reformatory schools were merged as Home Office approved schools in this century and have recently been renamed community homes.

### A HALF-WAY HOUSE

When Sir Edmund DuCane was appointed to the chairmanship of the Prison Commissioners he was charged with a difficult task; to bring the prison system to an acceptable standard of efficiency following the passage of control, in 1877, from local to central government. He set about this job with uncompromising enthusiasm and created a professional, para-military machine, well administered centrally

and well run locally. Naturally the new system was not without its critics and by the early 1890's they were saying that the prison authorities had sold out to organisation and method and were ignoring the needs of prisoners who were treated "... too much as a hopeless or worthless element of the community and that the moral as well as the legal responsibility of the prison authorities has been held to cease when they pass outside the prison gates".<sup>3</sup> In 1894, under the mounting weight of such criticism, the Home Secretary appointed the *Gladstone Committee* whose report coincided with DuCane's retirement. His successor, Evelyn Ruggles-Brise, was told by the Home Secretary, Mr. Asquith, of the strong desire of Her Majesty's Government for the recommendations of the committee, as far as practicable, to be carried into execution.<sup>4</sup> Three years later many of the recommendations were translated into law by the Prison Act 1898 but one, which led to the introduction of borstal training, had no basis in law until 1908 and therefore Ruggles-Brise was obliged to introduce a new system for the treatment of young offenders within the limits of existing legislation.

The *Gladstone Committee* supported a view, widely held, that too many children and young people were being sent to prison. The reformatory schools were recognised as suitable for the training of first offenders under 16 but what was needed to supplement their efforts was a half-way house between reformatory and prison. The idea embodied some of the principles of the state reformatory system operating in the United States and Ruggles-Brise travelled there to study the American methods with a view to introducing similar establishments in Britain.

On his return to England Ruggles-Brise formed the Association of London Prison Visitors to visit lads during their sentences and assist them on discharge. He encouraged the governors of local prisons to introduce special training regimes for the young offenders he called "juvenile-adults" and, perhaps more importantly, he set aside the convict prison at Borstal for the exclusive containment of selected juveniles.

### "YOUNG HOOLIGANS"

The regime at the new juvenile-adult prison at Borstal was not designed to provide a soft option to imprisonment. Ruggles-Brise saw the object of the system there "... to arrest or check

the evil habit by the *individualisation* of the prisoner, mentally, morally, and physically. To the exhortation and moral persuasion of the selected staff, we added physical drill, gymnastics, technical and literary instruction: inducement to good conduct by a system of grades and rewards which, trivial in themselves, were yet calculated to encourage a spirit of healthy emulation and inspire self respect".<sup>5</sup> Of the young men Borstal set out to train, Ruggles-Brise said they were not "... youthful offenders as usually conceived, that is, a boy or even a child, who may have lapsed into some petty or occasional delinquency, and who was being sufficiently provided for under the Reformatory Schools Acts and by the rules concerning juvenile offenders in prisons. Our object was to deal with a far different material, the young hooligan advanced in crime *perhaps with many previous convictions*, and who appeared to be inevitably doomed to a life of habitual crime".<sup>6</sup>

Around the turn of the century there was a good deal of concern with the large numbers of young people sent out, often because of their parents' grinding poverty, to earn their own living selling newspapers in the street. There was a high demand for the latest editions but the job of selling them was looked upon as a low-grade occupation inextricably bound up with crime. In 1904 the chaplain of Wormwood Scrubs stated his opinion of the young newsvendors and their style of life. "There is a class of prisoner to which I would draw serious attention. Lads and young men having little or no education with no trade in their hands generally sent to prison for gambling pitch and toss or idling at street corners. On enquiring into their antecedents I find they have been accustomed to sell papers in the streets and failing that, to do the best they can—in other words they *thieve*. Now these have been turned out of their homes to, or voluntarily, fend for themselves. One can see these children of 10 years to lads of 15 and upwards running through the streets with papers and the burden of their cry is 'all the winners'. I think the children should be prevented from such a course, there is absolutely nothing before them, no prospects but a life of a thief and a vagabond and they form the recruiting ground for a large number of our prison population. This is not my opinion only, but also of policemen to whom I have spoken both in the east and west of London. They bet,

gamble, *thieve*, they herd together in common lodging houses and when money fails, as one of them told me here, they sleep together under arches in wagons. I think it is high time something should be done to cut off the supply at least as far as the boys are concerned."<sup>7</sup>

### SWEDISH DRILL AND SINGING LESSONS

No doubt the Prison Commissioners abhorred the evils of poverty, ignorance and need which the chaplain reported to them; certainly this portion of his report appeared in their annual, published report. They were, however, powerless to act until the individual was committed to their care. Once sentenced, the young offender could be exposed to training as a juvenile-adult at a local prison or selected for transfer to Borstal.

The training scheme for juvenile-adults in local prisons was known as the "modified borstal system" for it embodied the principles of Borstal but applied them to local prison conditions. The modified system was operated at Wormwood Scrubs from about 1904. Next to the professional criminals the chaplain regarded juvenile-adults as the most difficult class of prisoners to deal with, for they were impervious to kindly advice or spiritual counsel, but the governor records that they were employed together in association without incident and they responded well to instruction.<sup>8</sup>

In 1904, 20 juvenile-adults in the prison were employed in basket-making and three or four others were under instruction in other trades. Two years later the governor reports that training resources had been extended to include carpentry, tinsmithing, bookbinding and shoemaking, and during 1906 a greenhouse and a potting shed were erected.

In 1907 a "very commodious and useful" building was put up. Known as the lecture hall it was used each day by schoolmasters who instructed the juvenile-adults in the fundamentals of reading and writing and on one evening a week a guest lecturer came to talk on some physical or moral subject, trade or useful occupation. From the accounts which have survived it seems that the young offenders responded well to instruction and made good scholastic progress. Once a week the chaplain took the class for singing lessons which probably explains why he thought them difficult!

The report of the governor of Wormwood Scrubs for the year ending



March, 1908 gives a very full picture of the work being carried on with juvenile-adults at this time. It shows the limitations imposed by a short, fixed term of imprisonment and the reluctance of London boys to change their way of life. "The total number of young prisoners between the ages of 16-21 treated under the modified borstal system during the 12 months was 623, the number under instruction at any one time is about 200.

"After 14 days spent in separate confinement in their cells they are put to learn the trade which, after enquiring into the circumstances and prospects, is considered most suited to them, and they are also taught daily for one hour in school until they pass standard five and undergo a daily spell of hard physical exercise at Swedish drill in the open-air, or on the apparatus of the gymnasium which was completed in the autumn, with a view of compensating for the comparatively sedentary nature of trade instruction in the workshops. The improvement in the appearance and smartness of the boys after a few weeks of this training is remarkable and there can be no doubt it reacts favourably upon them morally by cultivating self-respect.

"There have been special efforts this year to make the technical instruction efficient and real. Generally speaking, though the young Londoner is apt and teachable, at least 12 months of instruction are required before a lad is fit to enter a London workshop even as an improver but of these 623 only 31 or under 5 per cent received a sentence of 12 months or over. No less than 367 or 58.8 per cent were sentenced to three months and under and of these 81 had no more than one month. In such cases all we could do was to inculcate habits of industry and handiness with tools.

"The following are the trades taught: tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, tin-smith (now abolished in favour of bricklaying and building because much of the tin trade in London is in the hands of women), painting (including lettering), bookbinding and gardening. In addition to these a cookery class has been opened in the kitchen specially fitted up in the warders' mess room and the first examination was held by the chef of National Food Association and a certificate was awarded to all lads who entered for it. Special care is taken selecting boys for this class in the hope that the certificate will procure them employment as ships' cooks. A class has also been opened in the

evening for training lads destined for the sea in knotting and splicing and in the use of the compass and lead line, under a warder who was formerly an instructor at a naval school.

"Too much must not be made of the fact that out of the 623 only 46 or 7.4 per cent are known to have been reconvicted during the year. Many would not have been reconvicted even if there were no borstal system, a few may still return to prison and there undoubtedly are some who have returned to a life of street vagrancy and possibly of crime without having yet come into collision with the police.

"As compared with the juvenile-adult convicts at Dartmoor the criminal youths of London are a very poor material to work on. More than half of them are street vagrants, news-vendors and hawkers who either decline to leave London at all or, if work is found for them in the country, pine for the gas light and the music halls and drift back again into the life they love. 'Back to the land' as applied to this class is a meaningless cry and yet the obvious remedy for street vagrancy is to break the chain of evil associations by getting the vagrant into regular employment out of London. London is perhaps the worst labour market in England for the lad between 16 and 21, there is plenty of work for young boys as van-guards, errand boys, messengers, etc. There is work for unskilled men as cowmen or labourers, but for the hobble-de-hoy of 18 or 19, too big for boys' work and too young for the men's, there is very little work of any kind."

#### THE ACT OF 1908

Juvenile-adults became known as *young prisoners* some time after the first world war and the class still exists today, accepting those between 17 and 21 who have been sentenced to a *fixed term of imprisonment*. The numbers in the class have, however, dropped steadily as the courts have come to favour other, less drastic, methods of dealing with young offenders.

In describing the small amount of training which could be given to juvenile-adults during a short sentence of imprisonment, the governor of Wormwood Scrubs was reiterating the point that had been made earlier by Ruggles-Brise. "It soon became clear that the *element of time*, that is, a longer sentence than the law permitted, was essential for the success of the scheme. Experience showed that something may be done in 12 months, little or nothing in a shorter period. . . ."

This was not Ruggles-Brise being punitive, he had been instrumental in establishing a system of training which he hoped would help to save young people from a life of crime but to do this a sufficiently long, preferably indeterminate, sentence was required.

In 1906 Ruggles-Brise had addressed a "strong representation" to the Secretary of State asking for an alteration in the law and in return was asked to draft a Bill which became enacted as the Prevention of Crime Act, 1908. This allowed courts to commit to *Borstal Detention* offenders between 16 and 21 who "... by reason of criminal habits or tendencies or association with persons of bad character appeared to require detention under penal discipline".<sup>11</sup> Supported by the Criminal Justice Administration Act of 1914, the 1908 Act formed the legal basis of the borstal system until 1948 and allowed for detention up to three years with release on licence after six months, three in the case of girls.

The new sentence of borstal detention, for young offenders, proved a popular disposal, with the courts demonstrating a great deal of confidence in it. In 1910 pressure was growing on the limited number of places available at Borstal, now given over exclusively to borstal detainees, and the old industrial school at Feltham was being prepared as a borstal institution. In July of that year overcrowding was becoming acute and Ruggles-Brise wrote to the Home Secretary proposing a scheme to alleviate the problem. In so doing he started a relationship between Wormwood Scrubs and the borstal system which has survived to this day. "In the circumstances the Prison Commissioners propose, as a *temporary measure* until Feltham is opened, to send the surplus of lads freshly committed to a borstal institution to the large and well equipped juvenile-adult class at Wormwood Scrubs where the training under the modified borstal system is practically the same as at Borstal itself."<sup>12</sup> On 7th July 1910 Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, signed the order enabling this step to be taken and within a few days the first of the borstal lads arrived within the prison.

#### BORSTAL ALLOCATION

In 1922 there were three borstal institutions accepting lads; Borstal, (the original—and by then generally known as Rochester), Portland, one of the original convict prisons now largely rebuilt as a borstal and known as the Weymouth Institute, and Feltham, the refurbished industrial school. Ayles-

bury was the only borstal for girls. Each of these establishments, as is still true today, has a slightly different character and regime and so some observation and allocation process was required to select lads for the most suitable borstal. At first this work was carried out at Canterbury but with the proposed closing of this prison in 1922, the Prison Commissioners had to find an alternative location. Wormwood Scrubs was central and convenient and had an established reputation in the young offender field and was, therefore, chosen as the alternative.

Someone in the Home Office suggested that the whole of Wormwood Scrubs should be designated a borstal as the appropriation of a building as a borstal did not preclude its use as a prison. Such a step would obviate the necessity for further administrative action if the commissioners wanted to make changes at a later date. This proposal was not adopted, however, as the Under Secretary felt it would expose the Government and the Home Office to public criticism and on 4th March 1922 it was just "D" Hall that was declared a borstal.<sup>13</sup>

Since 1922 the number of training borstals has increased to over 20, and allocation, which was once a detailed and protracted affair, has become streamlined with borstal trainees only remaining in the allocation centre for two or three weeks. Immediately after the second world war, when the borstal population rose substantially, Latchmere House near Richmond in Surrey was appointed to help with borstal allocation and in the 1960's part of Manchester Prison was taken over and now allocates to borstals in the North of England.

"B" Hall now houses the borstal allocation centre at Wormwood Scrubs and handles over 10,000 movements each year. The allocating team which expanded to include numerous specialists during the 1950's has been reduced to a small, experienced group able to make swift decisions about individuals and so cut down the amount of time spent in the prison by impressionable young men.

## THE LONG DEBATE

Each prison and borstal has a board of visitors appointed to serve as an impartial "lay" body to which inmates can turn when they have exhausted normal channels of application. The board has greater powers of punishment and adjudicates in serious cases of indiscipline which are

referred to them by the governor. They visit all parts of the establishment regularly, talk to prisoners informally and make regular (and at least annual) reports to the Secretary of State on the management, regime and physical state of the prison.

Wormwood Scrubs is now served by just one board of visitors but when a borstal was first established there it had its own board which, in addition to the duties I have described, had a responsibility for making adequate after-care plans for lads, a duty that has now largely passed to the Probation Service. The first board were under the chairmanship of Sir Wemyss Grant-Wilson who had served the borstal scheme from the outset in a number of ways. He must have been aware of his board's obligation to report to the Home Secretary at least annually and it is rather surprising that, although the board was constituted in the spring of 1923, no report was sent until February 1926.

When the first report was sent up, though, it was critical and gave an opinion that has been reiterated by governors, politicians, newspapermen and reformers ever since. "The committee", they reported, "submit that it is not desirable that the institution should be housed in prison buildings".<sup>14</sup>

Hobhouse and Brockway, writing early in the 1920's, expressed their concern with the system which allowed young offenders to remain in the same establishments as adult prisoners. "It is clearly undesirable that the period of reformatory treatment at borstal should be generally preceded by detention amongst adult offenders in ordinary prisons. While giving full value to the efforts made to separate the two classes, our evidence is conclusive that, no matter how strict the regulations, complete separation is impossible so long as juvenile-adults and adults are detained in the same prison buildings."<sup>15</sup> This concern with "contamination" was popular with criminologists of the day who assumed that criminality would in some way be passed to the young offenders from the (theoretically) more criminally sophisticated adult prisoners. However conclusive the evidence of Hobhouse and Brockway, and remembering that theirs was not an official enquiry, I can find no indication that contact between young offenders and adults at Wormwood Scrubs was anything more than minimal. Then as now borstal lads were housed in a separate hall of the prison and occupied their own workshops, exer-

cise yard and classrooms.

A more valid criticism of the containment of borstal lads at Wormwood Scrubs was that they were being detained too long before transfer. Remembering that at the time of the outbreak of the second war there were only four borstals receiving boys, an allocation process of over a month does appear to be rather elaborate. This delay prompted a question from Viscountess Astor which was answered by the Home Secretary, Mr. Clynes, in the House on 12th February 1931: "Four to six weeks" he said, "were required for investigation prior to transfer". A second question caused him to detail the transfer times. Of the 740 lads allocated during 1930, 62 were transferred within one month, 345 within two, 270 within three, 54 within four and eight within five. One boy was detained longer for medical reasons.<sup>16</sup>

In 1927 the Young Offenders Committee, set up by the Government to enquire into the penal system as it related to juveniles, reported the need for a separate observation and allocation centre away from the environment of an adult prison. The Prison Commissioners certainly agreed with this and when no positive action had been taken they wrote, in 1938, to the Home Secretary proposing the removal of the allocation centre to Feltham. A Bill was at this time being prepared to establish remand centres for young offenders and it was hoped that this together with the removal of the allocation centre to Feltham would free Wormwood Scrubs of the young offenders. "When the observation centre is established at Feltham" they wrote, "it will receive all lads under remand or committal for trial and all lads sentenced to borstal training and awaiting allocation. These represent the greater part of the lads now detained in the boys' prison at Wormwood Scrubs".<sup>17</sup> In the event these plans, and the Bill, were halted by the war. The Bill was eventually enacted as the Criminal Justice Act 1948 but it was not until the early 1960's that lads on remand (i.e. awaiting sentence) were removed from Wormwood Scrubs to the new Ashford Remand Centre.

## THE 1968 OUTCRY

The Prison Service in general and Wormwood Scrubs in particular were reeling from the impact of the "Mountbatten Report" on prison security when in mid-1968 a party of magistrates were shown around the prison. No doubt they were impressed by the

electronic paraphernalia and security procedures which were absorbing so much of the limited cash and manpower available and which were so badly needed to prevent further escapes by notorious or dangerous prisoners. What did not impress them were the conditions they found in the two wings occupied by borstal trainees, "A" and "B" halls. The complaints they had heard by their M.P., Cyril Black, Conservative member for Wimbledon, and he took the matter up with the Home Office. Within hours the story broke in the newspapers.

Mr. Klare of the Howard League for Penal Reform said that he knew conditions in the allocation centre were bad "... but the main objection was that boys stayed too long and did nothing". An ex-borstal trainee who had passed through the centre blamed the poor conditions on "... abysmal ignorance and public disinterest".<sup>19</sup>

In the Commons the Secretary of State, Mr. Callaghan, came under bitter attack but as he pointed out to Mr. Shinwell he had constantly endeavoured to give publicity to the need for more public expenditure on prisons and he had now invited a representative of the Press Association and a photographer into Wormwood Scrubs to see conditions for themselves. The allocation centre was like an army transit camp, which everyone knew were filthy places. Money, though, was an important factor and it was a question of resources. A new school or a new borstal, which is likely to be given priority, asked Mr. Callaghan?<sup>20</sup>

Michael Day was the Press Association representative who visited Wormwood Scrubs on 15th July 1968 and his report was published in *The Times* of the following day under the headline "First taste of lost freedom the bitterest". He found it was "... about 'A' Wing that most of the allegations in the Press recently have been made. When I saw them, the 16 redecorated cells in 'A' Wing were light, painted blue and white, housed moderately clean mattresses and blankets, had glass in the windows, and fresh polished floors. A cross section of others I saw there were very grim. The mattresses were disgusting—grimy and greasy—some were torn, and all were very thin. Beds were hard with very little springing. The walls were peeling, chipped and appeared dirty and the floors were grubby. Most of the barred windows had much of the glass missing but this, I gather, is the fault of the boys who

smash them if it gets too hot in the cell. The boys there complained about the dirty conditions but did not mind too much about the windows".

The boys in "A" Hall complained to Day that they were kept too long in their cells but as William Smith, then young offenders' governor, pointed out they were on call for interviewing and testing and had to be easily available. One boy complained of the lack of disinfectant which as Smith rightly explained is limited in prisons because of its poisonous properties.

Mr. Day found "B" Hall where, at this time, lads were transferred after allocation to await a place at their training borstal, to be in a better state of repair and decoration. Here the boys were occupied all day in the workshops and their complaints related to their stay in "A" Hall.

Day's assessment of conditions in the allocation centre seems to have been fair. They were certainly far worse than any prison administrator or politician would have liked, but as the Home Secretary had said it was a question of priorities. I hardly think Day, an experienced journalist, was fooled by warm smiles and cups of not so warm prison coffee, his final paragraph showed that whatever the physical conditions of the building, the boys were being looked after well. "All the boys to whom I spoke except one said that relationships with the staff were very good. In spite of all the complaints, some of which could have been exaggerated for my benefit, most of the boys seemed in good health and a good state of mind—as happy as could be expected at the beginning of a borstal training session."<sup>21</sup>

A letter from Duncan Fairn to *The Times* probably best sums up the feelings and frustrations of the prison authorities, as a body and as individuals, about the housing of young offenders in a large London prison.

"From 1942 until my retirement a year ago three of us had been successively head of the Prison Commission, later Department: first the late Sir Lionel Fox then Mr. A. W. Peterson and I followed in 1964. We and our colleagues all knew that a Scrubs was no place in which to allocate borstal boys and continually plans were made for new buildings and a complicated change of user in order to get the boys out of Scrubs.

"Unhappily and irrespective of politi-

cal party, as soon as a Home Secretary secured extra money and plans were made the call would come a year later to reduce expenditure by X per cent."<sup>22</sup>

## TODAY

Today young offenders, numbering between three and four hundred, are housed in one hall of the prison. They are not locked in the insanitary and overcrowded conditions described by the magistrates in 1968 for the whole young offenders area has been refurbished. Cells are brightly painted, have vinyl tile floors and large opening windows. Borstal trainees normally share a cell with one other which is an arrangement most of them prefer for it enables them to play board games or to talk. They normally only remain in the centre for about two weeks but if their stay is to be longer they are subjected to a training programme designed to prepare them for the life they can expect at a training borstal.

The actual allocation process takes six working days during which time each young man is seen by an assistant governor, chaplain, educational tester, psychological tester, welfare officer and physical education instructor. Each of these makes a report to the assistant governor in charge who allocates the boy to the appropriate borstal.

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# The Abstract and the Concrete

GORDON J. ROBB

SINCE the Probation Service became the Probation and After-Care Service and manufactured the phrase "through-care", we have established closer professional links with the Prison Service. The Younger Report which recommends "a continuation of treatment" has been welcomed by Chief Probation Officers' Conference as a useful and stimulating document. However, as most members of the advisory council found it necessary to enter a note of dissent from parts of the report, it will not be surprising if the practitioners in both our services cannot achieve unanimity as to how it should be implemented. Nevertheless, there seems to be general agreement that time spent in custody should be kept to a minimum and that the community to which an offender belongs and will return must be involved in his rehabilitation. The inevitable debate about some of the proposals in the report should not obscure the fact of its general acceptance. This paper, however, cannot pretend to represent the views of the Probation and After-Care Service: the debate is still going on and it will be some time before a consensus is reached. Having said this, I now feel free from any obligation to conceal my own bias!

The advisory council asserts that "research and experiment both in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, appear to indicate that for offenders of comparable background, time spent in custody cannot be shown to produce any better results than supervision in the community". But the council is also aware that although the public demands that criminals be cured, it also wants them to be punished. People will have more confidence in the efficacy of the medicine if it has a nasty taste! I believe that there are irreconcilable elements in this conflict and that we can waste time trying to design a package in which one can sell treatment to people who demand punishment and sell punishment to people who demand treatment. I don't think that the adoption of new measures should depend upon the willingness of the public to accept them. There is a public protest when a prison is to

be built and there is a public protest when a prison is to be closed. After-care hostels in the main seem to enjoy the support of their local communities although their opening usually meets with strenuous opposition. There is a story about a man who made a concrete drive up to his garage and some children ran across it while it was still wet. He was letting off steam about this to a neighbour, who said with a wicked grin: "But I thought you liked children?" "I do", he said. "I like them in the abstract, not in the



Gordon Robb took a social studies course at Glasgow University and probation training in London. He was appointed a probation officer in Manchester in 1950, served in Cheshire and Staffordshire, and in 1966 became principal probation officer for Worcestershire. After the redistribution of probation areas he was appointed chief probation officer for Hereford and Worcester. He has been closely involved in staff development and training in borstals and other Prison Department institutions

concrete." The community in general seems to hate prisoners in the abstract but to accept them in the concrete.

## CONFLICT OF NEEDS

The Probation Service's experience with volunteers and voluntary organisations is that there is in the community a tremendous reservoir of goodwill and concern for individual offenders. The separation of offenders from the community in institutions is mainly a matter of geography: young offender institutions are too big and too isolated. The needs of the offender tend to be

crowded out by the needs of the institution and the survival patterns developed within the institution are unhelpful in the open. The solution is not a question of transport but of size and situation. In the penal treatment of young offenders, as in child care, large institutions are an anachronism. We need to help offenders learn about living in the community through experience in small groups. We need the equivalent of "family group" homes and foster parents.

At a meeting of probation staff three or four years ago, we were discussing the volunteers scheme and one probation officer said: "The fact is they do a better job than we do". In the brief silence which followed this remark, no one contradicted him. Of course, we defended our professional status by claiming credit for a good selection procedure, our skill in matching volunteer with client and the fact that volunteers were able to spend much more time with individual clients. I hope it may be possible when custody and control orders are made, to "board out" young offenders with selected volunteers who will be paid an allowance, keeping institutional experience to a minimum.

The offender's first experience of the institution is crucial in determining his response to "treatment". Too often he merely learns how to adjust to the regime, but recent developments in adapting techniques of crisis intervention and short-term casework to the remand centre situation suggest that, given adequate resources, this is a good therapeutic "wicket". A short period of custody, with generous expenditure of time and skill can help the offender to deal with crises in such a way as to produce lasting change and can produce better dividends than the longer fossilising process of some institutional treatment in which unhelpful attitudes congeal and harden.

## THEY WANT TO GO TO PRISON

The report proposes that a supervising probation officer should be able to apply to a magistrate for a warrant for the arrest and detention for up to 72 hours of an offender who, in the

opinion of the supervisor, has breached the conditions of the order, or is contemplating doing so or is contemplating the commission of an offence. This proposal produced a note of dissent from four members of the council and the objections of a large number of probation officers have been reported in the Press. It will be a pity if the proposal is rejected without noting that it draws attention to the real need of probation and after-care officers for a temporary refuge for clients—a port in a storm. More people escape to prison than from prison. One member of our staff with substantial experience in a large London prison once observed that if there was a side door for “private patients”—people who actually wanted to come in—there would be as much traffic through that door as through the main gate. Certainly, it is difficult to explain the offending behaviour of some people otherwise than by saying that they “want” to go to prison. The precipitating crisis is usually well-advertised. Probation officers not only see it coming, clients shout it in their ears. How many times have we wished for a place (other than prison) to which clients could escape for a short time from a situation which has become intolerable? How many “old boys” voluntarily return to the institution as “visitors”? In these situations, every probation officer, knows the difficulty of finding a suitable (or even an unsuitable) place for the client to go even if the means can be found to pay for it. I am very much in favour of the “72-hour” provision if clients can be admitted voluntarily to the proposed sanctuary without legal or financial charges.

The proposal to dispense with the offender's consent to the making of a supervision and control order is another one which has produced marked reaction. In a recent statement on the Younger Report, Chief Probation Officers' Conference made the point that although a court order may not require the *de jure* consent of the offender, his subsequent *de facto* consent is required “since supervision in the open cannot be effective without it”. I think that the formality of requiring the offender's consent to the making of a probation order is one which should be preserved: the supervision and control order is in effect a probation order with a new label. If the public will not “buy” probation as an alternative to custody, then it is open to us to advertise the same product with the new magic ingredient of “control”

or sell it in more concentrated form. That the law recognises the necessity of the client's co-operation if the outcome of a probation order is to be successful was confirmed in a recent appeal by a 19-year-old girl convicted at Norwich Crown Court and placed on probation for three years. She appealed, saying that she was given the impression that if a probation order was not made, the only alternative was a custodial sentence. The Lord Chief Justice heard the appeal and upheld it on the grounds that the making of this probation order was defective, so that no order had been made. He indicated that a custodial sentence was unlikely and that the girl should not have been given the impression that she only had the opportunity of choosing between probation or custody.

### SHARED EXPERIENCE

The notion that the offender's consent and willing co-operation with the probation officer in trying to solve the offender's problems is an essential preliminary to the making of a probation order, is one which has to be conveyed in a *real* sense to the offender. The fact that he is in conflict with a very powerful authority does not make this task easier. Few clients are able to discuss their problems calmly, logically and purposefully as we would take a problem to our solicitor—least of all clients in the young offender category who tend to work things out in deeds rather than words. Change comes about through experience rather than thought. Occasionally, one can arrange that clients have the kind of experience which will be helpful in changing attitudes. For example, annual probation camps in Snowdonia have aimed to substitute for the office interview a dialogue of shared experience. A strenuous programme of rock-climbing, canoeing and mountain-walking demonstrates to under-achieved youngsters who lack confidence in their own ability and potential, that they can perform great things and discover in themselves an ability to achieve and triumph over difficulty. Some of their feats are recorded on film and in some camps an officer of the R.A.F. mountain rescue team has arrived in a helicopter and presented certificates to them with a brief speech before departing into the clouds again. We believe that the pay-off from this experience is transferred to other situations at home and that the probationer can have an altered perception of himself and his ability to cope which can often move the log-jam of unhelpful

frozen attitudes and stagnant relationships. The need for this kind of pageantry of experience to grasp hold of a truth which is difficult to express is characteristic of human nature. I am thinking of a woman who, after a registry office wedding, said: “I know it's legal and all that, but I don't feel married”. One must admit the incongruity of a situation where an assize judge in red robe and grey wig, who has entered the court building to a fanfare of trumpets, after processing with various dignitaries in assorted uniforms and carrying sundry emblems and totems, is unable to place an offender on probation without the offender's consent. The majesty of the court is amply demonstrated. The procedure of obtaining the client's consent (which is insufficiently exploited) recognises the majesty of the individual. What it “says” is fundamental to the probation system and it is important that court and client acknowledge it. There is a moral for the Prison Service here which was pointed out in the paradox of Alexander Paterson in 1932: “If the institute is to train lads for freedom, it cannot train them in an atmosphere of captivity and repression. They must learn to exercise aright their power to choose. If they are forever forced by weight of numbers to do right, their faculty to choose will atrophy and on discharge they will wait for promptings from without because there is no voice from within”.

The length of the Younger Report (265 pages) provides opportunities for disagreement on many points of detail but it has mapped out an area where constructive work can be done and has some practical suggestions, some of which have already been implemented. If the role boundaries between staff of young offender institutions and staff of community-based agencies are becoming unclear, perhaps that is no bad thing.

### STAMP COLLECTION

Any governor who would like to arrange for inmates in his charge to collect stamps for a charity which will appeal to them, contact—

JIM ABSALOM,  
Governor,  
H.M.P. Canterbury

# The Voice of the Turtle

F. RICHARDSON

"FOR, LO, the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone . . . the time of the singing of birds is come." The present climate of thought is one of change and regrowth in the field of treatment of young offenders—*vide* the A.C.P.S. report on young adult offenders—and so perhaps it is appropriate for me to look back briefly on my own experience of the mixed achievements of a system of training and treatment which was accepted throughout the world—borstal.

The A.C.P.S. report spells the end of borstal as we have known it, but, for me, it was dying on its feet years ago. I was lucky in that I experienced the last few days of borstal's high summer, learning my trade at Lowdham Grange and Rochester under governors who had worked in borstal during the chief period of its achievement. However, even during my time as a housemaster what seems to me to have been the first act of expediency took place—the reduction of the borstal sentence to "not more than two years". I know and understand the arguments on both sides of this question, but, as governor of Portsmouth Borstal Recall Centre it became more and more apparent to me that my colleagues in the field were under intense pressure to get lads through their training in an impractically short time, it not being expedient to keep trainees in the borstals because of numbers waiting in the pipeline.

## CHANGING SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Admittedly, this question of expediency has brought us to consider the other major factor in the collapse of the borstal system: the sheer influx of trainees from an altered social structure. Borstal was modelled on the highly successful public school system and it aimed to inculcate the same values as Doctor Arnold's Rugby. These values—team spirit, patriotism, simple religious faith, participation as against winning, endurance and discipline ("stickability")—could and often did change the lives of the many lads who were encouraged to accept them. I can quote from my own experience: despite the fact that attendance at church was compulsory on Sundays

for all lads, the impact of religion seemed to be much greater 20 years ago. Group discussion often centred on religious subjects; on one occasion it was on why one believed, and one lad said with a simple sincerity: "The governor goes up for communion every time we have it, he must have thought it out and he is cleverer than I am, so if he believes, then so do I". A rather good example of the principle of the Christian witness. Nowadays, when patriotism is an embarrassing word, discipline as an end in itself has virtually disappeared other than in the

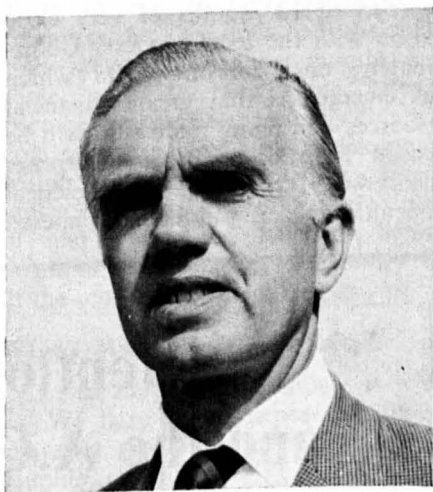
society, in which borstal has failed, has abandoned most of its religious and moral concepts and is progressing towards a Benthamite outlook where the polarisation is in right and wrong, or the acceptable and the unacceptable.

Looking back, however, to the times when working in borstal gave more personal satisfaction, a flood of memories come to mind, memories which are a testimony to the success or partial success of the borstal system. I am afraid that in this justifiable enthusiasm for new ideas such success may be forgotten. This was forcibly brought to my attention only a few days ago when I received the following letter from "two very grateful parents".

*Dear Sirs, Just a few lines to say how grateful I am for the way you and your staff of housemasters and matron looked after my son on his term at borstal. When he was first sentenced to Hindley I thought I couldn't face anyone, but the friendly way your staff greeted his father and I on visiting days helped us greatly. I am not very good at putting into words all I would like to say and I hope you know what I am trying to say. I pray that my son will turn out to be one of your successes and I know he still thinks of Hindley and its staff with a lot of affection. God bless you all.*

## THE RIGHT TO HATE

So in some ways, I would like to think things have not changed very much over 20 years; I have received similar expressions of gratitude from parents and lads who were in my care at Lowdham Grange and Rochester. Dealing with unsophisticated lads can have its touching moments and can teach valuable lessons such as the one I had in communication: after a preparatory talk for a youth hostel tour involving socially inadequate lads, I was asked by one why the feet should be powdered. He was going out of the door and I answered in haste: "Helps prevent friction". Two days later the same lad was lagging behind the party on a steep Peak District road and so I dropped back to see what was wrong. "What's the matter Gilbert?" I asked. He groaned: "Sir, I've got friction bad in both feet". Incidentally,



F. S. Richardson, Governor of Hindley Borstal, joined the Prison Service in January 1949 after serving 10 years in the Royal Air Force. For six years, he was a discipline officer at Durham Prison, and on promotion to Assistant Governor II served as housemaster at Lowdham Grange and Rochester borstals. In 1964, he became Deputy Governor of Leyhill Prison and on promotion to Governor, he took charge of Portsmouth Recall Centre in 1968 and one year later was given the responsibility of developing this establishment into a Class B security prison. After initiating the existing regime for selected life-sentence prisoners at Kingston, he was transferred to Hindley Borstal, where he is at present responsible for the development of a "neighbourhood borstal" project

armed services, and to win the reward is the only aim worthwhile in an increasingly materialist society, clearly the public school values appear to have little relevance to the average young offender. The public school ethos stems from a way of thinking based on religious and moral concepts polarised in good and evil; modern



he turned out to be one of Lowdham Grange's successes. For a success of a different kind, I turn in my mind to a difficult group counselling session at Rochester. During the previous 25 sessions, John, an intelligent and well educated lad, had done everything in his power to try to provoke me and break the group. Finally in sheer frustration and without a trace of malice he explained: "You have denied me the right to hate you"—and this from a lad whose history of being anti-authority stretched right back through approved schools. Borstal had finally achieved some change in his attitude.

Borstal could, at times, fail through succeeding too well. Brian had gone cheerfully through his training but within two months of his discharge he arrived back late one evening to ask if he could stay permanently. He had committed no crime, he simply missed a community where he had been very popular and which looked after him. He was quite happy to work for his pocket money; he was thoroughly institutionalised, we had become his family. That night C.I. 1/1974 was anticipated by many years. This family feeling was due to a great extent to the pronounced degree of staff involvement. A typical example of this was one house officer who identified himself so closely with his charges that, when youth hostelling, he insisted on wearing the same coarse woollen socks and hard uncomfortable boots which were worn by the lads. It is encouraging to note that staff involvement should be greater than ever if the recommendation on "neighbourhood" establishments in the A.C.P.S. report is put into practice.

Juvenile delinquency has always had its roots in an aspect of society which is unhealthy. This aspect is in a more or less continual state of change according to culture and historical circumstances. The Advisory Council were given a brief and have carried out their task thoroughly; my criticism is of the timing of the brief. I should have thought that by natural logic the cause of the "young adults" offending should have been the first subject for examination. The term "diseased society" is often come across these days, and it seems to me that the Advisory Council were instructed to examine the symptoms of this disease rather than the source. As in all penal systems to this date, the danger is that a cured patient could be returned immediately to the source of infection. Having visited in the course of the Hindley Neighbourhood Borstal Project

some of the areas from which our trainees come and to which they will return, we have been made acutely aware of this problem.

There are many suggestions which I am pleased to see in the A.C.P.S. report, I particularly welcome the recommendation that a senior official should be designated within the Prison Department to co-ordinate policy on young adult matters. However, in the interest of the Service as a whole and the staff in particular, I think it essential that this official must have had some first hand experience of work in the field. I know that it is not obligatory for the chairman of British Rail to be an ex-station master, but it might be of considerable help if he were.

However, most of the suggestions which really appealed to me are concerned with the general idea of "neighbourhood establishments". I can see the enormous benefits of a closer link with the Probation Service, having experienced 12 months of very close liaison with the local services. Unfortunately, one worrying point which has emerged is that greater financial resources and many more staff will be needed for this kind of enterprise. Altogether, I think that the practical difficulties which will be encountered

in implementing this report are more complex than at first appear. How long will it be before the local authorities have facilities to deal with the "under seventeens" which form a large proportion of the present borstal population?

In the A.C.P.S. report, along with the borstal, the detention centre is given the death blow; not inappropriately since when it was introduced, its purpose was the "short sharp shock". Perhaps the aim of its replacement, the neighbourhood establishment, might also be described in Gilbertian terms:

The hooligan who, on football  
terraces,  
Injures and shouts obscenities,  
Provides for his neighbours  
By fruits of his labours  
Environmental amenities.

Finally, and on a more serious note, I think a little tribute is due to staffs at all levels who made the borstal system the success it was. Because of them, thousands of men are now leading perfectly normal lives, living testimonies of the faith which borstal staffs had in the system and of the effort they put into it to make certain that it did succeed.

## Detention Centres and the A.C.P.S. Report

H. W. H. FLEISHMANN

THE REPORT on young adult offenders by the Advisory Council on the Penal System published in 1974, is of great interest and relevance to a principal officer serving in a detention centre.

There is a need for the "young adults" to be treated as a special group. They are too old to be handled as children and too immature to be treated as true adults. There is also the possibility that, as immaturity implies an unfinished character, so in this age group there is a reasonable chance of moulding and guiding these offenders into a way of life more acceptable to the community.

I would, however, question the setting of the lower age limit at 17 years. It often happens in my present establishment that requests are received from junior D.C.s to accept a lad below

the statutory age to relieve overcrowding in the other institution. As this pressure on junior D.C.s would seem to be widespread, is there not a case in the light of this proposed reorganisation to make the lower age limit 16 instead of 17 years?

If we, therefore, accept that there is to be a group of young adults for whom special facilities must be created within the penal system, how should this best be achieved?

The A.C.P.S. report suggests that the existing borstal, D.C. and Y.P. systems should be amalgamated and streamlined into one coherent service of custody and control.

### THE REGIMES

While agreeing that such streamlining would appear both necessary

and logical, may we look at some of the practical issues concerned with bringing this about?

At the present time we have young adults in three different kinds of establishment. Firstly, those in borstal undergoing a training of up to two years with much emphasis on vocational preparation for work outside. This borstal training may take place under secure or open conditions. Secondly, those in D.C. undergoing a short three- to six-month sentence which is partly vocational and educational, but its main force lies in the deprivation of the offender's liberty and takes place under secure conditions. Thirdly, we have those in the Y.P. section of our prisons undergoing perhaps the least hopeful regime of the three. If no other course is suitable he becomes a Y.P.

Now if the recommendations of the report are to be enforced the three regimes will be replaced by one. How is this physically to be done? Our present borstals, D.C.s and prisons have either been purpose-built or adapted to suit the philosophies underlying the three types of training. If all young adult offenders are to be in one kind of institution we should have a multi-purpose establishment. How can an institution such as Usk D.C., an old local prison, cope with the full range of offenders who will require all shades of discipline and security from the very lax to the very secure? Conversely, how could Hollesley Bay, an open borstal, provide the highest level of security?

It might be argued that offenders at present suited to open conditions would, under the new system, be in the care of the Probation Service rather than the Prison Service. Is this really a practicable proposition in view of the present economic plight of the country?

Taking figures published for May 1974, a total of 1,672 offenders were in open borstals. Are these numbers really going to be absorbed by an already overloaded Probation Service? If not, we have again the situation of a mixed population in unsuitable buildings, if they are segregated into more suitable premises we are back with today's three separate systems.

Another problem arising from the mixing of all types of young offenders is this. Under the present system all offenders serving short sentences are in a like situation. There is little disparity between the offence committed and the sentence given over different



Henry Fleischmann, aged 47, is married with two teenage daughters. He left school at 15 and went as a boy entrant to the Army School of Music for 12 years 1942-54. He entered the Prison Service in 1955 and trained at Manchester Prison. He has served at Feltham and Huntercombe Borstals and is now Principal Officer at Usk Detention Centre

parts of the country. However, if offenders in the same establishment were serving both three months and three years for the same offence because they were sentenced by different courts there could be much discontent within the establishment. This would indicate a need both for the education of magistrates, etc. and the laying down of some countrywide policy to fit the sentence to the crime.

### WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE

Let us suppose that Utopia is with us. We have multi-purpose establishments to give appropriate training to suitable candidates. Who will these people be? It is the suggestion of the A.C.P.S. report that as many offenders as possible should be catered for within the community. The Probation Service would be widened and enlarged so that as few offenders as possible would receive a custodial sentence. Is this not the same as saying: "when all else has been tried and failed slap a custody and control order on him"? What kind of person will arrive at an institution? What hope will there be of positive and hopeful training for him? What will be the role of the prison officer in caring for these rejects of society? Is there not a danger here that all the recent progress within the Service towards officer participation in the rehabilitation of offenders will be lost? Is there not a possibility that the prison officer of the future will again more accurately be termed a warden?

Let us consider a further possibility. Suppose that the institutions are suitable and the offenders are suggestible,

what kind of regime should we offer? It is suggested in the report that the timing of the institution day should be altered so that it more nearly resembles the timetable the young adult would pursue within society. Supposing that it is normal to rise at about 07.30 and work from 08.30 to 17.30 and retire at 23.00. How, as management, could I cope with these demands on the manpower available? It would mean an extension of the institution day by only 45 minutes but would entail the working of staff for one and a half hours later in the evenings. It would mean an increase of approximately 42 man hours per week in the overtime worked in the institution. It could be undertaken on present authorised staff levels, but how would the staff feel about finishing their late shift at 11 p.m.?

The A.C.P.S. report suggests that probation officers should have an active full-time role within the institution. As a serving officer I do not agree with this. An institution is a dynamic social unit, it functions as a group. If many outside workers are allowed to work within that group, the relationships within the unit are ruptured, and the group function is lost. An institution can best help those within, from within. A view strongly backed by the Prison Officers' Association. The Probation Service can best be aided by close liaison between prison staff and probation officers. This kind of liaison has been working most successfully between Usk Borstal, the detention centre and the Probation Service for several years. It is a reciprocal relationship. In order that officers should understand the problems and frustrations encountered by the Probation Service, staff from Usk are sent on a three-day attachment to the Gwent Probation Service. Staff here found this an enlightening and valuable experience. In return probation officers come into the institution to see our problems and to interview those in their care during the course of their detention.

### ATTITUDES TO "EDUCATION"

Education has much emphasis placed upon it by the A.C.P.S. report. First it must be understood by all concerned what is meant by the term "education". This is a philosophical question that can have no definitive answer. It is accepted by modern education philosophers that education should concern itself with the whole person. We must, therefore, educate him intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially so that he can occupy his rightful



place in society. It is necessary that all staff should understand this broad concept of education so that the widely held idea that education classes are a "skive" can be outmoded; "widely held" incidentally by both inmates and staff. Accepting that everything that goes on within the institution is educational in its broadest sense, let classes take up as much of the offender's time as is necessary to him, and let there be no financial loss to him because he attends them.

Figures concerning offenders reconvicted after serving custodial sentences would indicate that a short term of detention is the most effective sentence. The figures are as follows:

**Taken from A.C.P.S. report**

55.9 per cent released from senior D.C.s reconvicted within two years.

65.1 per cent released from borstal reconvicted within two years.

**Taken from "People in Prison"**

55-60 per cent released from senior D.C.s reconvicted within three years.

70 per cent released from borstal reconvicted within three years.

Thus it would seem that the offender subjected to a short term in a detention centre is less likely to be reconvicted than the borstal trainee who has served a longer sentence.

The proposal that probation officers should be able to commit offenders for up to 72 hours is not acceptable to me. Probation officers should be in the position to help and advise a boy, this power to commit him would destroy that relationship. There are also the practical difficulties of how, and where, the offender would be detained at such short notice and for such a short time.

**TRAIN PRISON STAFF—AND USE THEM**

It is suggested in the report that a parole board would consist of "the governor of the establishment or his deputy, a representative of the local Probation Service, a member of the Board of Visitors, and one other member of the local community". The report suggests such a board would constitute a balance between the professionals concerned with the care of the offender and the local community. I disagree with the report most strongly. It would seem unfairly balanced against the people who are most closely concerned with the inmate, i.e. the serving officer. The governor is by definition in possession of the relevant facts of a case, but he cannot have the

day to day knowledge of an offender gained by a discipline officer, and such an officer should be a member of the Parole Board.

What will be the role of the prison officer in this streamlined service of the future? It has been agreed above that there is a need to treat young adult offenders as a special group. So it would follow that there should be prison officers fitted by training and inclination to spend their working lives within this sector of the Service. Much attention must be given to the selection of suitable officers, and after-

wards to training them for their specialist role. One might take this proposal one step further and suggest that when these specially trained prison officers attain senior rank they should be promoted *in situ*. Thus institutions within this sector would realise an increase in continuity and efficiency.

If my future as a principal officer in an establishment for young adult offenders is one entailing skill, pastoral care and education in its widest sense, combined with the management of specialist staff, it is a future I welcome whole-heartedly.

## Ideas Into Action

J. H. M. ANDERSON

THE starting point of the A.C.P.S. Report on young adult offenders lies in the belief that offenders are essentially individuals who are in conflict with society and who need to be reconciled with it. Thus any corrective process must begin in the place where the breakdown occurred, removal from society being used only when no other alternative is seen to be appropriate. Few would argue with this basic premise but it is a little strange that the envisaged means of reconciling the offender to society should be rooted so firmly in the concept of control, whether linked with custody or with supervision. Perhaps, like the French, we are developing a fear of *les jeunes*.

The long-awaited report does not contain the far-reaching proposals which many people had come to expect. It is disappointing first in so far as it merely reflects much current thinking anyway and secondly, in many of its proposals which are couched in such generalised terms that they become subject to varied interpretation and will stand or fall by the way in which they are implemented. One senses from the report that fundamental issues have been recognised but not confronted and that much of the ensuing argument has been built on premises and assumptions that are not necessarily valid or are at least arguable.

### THE CUSTODY DUSTBIN

Already in discussions about the report it is being said that custodial penalties are to be used only as "a last resort". I don't think these actual

words can be attributed to the report itself but nonetheless this is how the concept will come across to professionals and public alike and it is a dangerous line of thought. With increasing emphasis on control or treatment in the community, custody will become more and more to represent the dustbin for failures of probation and the social services. Such polarisation of thought is inevitable but is it necessarily true that a residential institution has nothing more to offer than enforced segregation from society for the latter's good? Seen in these terms any young offenders' establishment becomes simply a prison and should be recognised as such no matter what activities are introduced into the programme to offset the damaging effect of confinement. Might it not be that there are essential ingredients, or at least potentialities in the institutional situation that cannot be provided normally in the community and that to view custody as the final rabbit up the penal sleeve is both unnecessary and inappropriate. The long term effect of such disastrous thinking is not only to label offenders as being virtually incorrigible but also to isolate the staff who have to work with them. If prison staff are not to be left carrying the role of custodians and having projected on to them the punitive attitudes of society then it is essential for new dimensions to be developed and this can most easily and sensibly be effected in the area of hostels both pre- and post-release and possibly for offenders who do not necessarily qualify for a custody and control order. There is a wealth of expertise and potential for this sort

of task amongst prison staff and participation in this area would provide a direct and purposeful means towards prison staff moving outwards into the community and working with other social agencies on their own ground. The creation of a separate youth authority is considered by the report and rejected on understandable grounds but it is becoming increasingly untenable for social agencies to restrict themselves to their own familiar corners and at a time when the Probation Service, quite rightly to my mind, is resisting overtures from the social services, it ill becomes the Prison Service to retain its specialised role when the only future for both services is to throw in our lots together.

### TOO HIGH A PRICE FOR INDETERMINACY?

The introduction of a generic sentence, abolishing the now blurred distinctions between borstal, detention centre and Y.P. is a welcome move, if only because the differences have ceased in practice to have any meaning; an added advantage will be a greater and more flexible range of resources enabling the "neighbourhood" principle to become a reality. The length of a custody and control order will be fixed by the court but the stage at which transfer from inside to outside supervision takes place will still remain an executive decision, albeit subject to the equivalent of the now familiar L.R.C. and parole procedure. At first sight this introduces a welcome element of flexibility into an otherwise determinate sentence but in the very nature of things a "norm" will be established sooner or later to determine the average length of time, or proportion of sentence to be spent in custody and it is pertinent to ask whether the criteria for "discharge" (for this is how it will be perceived whether we like it or not) will be based on any significant facts that were not already known at the time of sentence. The only real question that should have any bearing on a release decision is whether or not a prisoner is likely to offend again and the Parole Board is giving increasing weight to statistical probabilities, all other hunches such as sentence "peaks", institutional conformity or supposed changes in attitude having been shown to be treacherous quicksands. On the other hand there is much to be argued in favour of a straightforward sentence of determinate length which in reality is little different from the current widespread practice in borstal of target dating, dates which are given on reception without pretence



Jim Anderson joined the Prison Service in 1959 after taking an Oxford degree in politics, philosophy and economics. He served as a housemaster at Hollesley Bay and Portland Borstals, and later as deputy governor at Leyhill Prison. He spent a period as a governor with the inspectorate team, and took up his appointment as governor of Huntercombe Borstal in November 1973. He is married with two sons and a daughter

of assessment of any kind.

I have long felt that the degree of anxiety and uncertainty inherent in the indeterminate sentence is too high a price to pay for any fringe advantages it may have to offer. Certainly some degree of anxiety is essential for functioning at a positive level but there are enough anxiety provoking ingredients in the custodial situation without looking for more. The net effect of uncertainty about release is an incentive towards superficial conformity, the quenching of creative instincts and an immense diversion of staff time and energies into fruitless and inappropriate channels. The introduction of local advisory committees and all the paraphernalia of parole will only serve to increase this burden by the constant emphasis on judgement rather than interaction and relationships which are properly the business of staff in a penal setting.

The "neighbourhood" concept, i.e. the siting of young offender institutions within the regional area from which its population is drawn, is of importance if links with family and community are to be retained, for staff as well as for inmates. The provision of a sufficient number of establishments each providing a full range of resources is likely however to be a less attainable objective. Ideally many of the "treatment" resources should be based in the community rather than in the establishment, or perhaps as well as in the establishment so that there could be a two-way flow of movement with "outsiders" coming in to partici-

pate rather than to observe. There is little evidence, however, that communities are either very interested, or still less, are willing to accept any responsibility for their delinquent members. Taking the A.C.P.S. neighbourhood yardstick of a two-hour journey from home to establishment one would hazard a guess that at the present moment there are comparatively few young offenders who are separated from their homes by more than two hours anyway. Some isolated rural establishments would provide notable exceptions to this but without a major urban building programme, both undesirable and economically unfeasible, there would seem to be little prospect in many areas of realising this proposal. It is difficult for example to envisage Hollesley Bay ever becoming a neighbourhood establishment in the true sense of the word. What could justifiably be pursued, however, is the acquisition of suitable properties in urban areas for pre-release hostels. Instead of a luxury afforded to the deserving or undeserving few a period of semi-liberty should be as much an integral part of training as home leave has come to be accepted. The transition from custody to liberty is in the majority of cases far too abrupt and the crucial period of the weeks immediately after release is a powerful argument in favour of open rather than closed systems.

### KEEP THEM SMALL

The prospect, however, of every establishment providing a full range of resources from the date of sentence to the date of release is in any event likely to be unattainable and the best that can be worked towards is a system of grouping establishments within a given neighbourhood. The giant multi-purpose complex with an overall managing director is surely what we do *not* want. There have been sufficient misgivings about this sort of planning in the realm of education and from the penal white elephant at Fleury-Merogis to warn against this sort of thinking. The inevitable problem, however, is how to reconcile in organisational terms the need for small autonomous units with a system which allows progression from total custody through open conditions and hostel to freedom. Progression systems in our own borstals have demonstrated the price to be paid in the continual formation of new relationships and it is significant that where progression systems have been attempted, reversion to more traditional concepts has taken place within a few years. But progression

through phases of dependance, personal growth and increasing acceptance of responsibility is an essential part of development and there is considerable value too in the constant facing of new situations and the need to form new relationships which after all is what life is about anyway. An adult cannot mature in a childhood world and yet it can so easily represent a place of safety, recognition and belonging especially to those who have grown old in deprivation and insecurity. It is so much easier to retreat, in Erikson's delightful phrase, to the "world of manageable toys". This is frequently how we feel about our own institutions. We have got to place emphasis on the need for the small unit and yet at the same time there must be movement within it and out of it. The answer is not for each establishment to provide a full range of resources which is impracticable anyway but for resources within each neighbourhood (this in itself needs to be defined) to be recognised and developed. This will point towards the need for a base establishment in each group to assume the role of a care establishment with resources for reception, allocation and possibly carrying a specialist function as well. It will need to be recognised that some offenders are going to require lifelong support whilst others are undergoing a temporary crisis only. Perhaps this is the opportunity to have a fresh look at methods of personality assessment and make use of such aids as the Heimler Scale for Social Functioning. At the other end of the spectrum the report's observations on recall and voluntary return to borstal are sound. Enough has already been said and written regarding the controversial proposal for the 72-hour detention period; one would assume that this part of the report is unlikely however to be implemented for the very cogent reasons argued in the note of dissent.

But however functional the organisation it is the content of the regime that matters most and in chapter 12 it is a relief to note the reference to the "programme" of a penal establishment and a healthy suspicion for the words "treatment" and "training" with their medical, military and educational overtones and above all the connotation of manipulating people into a prescribed mould. The essential ingredients of a programme are outlined in paragraphs 327-36. Paragraph 334 which reiterates the need for offenders to set their own objectives is worth reading even if nothing else in chapter 12 is very

startling. The chapter as a whole is a useful restatement of objectives but leaning rather heavily in the direction of education. It is clearly stated that education should be interpreted in the broadest sense but reading further there is just a hint that education perhaps is being grasped at as the panacea which has hitherto eluded all research into the problems of delinquency. Some very useful infor-

mation is contained in the appendices to the report, in particular a description of current systems of dealing with young offenders and a glance at comparative systems in other countries. The "household management" recommendations have much to commend them, not least with reference to the Prison Headquarters organisation and the plea for young offender governors to remain longer in post.

## Controlling and Helping

W. JACKSON

FOR the last year I have been involved in the Hindley Neighbourhood Borstal Scheme and it is becoming increasingly apparent that the aims and objectives of this scheme are very much applicable to the thinking behind the Younger Report. There is every reason to suppose that the difficulties and problems faced in the borstal scheme are likely to be repeated when this white paper is implemented. In other words, the neighbourhood borstal experiment could be used as a blue print for the much wider and further reaching reforms envisaged for the young adult offender.

When anything new or controversial is proposed, people tend to become concerned about its effect both upon themselves personally and on their work. They wonder if it will affect the way in which they operate, will they be able to cope, or did they envisage being involved with the new concept when they first were attracted to their work? These worries and fears are very much applicable to the reaction of the probation officers and prison staff to the white paper "the young adult offender". The members of each agency exaggerate the consequences of its implementation and appear to see problems and difficulties, both professional and practical, that might not even exist. If these difficulties do exist, they have been with us (perhaps in differing forms) in the past and have been taken in our stride.

### WHOLESALE REJECTION?

Very few people in the Probation Service would deny the force of the arguments as set out in the white paper, but this article will not be concerned so much with them, as with the effect the implementation of them

will have on both the Probation and Prison services.

The most important factor of the implementation of the white paper (from the probation point of view) appears to be the control element. The idea of having the power to put someone in custody for three days has caused consternation throughout the service and there is little doubt that at this moment in time there is an almost wholesale rejection of the idea. For years the Probation Service has been happy and contented to put the responsibility for sentencing on magistrates and judges, when in actual fact it has quite often been recommendations from the probation officer that have influenced such sentencing.

It would appear now that the Probation Service is being highly hypocritical in its show of social conscience. It appears to me that the service throughout its history as a statutory body has had a contract with society that has covered two facets of expectation: (1) a form of control, in that society accepted that when someone was placed on probation the probation officer would use his skill and influence to prevent further crimes; and (2) perhaps of secondary importance to society, that the Probation Service would try to help the people placed under its supervision.

However, with its usual ability for compromise, the service has conveniently ignored the control aspect of this contract and has concentrated on helping in the hope that this would be seen as contributing to a form of control. If the service had lived up to this part of the contract in the past, then it would seem that there would

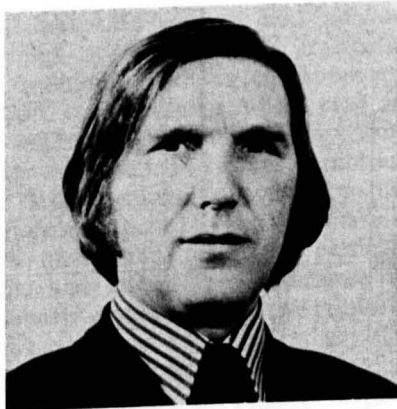


have been very little need for the control terms to be spelt out so rigidly in the white paper. It has, therefore, been seen necessary to ensure that the service can no longer ignore its responsibilities. If any probation officer would argue that he is not a control agent and has not any desire or intention to become so, how does he explain the requirements in a probation order, and the fact that he serves such an order on his client? None but the naive would rationalise doing this by saying that the client gives his consent. Once the service as a whole can work through what appears to be an emotional blockage, i.e. that we are agents of control, it can then start to look positively at ways and means of being involved in this new and exciting project.

### "HACK" WORK OR QUALITY

At the present time, more research is being done into the use of social enquiry reports. The evidence coming out of these suggest that the courts are asking for reports on a scale not even envisaged in the Streatfield Report of 1961. The quality and value of these enquiry reports is another matter. One piece of research by a probation officer at the Cambridge Institute of Criminology accuses probation officers of "hack work" and this in a service which has prided itself on comprehensive and objective reports. This is neither the time nor the place to discuss the criticism, but it is relevant to the idea of the "Younger" Report, in the context of the recommendations of the committee which said it "hopes that in the future the court will comply with the recommendations made in social enquiry report (p. 149) submitted at conviction and inevitably at review stage during an order". This suggests that the Probation Service of the future is moving towards providing information for other agencies as a basis for individual treatment programmes. In view of the results of the recent research, the service must take a long hard look at its responsibility regarding the quality and content of the social enquiry reports it produces.

The probation officer can no longer claim to be solely a case worker, i.e. that he sits in an office in a one-to-one situation supporting weaknesses and encouraging strengths. The many new and varied types of work that are being carried out such as community service orders, day training centres, mean, of necessity, that we are now social workers in a far wider context than just that of the courts. That



W. Jackson is forty-five years of age, married, with four children, a native of Wigan. He has been in the Probation Service for 13 years, has worked at Wigan Probation Office, Risley Remand Centre, Newton-le-Willows Probation Office, and is at the present time involved in the Hindley Neighbourhood Borstal scheme. His other interests are youth work, fell walking and "do it yourself"

being the case, it would seem that we should be prepared to welcome the idea of a "generic sentence" for young people on the grounds that it leads to greater flexibility in methods of working and therefore a better deployment of resources. Since 1967 the Probation Service and the Prison Service have come much closer together and are now showing more understanding of each other. This in itself must be seen as progress for both services, away from an incestuous, inward looking, parochial attitude towards global interaction.

### INVOLVING PRISON OFFICERS

The Prison Service itself has come a long way since the "no speaking rule", but it appears that there is still a great blockage in the way of upward communication. Previously prison officers appear, by and large, to have had some form of services background and this has lent help to the system. However, the area of recruitment is widening and the Prison Officers' Association is becoming increasingly active in pressing for better conditions, which include consultation on major changes in policy. In the Hindley Borstal neighbourhood experiment it has become clear that even if resources were available, the basic grade officers have felt that they have not been involved in the original idea, neither have they been properly canvassed for ideas and schemes to be included in the experiment. If it is envisaged that prison officers will be used in hostels, sheltered workshops and other community projects in the

new white paper, then this lesson should be taken note of by the Prison Department.

The Mountbatten Report, whilst at the time, and in view of public concern, seemed a logical step, with hindsight may have been an over reaction. In terms of the ideas incorporated in the "Younger" Report it was a step backwards. If young adult offenders establishments are set up with the accent on society and the community, the Prison Service will have to accept a moving away from security towards a greater involvement with the "outside". This will mean far larger numbers of people drawn from a wider cross section of society moving in and out of these establishments. At the same time, the "clients" will not be static themselves, as at some time during their sentence they will be going out to education; training or work centres. It is of little use the Prison Service saying high security establishments will always be needed, because whilst this may be true, it is becoming accepted more and more that the numbers of high security risk offenders is very small compared to the numbers who actually get locked up. In view of this, the Prison Service in general, and that part of the Service dealing with the young offenders in particular, need to modify attitudes.

Because prison officers spend so much time with prisoners, they develop certain skills unconsciously. At the same time they appear to have a need not to be "conned" or taken advantage of because this would undermine their authority. If they can learn to accept that they do develop an ability to form relationships, they should be able to see that "the losing face" issue recedes in importance. With the right kind of training, their "skills" can be channelled into very positive directions and their image of themselves changed. If the "Younger" Report is implemented it will be important that prison officers can use their initiative in contacting other agencies and work in the community as a supportive resource, not as "screws".

In our borstal experiment it is being proved every day that both agencies can work together and produce worthwhile ideas that are in the interest of the individual lad and not just the smooth running of the institution. The greatest frustration in both agencies is that the commitment they have made in terms of time resources and ideas is nowhere near matched by the powers that be—the Home Office,



"And when I told them that if they didn't meet our demands they would never see their Governor again they shook my hand and sang 'For he's a jolly good fellow'".

## Attitudes and Facts

RAY DOUGHTY

Ray Doughty is married with two children. After a formal education he worked in the motor vehicle industry leading to a management post. Prior to joining the Prison Service he was a merchandising manager with a large chain store group. Currently serving as A.G. II at Everthorpe Borstal, his first post after completing the staff course in 1972

THE brief of this article is to look at the proposals of the A.C.P.S. Report on the young adult offender, especially the problems of the implementation and change for the present borstal system and its relations with the Probation Service.

My approach to the article is one of identifying attitudes toward two

fundamental areas of change suggested in the report. I do not intend to go through the recommendations one by one, rather to examine the theme of the report in a borstal context, relying on the reader's knowledge of the points discussed.

The principal recommendations of the A.C.P.S. Report were placed... "for

changes in the existing law and practice in the wider social context within which a modern penal system has to operate, including the increase in recorded crime during the last quarter of a century, the increasing cost of the penal system, and the transformation of social life and social values which has taken place, especially in the great urban centres from which most young adult offenders came and to which they must return after a period in custody". This then is the stated theme of the report, interpreted through proposals that for social, criminological and financial reasons, place great emphasis on the treatment of young adult offenders within the community where they live, work and offend.

### CUSTODY PART OF THE TOTAL PROCESS

The springboard of the report is embraced in two new sentences: the custody and control order; and the supervision and control order. It is the former that is of prime interest to me here. The custody and control order is the instrument recommended for use by the courts when passing a sentence of custody on a young adult offender. The maximum period of the sentence will be fixed in each case according to the nature of the offence and the history of the offender. The subject would be eligible for release at any time from his first day in custody, suitability being determined by local advisory committees passing on recommendations to the Home Secretary or the Parole Board. Irrespective of the opportunity for early release, a statutory entitlement of one-third remission, subject to good behaviour, applies to all orders. On release from custody the offender would be under supervision by a probation officer for the balance of the term of the order, or for six months whichever is longer. Features of the supervision period are: stronger and specific licence requirements, greater flexibility to the supervisor, subject liable to recall. In addition the report recommends that... "only those offenders from whom the courts find it necessary to protect the public, will serve considerable periods of custody, furthermore there will be no implication that the court thought them likely to respond to treatment...".

From this one can identify two fundamental areas of change, first the inference that custody is no longer complete in itself, but rather part of a through-care process; second, the provision for release on licence to the community at any time deemed appropriate.



Before expanding on these points, I feel it is necessary to briefly set the scene of the borstal system. Borstal training had its roots planted firmly in the confidence of disciplinary training methods, with the personal quality of staff setting a moral example to the inmates. This was backed by trade training and, most importantly, with the inmates sentenced only if deemed likely to respond favourably. In addition, the time spent in custody, though indeterminate, was considered needed to be lengthy if the influence was to be of positive effect. Over the last decade a change in the system has evolved, with borstal training becoming a custodial sentence often selected as protection for "society" as opposed to being for training purposes. This concept of "banishment" coupled with a reduction in training time (resulting in an increase in turnover) and with the probation order increasingly utilised, has meant that selectivity is no longer pertinent to borstal, leaving a more difficult, often highly delinquent population than initially provided for. In juxtaposition, a transformation in criminological thinking has taken place, with greater emphasis being placed on assisting the young offender to cope within the environment where he lives by allowing the subject to work through his difficulties, as opposed to the conditioning of a disciplinary approach. This trend, of course, is amplified by the A.C.P.S. Report.

### POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES

At this stage two questions come readily to mind: (1) What is the proposed function of the custodial establishment? (2) What are the mechanics for determining early release?

The report states . . . "every custodial establishment must provide safe custody (though not always at the same level of security) and an adequate standard of physical care. Beyond that it must exert whatever influence may seem most likely to prepare offenders to return to life in the community with an improved prospect of keeping out of crime". Of greater interest and ambiguity is the recommendation that "the objectives of custodial establishments should be educational in the broadest sense, and such as to motivate the offender toward change and motivation". This statement is supported by a number of propositions basically claiming that the young adult offender needs to be exposed to a variety of experiences and opportunities which may assist the development of personality and social adequacy. It is

felt that this will be best achieved through relationships and interaction by traditional methods (classroom education, trade training, work, etc.) and by other techniques (group work, case work, etc.). The aim is to motivate the desire for involvement and participation, as opposed to being prescriptive and attempting to instil particular skills and attitudes. Furthermore the emphasis should be a positive reinforcement through reward, rather than negative reinforcement through punishment. To encourage social learning through discussion, and by practical application with community service and utilising outside facilities. Finally, the process should involve the whole staff of the establishment whatever the discipline in which they have been trained and the task to which they have been assigned.

The procedures for early release to supervision are laid on a principle in which custody and supervision were envisaged as equally valid methods of implementing the court's sentence. Fundamentally this means the offender will be released to control in the community on a decision primarily based on his needs and circumstances outside the establishment, future prospects, and progress whilst in custody. A recommendation for early release made by the local advisory committee based on information from the establishment staff, has to be ratified by the Home Secretary or Parole Board.

Having outlined what I consider to be the two fundamental areas of change, I will now turn my attention to the problems of implementation and change to the borstal system.

When proposals are applied to an existing system to bring about change, often the agent of change is in itself liable to modification by the inherent influences of that system. I feel this could be the case when the A.C.P.S. Report proposals for custodial regimes and early release are applied to borstal.

From a regime viewpoint, the change in emphasis toward a less didactic approach, linked to providing a service aimed at assisting an offender in an optimum individual manner will create difficulty in determining a level of behaviour that gives good order without stifling self-expression. This problem of balance is further aggravated by the borstal culture, a heritage steeped in the tradition of the "good old days", vestiges of which remain in the system to date. This resistance to change became more apparent as the foundations of borstal training were eroded

by judicial decisions and the redirection of penological thinking. Nevertheless, some of the practices and attitudes prevail including the preoccupation with institutional requirements for their own sake, the demand for rigid discipline and obedience and desire for conformity of both inmate and staff. Coupled with this is the influence of desperation felt at the deterioration in standards and values at one time thought to be the "ideal" of moral rectitude. This reaction to change is held in common by many practitioners and is in conflict with more radical propositions. The interpretation of good order, resistance to change and conflicting attitudes or morality could bring about a shift in the practical direction of the A.C.P.S. proposals for custodial regimes, a movement toward what is familiar, acceptable and therefore less threatening.

In regard to early release, the council states . . . "the decision to release on licence should be based on an assessment of the individual's needs, but regard should also be had to the likelihood of further offences, the damage they would cause and the potential effect on public confidence in the sentencing and release arrangements. I consider this statement to be the most crucial proposal of the report, from the custodial point of view. The implications are such as to create ambiguity of interpretation. The proposal is to extend to custodial practitioners, people in the position to assess the offender's disposition, discretion to decide what proportion of the sentence is spent in custody. On the surface, the ideal situation in terms of the spirit of the recommendations, unfortunately the criteria is such as to leave uncertainty of action. When assessing prospects for early release, staff are to identify needs and gear the subsequent process toward meeting the needs, but upon what is the decision to release made? The report suggests a combination of prognosis, character development and institutional performance. One is inclined to think that overt behaviour will take pride of place, if only because it is most easily measurable. This would introduce a distortion to the mechanics of assessment, opening the way for manipulation. Another weakness is in the area of accountability for decisions taken. Governors are expected to play a leading role on the local advisory committee, which could introduce a cautious approach to decision-making, if embarrassing mistakes lead to damage of their career

prospects. Another factor that may influence early release is the liaison with the Probation Service. There is a need for effective dialogue between the two services, especially if the offenders' needs and circumstances are to be assessed realistically. From a physical situation the neighbourhood proposal lends itself to regular interaction at all levels but the essential mutual trust may not be forthcoming. This leads me to the second part of the article, namely the relationship between custodial and supervisory agencies.

### A FRAGILE RELATIONSHIP

The Borstal Service and Probation Service have worked together for a number of years through the after-care process. This would suggest that the relationship will be one of co-operation and understanding. Upon close examination though, the "harmony" is not all it could be. There exists a certain amount of mistrust and ignorance of each others role. By and large, concern for the client tends to over-ride the differences, forming an operative co-existence. The proposals of the A.C.P.S. Report could place a great strain on the fragile relationship, given the premise that the offender should return to the community as soon as is deemed appropriate, a situation that can only be arrived at through close liaison between both services. This means in effect that the Probation Service will have considerable influence on this decision through the case worker and representation on the local advisory committee. With this state of affairs it is possible that the latent divergence may come to the surface, thus impeding the operation of the early release facility.

In this article I have attempted to identify possible extremes in attitudes towards the proposals of the A.C.P.S. Report. I do not wish to imply that certain borstal practitioners are so set in their ways as to be beyond adaptability; that governors lack the courage to make adventurous decisions; or that custodial staff and probation officers are too entrenched in their respective roles to be objective. What is of concern to me is that the spirit of the report will become subject to influences that will result in a compromise of practical implementation. What is required is a clear declaration of intent from the administering authorities and for everyone involved to open their minds to the possibilities. I take great comfort in the following extract from the report: . . . "some of

those released on licence will undoubtedly offend again, but the majority of them would in any case be released in a comparatively short time and there is little advantage from any point of view in keeping them in custody for a few weeks or months longer if their chance of avoiding crime in the future is judged likely to be improved by releasing them a little earlier under

appropriate control. If the policy of the authorities in this matter is clearly explained, we do not believe that public opinion will jump to the conclusion that there has been an error of judgement every time an offender commits a further offence soon after his release".

After all, attitudes are more important than facts!

## Letter

From SIR ARTHUR PETERSON,  
K.C.B., M.V.O., Permanent  
Under Secretary of State

TO THE EDITOR,  
*Prison Service Journal*.

Dear Sir,

A resolution of the General Assembly provides for the convening every five years by the United Nations of a world congress on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders. The first was held in Geneva in 1955; the second in London in 1960; the third in Stockholm in 1965 and the fourth in Kyoto in 1970. The fifth is to be held in Toronto from 1st to 12th September 1975.

The provisional agenda is as follows:

1. Changes in forms and dimensions of criminality—trans-national and national.
2. Improvements in criminal legislation, law enforcement, judicial administration and correctional systems with a view to the prevention of crime and the treatment of the offender in the community.
3. The emerging roles of the police and other law enforcement agencies, with special reference to changing expectations and minimum standards of performance.
4. The treatment of offenders in custody, with special reference to the implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners adopted by the United Nations.
5. Economic and social consequences of crime: new challenges for research and planning.

Associated with the congress but not forming part of it will be a research meeting in Montreal from 29th to 31st August 1975 to study certain areas of scientific interest related to the congress agenda, concentrating specifically on—

- (a) changing concepts of deviancy in different countries at different

- levels of development;
- (b) various evaluative methodologies for the several services within the criminal justice system; and
- (c) studies of discretion as this is exercised in the administration of justice.

The secretariat intend to restrict attendance at the research meeting to one representative from each national delegation, with invited members of non-governmental organisations and selected experts.

Both the congress itself and the meeting in Montreal will be of interest to many of your readers. Having been asked to assist in publicising these assemblies, I should be grateful if you would consider drawing attention to them, either by printing this letter or in such other way as you may think fit. Registration for the congress has begun and although the organisers hope not to have to turn away any would-be participants from outside North America, it would be advisable for anyone thinking of attending as an individual participant to obtain a registration form fairly soon. These are being issued by the Executive Secretary for the Fifth United Nations Congress, c/o Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section, Social Development Division, United Nations, New York 10017. This department will be glad to supply copies of the United Nations circular on request. Application should be made to Mr. J. V. Dance, Home Office, Horseferry House, Dean Ryle Street, London SW1P 2AW.

I should add that the expenses of participants in the congress must be met by the governments, organisations or individuals concerned. Her Majesty's Government will be represented by an official delegation and it will not be possible to make any grant from Exchequer funds towards the expenses of other persons attending the congress.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR PETERSON.

## BOOK REVIEWS

# Doing Away With Prison Services

## THE POLITICS OF ABOLITION

THOMAS MATHIESEN

Martin Robertson 1974. £3.85

KRIM, KRUM, and KROM are the inspiration for Thomas Mathiesen's book *The Politics of Abolition*. Before attempting to explain who or what are Krim, Krum, and Krom, let me say that Professor Thomas Mathiesen is the senior research fellow at the Institute for Social Research in Oslo. As a fellow of the university, Mathiesen took a leading part in establishing a group called the Norwegian Association for Penal Reform in 1968. He was the chairman of its board until 1973. Much of the initiative for this association came from its Swedish counterpart, the *Riksförbundet För Kriminallagens Humanisering* (The National Swedish Association for Penal Reform), abbreviated as KRUM. The Norwegian Association took the name of KROM (a "nonsense word") simply because it was analogous to KRUM. Meanwhile, further east in Finland and south in Denmark, similar organisations developed known as the Finnish KRIM and the Danish KRIM. It would be totally misleading to try and draw a comparison with any one organisation in Britain: KRIM, KRUM and particularly KROM (Mathiesen's own organisation) have something in common with parts of the philosophy and practice of N.A.C.R.O., of the Howard League for Penal Reform and of P.R.O.P. (Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners).

But if Krim, Krum and Krom need explanation, so does the title: *The Politics of Abolition*. The book should perhaps not be read from page 1 to page 222, for it is a series of loosely connected essays which, in the author's words, he (and hopefully others) will follow up later. But the relationship between them is that they all discuss aspects of political work geared towards the abolition of a repressive social system, or a part of a system. The "system" in question is the Scandinavian (and in particular the Norwegian) penal system. The "work" is chiefly that of the pressure groups—Krim, Krum and especially the Norwegian Krom. The goal of these groups over a period of time becomes that of abolition, as opposed to that of ameliorating or tempering the more repressive parts of the penal system. Hence, the means employed increasingly become political by nature.

To my knowledge this is the first time that the development of pressure groups in this field have been described in such depth and detail. This description constitutes Part II of the book and it makes absorbing and compelling reading. I would recommend the

reader to begin with this section. Part I contains two essays: "The Unfinished" and "On Action Research". Here, from his standpoint that Scandinavian penal policy to a large extent involves an unreasonable and unjust handling of expelled groups in society, Mathiesen as a researcher discusses the issues involved from a theoretical and methodological point of view. Part III contains two further essays. The first analyses attempts made by the prisoners to stimulate and organise reform. The final essay brings together the experience within the limited penal field and begins to develop a theoretical base for the politics of abolition within a wider context.

On one level this book is a fascinating account of attempts to link together forces for change of some aspects of the penal system. The crucial link, but one that Mathiesen would be the first to admit, is by no means easy to achieve, is between the inmate population and those concerned and active outside the prison. Largely as a result of this link and the presence of ex-inmates on the board of Krom the organisation moved from a position of conformity whereby alternatives to repressive aspects of the penal system were proposed, to a position where the abolition of all repressive measures was proposed. Alternatives came to be seen as prison (or an aspect of prison life) by another name. Abolition relies on measures which are genuinely voluntary.

On another level the most important contribution of *The Politics of Abolition* is its attempt to forge a new theory for radical social change in Scandinavia or any other westernised welfare democracy. Mathiesen argues his case from the context of the penal system (probably the most overtly repressive part of any western society). But the theory he develops from this base is relevant to other fields and indeed to society as a whole.

NICHOLAS HINTON,  
Director of N.A.C.R.O.



## IN DEFENCE OF EMPIRICAL PSYCHOLOGY

D. E. BROADBENT

Methuen 1973. £2.90

## RECONSTRUCTING SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Edited by NIGEL ARMISTEAD

Penguin Education 1974. £1.00

THE methods and purpose of psychology are currently under debate. What is the argument

about and what implications does it have for the work of psychologists such as those employed in the Prison Service? The titles of these two books give several clues to the orientation of the authors and to the issues involved.

*In Defence of Empirical Psychology* is by one of the giants of traditional psychology. Dr. Donald Broadbent is director of the M.R.C. Applied Psychology Unit at Cambridge, a Fellow of the Royal Society and also a past president of the British Psychological Society. Since it would hardly have been necessary to defend empirical psychology five years ago, the title of Dr. Broadbent's book shows the recent shift in attitudes; today, there are many people who are dissatisfied with the present theory and practice of psychology. There are so many areas of controversy surrounding the traditional approach of experimental or "scientific" psychology that it is impossible to do justice to them in one short review. However, most issues probably come under two headings: "The meaning of science in relation to the study of human beings" and "The political implications of psychology". These controversies are not just a student revolt against orthodox psychology, but draw support from other areas. Many older sages from the ranks of academic psychology have joined the debate. Even Dr. Broadbent admits: "In the United Kingdom there is at this time a wave of questioning or doubt concerning the traditional approach of experimental psychology" and he goes on to quote an impressive list of critics from the United Kingdom and from the U.S.A. Dr. Broadbent states his own view clearly and succinctly: "My position is, as you might guess, that I think this criticism mistaken". Later he says, "from my own point of view, the critics of a behaviouristic and experimentally orientated approach to human beings represent the last kicks of an outdated culture . . .". This is the context in which to examine *In Defence of Empirical Psychology*.

Structurally, the book contains two parts. The first consists of the 1971 William James Lectures at Harvard, and the second—entitled "Some Particular Issues"—contains four shorter essays. In both parts, Dr. Broadbent presents a comprehensive and detailed account of many of the important advances in experimental psychology. He is concerned to place each of the areas that he describes in its broader context; he refers to reasons why the research was done, its implications for philosophy and for the scientific method, and its connection to an outlook on politics and life. He says: "my view of experimental psychology forms part of an integrated attitude to science as a whole and to life in general". Dr. Broadbent argues that proper concern for human values, and understanding of people with different ideas, demands more a scientific than an intuitive analysis of man.

*Reconstructing Social Psychology* is a collection of original essays edited by Nigel Armistead. The authors are mostly respected academics, well known for their original and often unconventional contributions in areas related to psychology. The position adopted by this book is not easy to summarise, partly because the criticisms of psychology are many and varied and not least because the book represents the views and orientation of 20 independent contributors. Nevertheless Nigel Armistead says: "This book has arisen out of our dissatisfaction with much of what is called psychology. That dissatisfaction is felt most acutely in relation to the lives we are leading and the world that we see around us."

We feel that social psychology should be making some sense of our experience and that it doesn't: we feel disappointed". In his introduction, Nigel Armistead describes his personal disillusionment with social psychology: "This study of psychology had nothing to do with my life or with the issues of the world". The historical situation is analysed, and the general view held by the contributors seems to be that social psychology has been distorted by its over-dependence on traditional empirical psychology, out of which it has grown. Thus, they say that much of "the scientific study of behaviour" has become very far removed from the object of its study—human beings. The focus is on behaviour rather than experience; the approach is mechanistic and ignores the individual and the social situation. The other main criticism concerns the political implications of psychology. Its critics say that psychology either hides or is unaware of its own value assumptions.

Armistead's book is in three parts: "Methodology", "Topics" and "Approaches". In the first part, there are six essays which criticise "positivist" methodologies and suggest alternatives. Crudely, "positivism" asserts that the approach of the physical sciences is applicable to the study of all phenomena and that abstract statements that do not refer to actual, verifiable, physical entities should not be part of scientific discourse. The theme of part two is that conventional social psychology is out of touch with the real world and that it deals with topics in a narrow, restricted way and thus abstracts them from their social contexts. Armistead says: "In relation to social psychology, what was happening in my life and in the world around me made what I was studying seem trivial, boring and unrelated to the questions about values and social change that were concerning me". The essays in part three try to outline alternative approaches. Most of their authors criticise the connections between capitalism and social psychology. Nigel Armistead says: "Broadly speaking, then, I think we can identify three 'alternative' stands in the social sciences which we consider have something to contribute to a reconstructed social psychology: humanistic psychology, phenomenology and Marxism".

Clearly, the first issue crucial to both books is the place of "science" in psychology. The scientific study of human behaviour had developed in this century in reaction to the idea that psychological truths could be revealed by people examining their own consciousness. This led to behaviourism which maintains that the only reliable data are behaviours which people other than the performer can observe. Dr. Broadbent clearly feels this is a desirable and healthy state of affairs. He adopts the Bayesian outlook, a fairly sophisticated version of the scientific approach. He says: "the essence of it is that, when one investigates a problem, one should not only consider one pet theory, but also consider what alternatives there may be". Broadbent finds this a more advantageous model than either the strict hypothetico-deductive approach or pure positivism. About positivism he says: "On this doctrine, the scientist wanders through the world observing at random, and the facts of nature inexorably compel him towards certain generalisations and inductions. This view is not now popular, and it is rather hard to find anybody who really believes in it". Dr. Broadbent does, however, imply that no area of psychology should be exempt from the less rigid form of the empirical approach which he follows. If we abandon the observation of behaviour, he suggests, we will return to

the old, inadequate mental concepts.

The focus of Armistead and his colleagues is on social psychology, an area not excluded from Broadbent's comments. They would allow that much of importance has been achieved in other areas of psychology using the empirical approach, but they criticise the traditional emphasis on things which could be accurately observed, measured and quantified—small pieces of behaviour, usually from animals. For Armistead and his colleagues, psychology should be about the whole person and the society in which he lives. Armistead wants psychology to tell him "how the society around me operated and how I got to be the sort of person I was". I suspect that this is what most of us want from psychology but that the traditional approach is not just taking a long time to answer these questions, it is never going to answer them if it continues in the way it is going. Armistead says: "If we want to answer these questions, we need to have a developmental perspective on the individual (the accumulation of past experience), and a historical perspective of 'society' (the accumulation of other people's experience and ideas); we need to look at real life behaviour and pay a lot of attention to people's experiences in real life, we need to look carefully at the social context of behaviour and experience; and we need to be involved in producing social change ourselves".

How does the conflict surrounding "scientific" psychology relate to psychologists studying criminal behaviour and working in prisons? In recent years psychologists have looked for the causes of criminal behaviour in the individual himself. Traditionally, we have compared prisoners to so-called "normals" on dozens of pieces of behaviour and areas of psychological functioning. In nearly all cases, no real differences have been found. This might suggest that "scientific" psychology has not, to date, provided sufficiently refined tools to deal with the task. But rather, as *Reconstructing Social Psychology* suggests, we may need to study the criminal in relation to his history, his experience and his total situation, using new and radical approaches. It may be that meaning cannot be obtained from pieces of behaviour produced by people in prisons without examination of the total concept of the prisoner in his prison situation.

One of the approaches suggested by some contributors to Armistead's book is that of humanistic psychology, which has been hailed as the "third force". Armistead comments: "This movement has grown in reaction to the dominant orthodoxes of behaviourism and psychoanalysis both of which are seen as too deterministic. Instead, humanistic psychology stresses man's potential for change and growth and that he can be active and self-directed in bringing about such changes". More recent trends in rehabilitation, such as the self-help groups and "New Careers" projects, have reflected this movement. Traditional approaches of treating offenders as passive recipients of all kinds of "treatment" have not yielded much fruit. One tool of humanistic psychology, experimental group-work or "encounter", has yet to be tested in the prison setting. Encounter groups have achieved a recognition in other institutions as a useful therapy and as a way of improving relationships between people who live and work together. Encounter groups are used to treat drug addiction and to increase collaboration between people in psychiatric clinics, in social work and in universities. It is an approach not yet widely applied to prisons.

The second big controversy dealt with in the two books concerns the political implications of psychology. Dr. Broadbent states that the traditional approach of the experimental psychologist "is pre-eminently that of the so-called 'silent generation' which returned to university from world war two and which in contrast to their fathers or their sons, raised no protests, went on no marches, and issued no manifestos". He adds, "I myself belong to this profession and this generation and I fully share its values". Armistead asks: "But what values?" He goes on to say: "The values of our society are not a random selection from all possible values but the values of a particular sort of society at a particular point in history; a technocratic, hierarchical, capitalistic society, inching its way towards social democracy on the one hand and state regulation on the other. Such a society stresses efficiency and competition, individualism and success, rewards and profit, power and control, acquisition and materialism, performance and the intellect, ends rather than means, at the expense of other values that would stress our common humanity and imply a wider vision of human possibilities". This basically Marxist approach is adopted by several of the contributors to *Reconstructing Social Psychology*.

For David Ingleby, the central question is: "Who are psychologists working for?" He says that, from an ideological point of view, the problem with psychology is that it incorporates social norms into laws of nature. If social norms are represented as natural laws they can become instruments for maintaining the status quo. Ingleby illustrates his case in "The Jobs Psychologists Do". The understanding of the industrial psychologist, for example, is far from universal since he is paid to work for a particular company and it is his employers' welfare that is his concern. He can only manipulate those variables that company policy will allow. Armistead adds that the social situation of those of us working in welfare, educational or penal settings ensure that our issues are those of our employers, rather than of the people processed by these institutions. What constitutes an issue worthy of study by a social psychologist is decided by the "authorities".

You may find the argument has no relevance. Ingleby comments that it is only thanks to the solidarity of Broadbent's generation that we can enjoy the luxury of questioning our own. To many of us, questioning the value judgments implicit in traditional psychology, and the society which it is said to represent, is a necessary manifestation of the freedom with which we are endowed.

DELIA HAYES,

Senior Psychologist, Coldingley Prison.



## A GOOD AND USEFUL LIFE

ROD CAIRD

Hart-Davis/MacGibbon 1974. £3.50

THIS is yet another book from the Consumer Research Department and tells of the author's experiences at Wormwood Scrubs and Coldingley Prisons. Mr. Caird was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment shortly after graduating with honours from Cambridge and spent two months at Wormwood Scrubs and the rest at Coldingley. He is a contributor to

*New Society*, *The Sunday Times Magazine*, *Rolling Stone* and *Morning Star* as well as writing and researching for other newspapers, magazines and television. As may be gathered, the book is an attempt to examine Rule 1 of the Prison Rules, namely: "The purpose of training and treatment of convicted prisoners shall be to encourage and assist them to lead a good and useful life". There is nothing cosy about the book; the pattern is clear and concise. "Here are the aims and objectives of the Prison Department of the Home Office. Here is what I found. . . . You will see that the gulf between aspiration and attainment will cast doubts upon the very existence of prisons."

The descriptive passages are well drawn and reflect Mr. Caird's eye for detail and the depth of his personal observation. The description, for instance, of the reception procedure at Wormwood Scrubs and the whole induction process leads meticulously and inexorably to the stripping of the "apparatus of individuality", a loss which is felt by most prisoners. He has a lucid style and is obviously more articulate than the majority of people who undergo similar experiences. Again, the deprivation of personal freedom is an affront more to his intellect than to his emotions. The reactions are, therefore, of a person who is not necessarily "typical" (accepting there is no "typical" prisoner) of the inmate population and this book is a worthwhile addition to the reading of those who are involved in the work of penal administration. The descriptive passages provide an interesting comparison between the scruffiness of Scrubs and the clinical regime of Coldingley. It is a book which would also be interesting for those unacquainted with prisons in so far as any description of a necessarily esoteric and inherently menacing experience would be made interesting when described by an intelligent and literate observer. It will titillate those with a morbid interest in the details of prison life. Although somewhat discursive, it is not so discursive or poetic as Behan's *Borstal Boy*, but has the ephemeral advantage of being comparatively up to date.

Mr. Caird has so constructed his book that he begins all but three chapters with a first hand account of his own experience, on the basis of which he then proceeds to theorise. It is only fair to add that his theories were partially formulated by his reading and conversations after he had left prison. In the course of his arguing from the particular to the general he takes a side-swipe at the judiciary, a rather unnecessary tilt at the uniformed staff as a whole—"The reality of their unglamorous, low status occupation made them look ridiculous"—and makes detailed and opinionative character analysis of two members of the senior staff at Coldingley. It is only fair to add that, at Coldingley, he makes some attempt to understand the motivation and background of members of the staff.

The underlying usefulness of Mr. Caird's work may lie in his identifying the inherent paradox of imprisonment, namely that prison is designed to deter and yet to reform. For there is a necessary conflict between punishment and rehabilitation, although the former may be an essential precursor to the latter. It may be that the book would have profited by a fair definition of terms at the outset. What, for instance, does Mr. Caird understand by prison? The concept which emerges is a somewhat vague one, although it is only fair to say that in certain parts he appears to be groping towards the idea that what we need is not "prison" but a diversity of treatment,

most of which need not be institutional. In essence, where he has drawn on his powers of observation in describing the physical indignities and anatomy of existing establishments, Mr. Caird has, I think, been successful. In terms of his exposition of principle and philosophy, the book falls somewhat short of measured analysis. It may well be, however, that the penal administrator is as subjective as the client in his assessment of the prison scene.

One would like to feel that a book on this very topic could be forthcoming from one of the long-term men of (say) D wing, Wormwood Scrubs, some of whom might lack the articulate style of Mr. Caird. Such a book would, I am sure, be not only self-revealing, as indeed Mr. Caird's is, but would be written with a degree of humour and insightfulness born of an awareness that prison is not only a microcosm of society, but an episode in the continuum of life itself.

The rapidity of social change has conspired to make even this book somewhat dated. The last two years have seen a move towards a more pragmatic approach, geared to humane containment, a disavowal of rules which savour of the moralistic, and a move away from regimes which depend upon the charismatic personality. It could be, however, that despite Mr. Caird's abrasive appraisal of Rule 1, he is both a better and more useful member of the community as a result of his period of self-analysis in the goldfish bowl of prison. His contribution certainly demands revision and restatement of opinion, even if the administrator feels compelled to reaffirm his belief in the need for further experimentation within the prison system on the lines of Coldingley.

GORDON FOWLER,

Assistant Controller, P7.



## MAN MISMANAGEMENT

ALAN FOX

Hutchinson 1974. £3.85

## OVERCOMING MISMANAGEMENT IN THE HUMAN SERVICE PROFESSIONS

HAROLD H. WEISSMAN

Jossey-Bass/Dent 1973. £4.75

THE first book probes the underlying reasons for industrial conflict and, in the process, throws up the inescapable fact that the "illness" is societal rather than simply organisational. Alan Fox explores the managerial strategies that have been adopted in an attempt to obtain some degree of commitment to the organisation from shop floor personnel. He argues strongly that they represent at best some kind of first-aid and treatment that goes no further than ameliorating crises in the immediate sense and do nothing in themselves to treat the fundamental sickness.

There are no clear-cut solutions to be found in the book; rather, it places the problem in its true perspective. For those who adhere to the notion that the human relations approach is a managerial style best suited to avoiding conflict, Fox lays bare the inadequacies surrounding such a philosophy. Equally, his analysis of participative management and the inherent processes of decision-making relating to this style show that the incidence of "high trust" commitment required to effectively produce a unity of purpose between management and non-management cannot come from

strategies that are immediately bedevilled by inequality of wealth, income and privilege, all having their roots in the kind of society in which we currently live.

Not much escapes Fox's analysis as far as organisational strategies are concerned and, indeed, he widens the scope of his book by relating the national problem of inflation, in part, to the competitive pressures that inequality brings and the subsequent aggravation caused. There is an interesting chapter on "Collective Bargaining—It's Role and Meaning" in which the suggestion is made that by its very nature, collective bargaining can be a powerful institution for the retention of the status quo. This is accepted as a radical viewpoint, i.e. in a negotiating process, the rank and file, in a sense, collude with the forces that perpetuate status and power differences, in order to obtain material rewards, without really challenging the organisational characteristics responsible for their inferiority, e.g. hierarchical structures and division of labour.

Prescribed and discretionary aspects of work are discussed and although to my mind stating the obvious, Fox intimates that decisions work-people are allowed to make, or conversely the influence they can exert on those who make decisions, will either generate involvement and identification or, if absent, will result in a hardening of attitudes and an increasing gap between "them" and "us".

The title of the book—*Man Mismanagement*—is somewhat misleading, since it suggests managerial incompetence whereas, in actual fact, the theme throughout is a massive indictment of the kind of society we have engineered for ourselves. Having said this, however, it does seem as though Fox is suggesting that serious consideration needs to be given to organisation "structure" in particular. The old bastions of bureaucracy that still characterise the larger organisations, and the inherent conflict of authority and power that permeate such structures, are seen to reinforce perceived inequalities, so that if progress is to be made then this is the place to start. A more "functional" approach to work is called for, with integration and co-operation being seen as infinitely superior to what currently exists, e.g. confrontation and conflict.

Fox accepts that managerial decisions can be influenced by external events, whether these be political, economic or social, but feels it remains possible for management to change its attitudes, reflecting its responsibilities to the work force in deeds.

For those who simply apportion blame to one or more groups when industrial conflict occurs, this book may help to underline the complexity of the problem. Others who are involved in industrial relations will find it useful to step back from their tasks and be reminded, if it is at all necessary, of the enormity of what confronts them. Finally, for all those interested in the more fundamental issues of authority, power and equality, the book offers a stepping-stone to greater awareness.

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The second book I was asked to review also concerns itself with mismanagement of human resources, but it differs from Fox's book in that it is specifically related to non-profit-making organisations.

Weissman's *Overcoming Mismanagement in the Human Service Professions* starts from the premise that such organisations, because



of the bureaucratic structure that inevitably exists within them, tend to lose sight of their goals and replace them with a kind of administrative expediency that results in a lowering of morale amongst lower level staff who are mainly interested in the qualitative aspects of their professional work.

The format followed by Weissman is an "anecdotal case study style". Each chapter concerns itself with aspects of organisational life illustrated by real situations, rounded off by a discussion of the theoretical implications which can be translated by the reader to his own work setting. Lower level workers in the context of this book would seem to be those who are closest to their clients and whose functions do not carry with them managerial/supervisory requirements in the accepted sense. The first chapter entitled "Promoting Teamwork" highlights the complicated interplay that takes place between the formal and informal procedures in organisations. Weissman seeks of the reader a basic understanding of how organisations function, and in the process describes the competitive and often conflicting aims of those who make up the team. Three strategies of change are discussed, namely (a) by demonstration, i.e. where proposed changes can be quantified in terms of their effectiveness; (b) by integration, i.e. a kind of mutual problem-solving; and (c) pressure strategy, i.e. the application of force and/or power. Understanding organisations and their social systems is a prerequisite to adopting one or other of these strategies in a change situation.

Weissman goes on to look at "tradition" and the degree to which change is accepted or resisted. He suggests that basically resistance has its foundation in people's perception of rewards and costs allied to the proposed change, whether viewed from individual, departmental or organisational levels. When a multiplicity of goals is accepted as part of any large organisation's make-up, the need to translate change into meaningful terms for everyone becomes crucial. Change seekers need to answer such questions as—(i) Is the timing right? (ii) Can existing formal procedures be used to effect change? (iii) Has the time come for taking risks by placing professional values above organisational allegiance? Hardy perennials like "custody versus rehabilitation" and other such manifestations of role conflict are discussed in the context of changing treatment procedures. A case study drawn from the experiences of probation staff in an agency in America underlines the fact that stated goals are not necessarily the ones actually pursued.

For those who have suffered at the hands of supervisory incompetence, Weissman explores the avenues open to lower level staff to combat this. The ultimate means of redressing such a situation is seen to be the vexed one of "bottom up" supervision. This clearly calls for attitudinal changes on the part of management, together with a redefining of such fundamental issues as power, authority and status. These would be currently unacceptable though advisable. The author accepts the difficulties here and suggests that a diminution in incompetence might be helped by the establishment of real "accountability" for results. Such accountability would be instrumental in forcing management to consider not only staff effectiveness, but also the organisational mechanisms that influence performance. It seems that, as well as performance appraisal, one needs organisational appraisal because of their interdependent nature.

Another part of Weissman's book deals with the "tension" existing in the work environment, accepted as necessary on the one hand, but often ill-conceived and misinterpreted on the other. Should tension be deliberately induced as a means of effecting essential change and what are the motives behind decisions made as a result of existing tensions? These are questions needing clarification if lower level staff are to be effective as change-agents.

Throughout his book, Weissman offers a number of "do-good organisational secrets" that are both humorous and deadly serious. Mentioning just one of these may give an indication of their telling qualities. This particular one relates to the chapter on the cost conscious nature of some social agencies and their influential benefactors: "A do-good organisational secret: Money is not given simply to do good, money is given to do what somebody thinks is good".

Anyone employed in a non-profit-making organisation (be he in a managerial role or not) who is interested in organisational health will find this book very readable and interesting. Weissman directs it to lower level staff as a contribution that may result in a more professional approach to the job. I would have thought its content was equally relevant to senior staff. It is not a call to arms, but rather a plea for peaceful revolution. Do not be put off by its American origins, it has a relevance that transcends national boundaries.

LYN NELMES,

Assistant Governor, Parkhurst Prison.



## GROUPS WITHIN ORGANISATIONS:

Applications of Social Psychology to  
Organisational Behaviour

PETER B. SMITH

Harper and Row 1974. Hardback £3.00,  
Paperback £1.50

THIS is a rather unusual book which does not fit neatly into any particular pigeonhole. It is partly an introductory text on social psychology, partly concerned with presenting a new framework for understanding behaviour in groups and organisations and it also contains a thesis on organisational change.

Peter Smith starts from the assumption that behaviour in groups, and hence in organisations, can be looked at in terms of a series of interactions between two parties. These parties can be two individuals, two groups or a manager and his subordinates. He goes on to suggest that there are only two ways in which these parties can influence one another. Either one party can choose voluntarily to relate his behaviour to that of the other or, alternatively, one party can set out to cause the other to behave in a particular way by the use of some kind of deliberate pressure. He refers to these basic processes as social comparison, and control.

In the main body of the book, he examines how social comparison and control operate, both in the laboratory situations studied by social psychologists and in the organisations described by management theorists. He also looks at how far they facilitate the task of the group or organisation, how far they contribute to the integration of various groups within an

organisation and the ways in which they are affected by the environment in which they occur.

The last two chapters, devoted to change in organisations, are of most immediate interest to anyone working in a Prison Service establishment. The first of these is an unbiased discussion of the effectiveness of the T-group as a temporary system for changing the behaviour of people working in organisations, while the second focuses on attempts to introduce more far-reaching and permanent changes into organisations as a whole. Perhaps one of Dr. Smith's most noteworthy conclusions, from our point of view, is that such attempts take time to bear fruit. In the most successful example of organisational redevelopment that he reviews, he records that little improvement was apparent for almost a year after the commencement of the project. He continues: "None the less, management had sufficient commitment to persist with the programme and ultimately more than recouped their losses".

However, I do not wish to give the impression that the first part of the book should be ignored. I would agree with Dr. Smith that it is important to understand how organisations operate as they are at present, in order to see how best to change them, and in what direction. Moreover, the first six chapters contain some illuminating ideas, such as that delinquents are as much influenced by social comparison processes as other people but it is vital to ask what group they are using when they are comparing their behaviour with that of other people. He suggests, with Thoreau, that "the social deviate is in reality but dancing to a more distant piper".

As someone working in a dispersal prison, I was most struck by Smith's account of some work on bargaining which was unfamiliar to me. This work (by Christie, Geis and others) showed that the people who were most successful in achieving their own goals in interpersonal situations were "Machiavellians", defined as "those who take a relatively cynical view of human nature and attempt to control the behaviour of others through manipulation and deceit". The researchers developed a questionnaire which enabled them to identify these ruthless operators reasonably successfully. This leads me to wonder how far those who are labelled "psychopaths" in prison are simply people who use machiavellian strategies in their dealings with others and whether this is a potentially more useful way of looking at the behaviour of this particularly difficult segment of the prison population.

Peter Smith is a lucid and interesting writer and a meticulous psychologist. He examines each piece of work he presents in a careful and objective fashion, he is cautious in drawing generalisations from the studies he discusses and he presents evidence to support his conclusions. Indeed at times he becomes rather carried away by this and the reader has to fight his way through thickets of references, but the book is blessedly free from footnotes which bedevil so many similar volumes.

Finally, I should like to pass on a word of advice to the prospective reader. I discovered, after the first few chapters, that it was not necessary to become involved in the author's apparent concern and confusion about his aims in writing this book. Simply read it as it stands and then come to your own conclusions about what you think he has achieved. I think that you will find it a worthwhile experience.

JENNY ROBINSON,

Senior Psychologist, Long Lartin Prison.

## AN INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY WORK

FRED MILSON

Routledge 1974. £2.95

THE key to this study is in its title. It is not simply another book which runs through the host of substantive problem areas. Rather, it is a serious attempt, one of the first, to appraise what is involved in community work. The book will appeal both as an introductory text for courses in the field, and as a source book for people engaged in, or considering, involvement with community work. It covers problems in the theoretical status or meaning of community, community development and the work involved, as well as expressing the author's thoughts on the basic requirements for training community workers.

Milson begins by acknowledging the contemporary fashion for relating community involvement to social problems. He also recognises that there is considerable confusion and disillusionment in this area and he sees his task as that of classifying, criticising and ultimately demystifying the assumptions behind the prevalent theories of community development, and then of suggesting more considered views derived from research.

The confusion over the usage of the term "community" is analysed through an examination of sociological, geographical, administrative and structural perspectives. This examination results in an acceptance of the concept of a social/psychological small group centred on the neighbourhood, whose members participate on the basis of needing to belong and to co-operate, and who are linked through social relationships. Milson produces a working definition which is rather heady and all-embracing: "a community is a social group, usually localised, in which there is manifest or latent, existent or potential, a sense of identification among the members: it is not simply a point on the map but an understanding to be found in people's attitudes and thinking".

A clear definition of the process of community development is drawn out from the present confusion of description and definitions which are available in the many recorded community development projects. Milson specifies this process as being on "a neighbourhood basis where attempts are made to mobilise resources of the community for the protection, support and enrichment of individuals through groups being part of the whole". The emphasis is on self-help in preference to outside help. Unfortunately, he does not examine the practical problems of overlap and conflict in a community development process which occur when a whole host of statutory and voluntary community workers, largely unknown to each other, work to different community work methods and definitions.

The chapter on the work of the community developer is to my mind the key area covered by Milson. He recognises how community workers suffer from the lack of a defined, neat implementation system—owing to a diversity of participants, projects and areas. He feels the literature (case histories) in existence rather ignores the need for standardised procedures. Milson identifies the various types of community workers: the grass-roots workers, the officials, the high-level planners. The accounts of specific processes and elements of the community worker role which are identified by Milson as being available to

community workers, make essential reading. Milson clarifies a point often ignored: that community work is only one method of social and educational work. This is only too apparent to those involved in the vast number of institutional programmes. Unfortunately, recent writings in the community work field have become largely disconnected from the work of practical problem-solving. Many have made important contributions to critical theorising but do not as yet make much impact at the practical level. My hopes were raised in this section by the constructive rather than debunking philosophy which is presented. However, I find it unfortunate that it is limited to one chapter.

Milson endeavours most ably to give guidelines for the development of future community work. He describes the skills and training he envisages to be a fundamental part of a generic community work training course. The skills he outlines are of an ideal nature, but to my mind he fails to raise the point that just as communities and individuals differ markedly, community workers (trained or untrained) all have a part to play—as in the case of prison or probation volunteers. Having identified training needs Milson proposes possible aims and content for training courses. These may be a help to those wishing to pursue some form of training, or for colleges and universities considering courses in community work.

Milson studies with clarity an area in which many are seeking answers at present, namely: the reason for the present emphasis on community work. His account examines the assumption that people at present feel life does not hold what it could or should for them because of, amongst other reasons, the three "evils" of urbanisation, bureaucracy and industrialisation. Community work, Milson feels, is trying to redress the balance between intrinsic values and the important gains which these three "evils" offer. Strong meat, I feel, to justify what could simply be a fashionable fad. However, I leave you to draw your own conclusions.

The last two chapters which deal with values and faith respectively, interact to such a degree that they must be considered together. They form a very disappointing finish to an excellent book. Although the attempt at clarification of value systems in our "non-judgemental" or "value-free" age is useful, it can be overplayed when considering community work roles. For here values are often dictated by the employing organisation or agency. Milson's view that faith should direct community work involvement I find personally rather discouraging, for although I accept that faith has an inherent part to play in motivation, its introduction here merely clouds the area under investigation in the book.

It is a real pity for me that this very readable book is not longer nor differently organised. Milson has started to tackle the important issues and has only performed half the task. He does, however, give some valuable suggestions for further reading and study.

Finally, as feelings grow about the need for further introduction of community based treatment programmes to deal with offenders, this book, or at least its subject, deserves our special attention so that community work is at least understood.

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## DEVIAN'T BEHAVIOUR

PAUL ROCK

Hutchinson University Library 1973.

Hardback £2.50. Paperback £1.50

two cheers for Paul Rock!

Readers of this journal will, no doubt, have become aware of the sociology of deviance through the deluge of writings produced during the past few years by its adherents. Depending upon their patience, determination and insensitivity to the abuse of the English language, they may have even penetrated the dense thicket of jargon that surrounds this discipline. For the many who have been defeated in this enterprise, certain ideas have filtered out and become reasonably well-known as critiques of orthodox criminology. Generally speaking, sociologists of deviance have questioned the presumption that crime and criminality exist, as it were, "out there" as a kind of natural phenomenon equivalent to an atom of hydrogen. Through notions such as "labelling" and "deviancy amplification" they have pointed to the fundamental way in which crime and criminality are social *creations*. Accordingly, they have sought to change the questions that social scientists ask, from "What are the causes of crime?" to "How are our understandings of crime created and maintained?"

Now there is yet another book to add to this collection, written this time by Paul Rock. Unlike his predecessors, however, he seems to have avoided the temptation to write in obscure jargon. Indeed, on the contrary, he appears to use plain English where possible and defines technical terms in readily comprehensible language. If for no other reason than its clarity of style, the book warrants becoming a standard text for students of this discipline. Of course, it is not simply a textbook—he does introduce original arguments within the framework of the discipline and particularly emphasises: (1) the extent to which deviancy becomes essential to conventional social life by establishing the boundaries of normality and at the same time presents an image of what lies beyond them; and (2) the way in which, in complex societies, rules are made by particular sections of society and then imposed—in the final analysis through force—upon other sections.

Apart from the general lucidity of argument, two chapters deserve special praise. Some readers of the sociology of deviance may have felt what one critic has powerfully expressed: "One sometimes gets the impression from reading this literature that people go about minding their own business and then—wham!—bad society comes along and slaps them with a stigmatised label" (page 65).

Now Rock tries to counteract this tendency to present the deviant as passive, powerless and "more sinned against than sinning". He argues that the effects of social control are partly determined by the manner in which the deviancy is organised by the deviants themselves. If deviants choose to engage in their deviancy in an undercover fashion then, because of the leeway afforded through the ambiguity that surrounds moral and legal rules, they will go largely undetected in everyday life and the police will need to infiltrate their undercover world if they are to control it. Militantly political deviants like the Gay Liberation Front, on the other hand, do not attempt to disguise their deviancy but express it quite openly in an attempt to change social values and thereby pose altogether different problems of social control. Whilst

these points are valid, I feel it is possible that many deviants share the same values as non-deviants and consider their own actions as wrong.

There is also a fine chapter on the police. Previously, one gained the impression that whereas sociologists of deviance would make strenuous efforts to suspend judgement and understand deviancy from the deviant's point of view, no such effort was forthcoming in relation to those in positions of authority—bureaucrats, lawyers, prison officers, but most of all the police. They appear to have been simply dismissed as brutes, cretins or worse. The author goes a very long way to redressing this balance, which is not to say that he presents the police as angels. The picture he does present is one of reasonable men who find that their occupation poses certain problems which they collectively attempt to resolve in a reasonable fashion. If the result defeats the aim of justice in some situations, then it would seem to be unfortunate, unforeseen and probably unrecognised, rather than cynically malevolent.

These are all substantial achievements, so why not a full three cheers for this book? Well there are four reservations: (1) The book is devoted, according to the author, to the synthesis of the sociology of deviance. Although much has indeed been written on this subject, one still wonders whether there has been sufficient to warrant synthesis. This is particularly so when it is appreciated that, although there have been a number of notable empirical studies in this area, there has equally been a great deal of speculative theorising which has been followed by speculation about the speculations of others. Almost from necessity, then, Rock too is drawn upon this speculative merry-go-round.

(2) Following from this first point, there is the tendency to argue by reference to authority. Like others in this discipline, Rock tends often to implicitly substantiate an argument by saying "as Schutz . . . Berger and Luckman . . . Douglas have argued . . .". Scholarship, it is true, demands acknowledgement of the source of ideas, but here—as elsewhere—one gains the impression that because Schutz or any of the others have argued a particular point, then it should be taken as given. Yet if someone, no matter how esteemed he may be, claims that "X is true" and I then agree with him, to quote this other person in support of the statement proves only that we agree and says nothing about the validity of the argument. To take what appear to be essentially speculative propositions, made by authorities in the discipline, and to build upon them yet further speculative propositions seems fraught with danger. What surely is needed is an empirical test of the validity of these fundamental propositions. It seems that rather than be delayed too long in this exercise, sociologists of deviance want to race ahead and explain deviancy *per se*, rather than this or that specific feature of it. Obviously, theory and empirical research need to be wedded together and there are parts of this book which do this admirably (the chapter on the police is a particularly good example), but at times it seems that Rock wants to amend theory not because it has proved empirically suspect, but simply because he did not find it appealing (a trap into which the chapter on deviancy organisation seems to fall). Plausible as his theorising undoubtedly is, it is probably no more plausible than that of other writers and therefore needs to be tested before being accepted.

(3) When Rock considers empirical research his argument seems at times somewhat suspect. The particular instance that comes to mind is his discussions of the part played by the mass media in forming a picture of deviancy. In this he refers to studies of how "crime waves" are created by the newspapers even though the incidence of reported crime hardly changes. He also refers to the study of how, in dealing with the anti-Vietnam war demonstration in Grosvenor Square, the media highlighted the largely uncharacteristic violent incidents because they had gone there expecting violent confrontation. This research does clearly show how the media interpret and even distort news, but Rock goes on to *presume* that this has a significant effect upon the audience's understanding of deviancy. There is, however, a considerable research literature of a more orthodox kind which suggests that by and large the mass media have little, if any, effect upon the views and attitudes of their audience. If Rock is going to presume that the media do affect their audience's views and attitudes in the face of this evidence, then it seems incumbent upon him to show how and why it is invalid or inapplicable. He does not do this; he merely ignores it.

(4) Whilst his style is comparatively lucid, it is none the less quite closely argued and would have benefited from being more clearly "mapped-out" for the reader, with a more extensive use of sub-headings and numbered paragraphs. It was not until the conclusion that I began to appreciate how the book as a whole hung together.

In sum, then, this book has a great deal to commend it and these criticisms should not put anyone off reading it. Certainly, the sociology of deviance, which has been at the centre of much academic controversy for the past few years, will now be accessible to a much wider audience.

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## ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Edited by ROY TURNER  
Penguin Education 1974. £1.10

"WHAT is ethnomethodology?" You may well ask. A reasonable question, for it appears that even the editor is somewhat uncertain about the answer. Very early in the introduction to the book, Turner writes that it is probable that some of the contributors ". . . would not (or no longer) characterise their work as ethnomethodology". Furthermore, ". . . there is no guarantee that the items collected here will fit together like the pieces of a puzzle, revealing—if only put together carefully and correctly—a picture, *the* picture, which finally makes visible 'what ethnomethodology is' ". If he is not sure what it is, how does he expect readers unfamiliar with this area to achieve any clarity? Turner continues in this ambiguous way with poor introductions to the major sections which offer little by way of an integrating framework, so that the relevance of the various contributions to one another is not easy to understand. This is certainly not a book which will serve as an introductory text.

It appears that ethnomethodology is about the study of how people make sense of their day to day activities and create orderliness in their everyday living. It seeks to clarify the assumptions and rules that we often take for granted in our interactions with one another;

these rules and regulations govern how we actually live as opposed to how we should live. The ethnomethodologist refers to the order that people bring to their everyday lives as the "practical reasoning" underlying their activities. We often use the term "commonsense" for this purpose. Turner writes that if the book has a theme it is about the various ways we use practical reasoning.

The book contains a series of contributions by various authors, arranged into four main sections.

### 1. On the Name and its Uses

In this section, the originator of the name describes how ethnomethodology started. According to Garfinkel, the term is now more than just a label since it describes the focus and methodology of a whole group of researchers and students of human behaviour.

### 2. Theorising as Practical Reasoning

This section has contributions on the construction of theories as a practical accomplishment, and on the similarities and differences between science and commonsense.

### 3. Practical Reasoning in Organisational Settings.

Dealing predominantly with record-keeping in organisations, this seemed to me to be one of the more interesting and readable sections of the book. The articles deal with the ways people construct and use records in actual practice, and the authors seek to elaborate the reasonableness of the way records are kept, be they good, bad or indifferent. Other articles deal with the way language can be used as a code among groups of people, as has been exemplified elsewhere in studies of prisoners' argot.

### 4. Methodical Bases of Interaction

This section deals mainly with the analysis of conversation, but one article comprises "Notes on the Art of Walking". The article is extraordinary and uses some hilarious jargon in its explanation of walking. For example: "The substantive focus of this discussion shall be the phenomenon of 'doing walking'. We use the verb 'doing' to underscore a conception of walking as the concerted accomplishment of members of the community involved as a matter of course in its production and recognition".

The quotation illustrates one of the problems of this book: the extreme obscurity of much of the writing. In many cases, the articles are tedious to read and lacking in literary style. The use of jargon, inaccessible to most people, is widespread and I began to wonder if some of the writers would not benefit from a commonsense study of the art of communication.

The book as a whole left me with the impression that ethnomethodology might have something to contribute, but I was not sure what!

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## A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE DRUG SCENE

KENNETH LEECH  
Sheldon Press 1974. Hardback £2.75.  
Paperback £1.25

THIS short, but wide-ranging, book is comparable to an "informative" television programme. After reading the book, as after watching such a programme, one has received so many

impressions, been liberally showered with figures, and has had to switch oneself from scene to scene so many times, that the overall result is sensory overload and confusion.

The October 1973 issue of this journal carried a review of the earlier version of Leech's book. Steve Twinn wrote then: "The unfortunate fact about this book is that it says nothing even up to date, let alone new, about the aspects of the problem in which our interest really lies". And, "I was amazed that this author avoided the questions, 'Why?' and 'What can be done about it now?'" Sadly, I feel, I must repeat those comments. The book is presented as "revised and updated" but neither revision nor updating has the power to answer unasked questions.

The first half of the book examines the various "scenes" that go to make up the big picture. There are chapters on history of the drug scene and on the pill, junk, pot and acid scenes in Britain. What may be learned from these chapters by the average reader of this journal? Very little I feel. So much information is presented that one is left with a confusing, and possibly dangerous, mixture of figures, facts and titbits which will probably not give the reader much information which is of any use in his particular social work sphere.

The book does, however, contain some useful insights (sometimes, it appears, almost by accident) as in the following extract which Leech relates specifically to the heroin scene, but which is applicable to many of our drug-abusing clients: "Certainly there are few heroin addicts who do not show severe emotional and psychological problems. To view them simply as addicts is to isolate their drug use in so artificial a manner as to make it the central feature of their disturbed condition rather than as the most painful symptom of their underlying need" (page 33).

Perhaps we all need reminding of this from time to time.

The second part of the book is subtitled "Caring for the Drug Scene" and here Kenneth Leech is on surer ground and has many useful things to say, particularly to the enquiring clergyman who is interesting himself in the Church's mission to the drug-abuser for the first time. Unfortunately, it is likely to be of little interest or help to the worker already in the field.

It is some years since I was involved with theology, but I did not find the final chapter on "The Spirituality of the Drug Scene" offensive (as Kenneth Leech imagines it might be for some people) but rather thin stuff. True, the Church has frequently kept a low profile in the mystical area, and mystical writings are difficult to appreciate if one has little connection with that life, but it did seem to me that Kenneth Leech had rather shakily interwoven the quasi-mystical utterances of some drug-abusers with Biblical references and quotations from the better-known mystics. Perhaps it is not accidental that the Book of Revelations is not given much attention by modern theologians. The Church knows she is on surer ground ministering to the sick, in mind and body, than in pursuing will o' the wisp mysticism.

In the area of common-sense, as Steve Twinn noted before, Kenneth Leech makes contributions to the understanding of a very real problem, although these contributions must be sought out from the text. Ultimately, what shines through the book is the author's care and compassion, qualities which are so frequently absent in the officially caring

world; perhaps the book could be read for this aspect alone.

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## WHO BECOMES DELINQUENT?

D. J. WEST in collaboration with  
D. P. FARRINGTON  
Heinemann 1973. £4.50

THIS book reports the second stage in a "study of delinquent development" by research workers at the Institution of Criminology, Cambridge. It is a study of 411 boys who were at primary school in south-east London in 1961 and who were followed through for 10 years. From their eighth or ninth years, a variety of measures were made. At the age of 18, 95 per cent of the original sample were re-interviewed, when 84 (24 per cent) had become delinquent.

Of the many factors included in the study all were found to be related in one way or another to delinquency. The factors include illegitimacy, intelligence, clumsiness, family income, parental behaviour, teachers' reports, self-reports, type of school, work record and apprenticeship, wages and savings, estrangement from family, relationship with father, use of alcohol and cigarettes, aggression and sexual promiscuity.

The study provides statistical confirmation for much that we already know; for example that boys with criminal parents, low income or "bad" parents (using categories derived from the work of the Gluecks) have a high chance of becoming delinquent. But the study adds force by showing that boys with all three characteristics have a 71 per cent chance of doing so.

Two other factors also carry particularly heavy weight—large family size and low intelligence. Together, these factors, determined at the age of 10 or even at the age of eight, proved predictive of future delinquency and of its early onset. Ratings of troublesome behaviour by teachers and classmates were also highly predictive.

Some less familiar findings were that higher intelligence suggested less likelihood of being caught, that having authoritarian or "unstable" parents was more characteristic of delinquents than of non-delinquents. These associations were more pronounced in respect of mothers than of fathers. Boys with high educational achievement whose mothers had low aspirations for them were especially vulnerable, perhaps by virtue of being subtly undervalued or rejected. Likewise, boys whose parents did not share their leisure interests and who spent little time at home were particularly delinquency-prone. Illegitimacy, although not formally acknowledged, was associated with delinquency. "Nervous-withdrawn" behaviour was found to be a non-delinquent reaction to family stress while aggressiveness was an important characteristic of juvenile delinquency.

The book provides evidence of the complex psychological and sociological nature of delinquency, showing the interaction between home atmosphere, faulty circumstances and the personal qualities of the boy. Thus, the juvenile recidivist is seen to be a member of a distinctive minority with "unfortunate parental background, difficult personalities and inadequate scholastic and vocational attainment, for whom life is an unrewarding struggle against authority". This minority

tends to be thrown together, becoming self-perpetuating and seeking out their own kind at school. The members run the gauntlet of caring agencies—though the less capable parents, whose need is greatest, use these agencies least.

The conclusion of the book considers measures which might help by increasing social support, perhaps using negative taxation. It is stressed that very little is spent on social agencies as compared with medical agencies, for instance. Family planning is advocated, together with training in the skills of parenthood and the study of the psychological needs of children which should be started for both sexes while they are at school. The authors argue that, with a radical change of curriculum and with career planning, the school could change the fate of children otherwise destined for third-class citizenship. The penal system, it is stressed, should be left to deal with the socialising of wayward personalities and temperaments, rather than with the social casualties. The penal system should also be aware of such common factors among their charges as impulsive temperaments, which are easily bored, so that leisure activities may need to be unconventional and even risky, if they are to succeed in diverting potential delinquents from anti-social outlets.

Some more incidental issues are also discussed. The *laissez-faire* attitude to large families is contrasted with restrictive adoption policies. The necessity for parental-role models for children and the need for constructive leisure pursuits for parents are argued. The reluctance of those in greatest need to use the resources available is related to the resentment which may be provoked.

Coupled with recent unpublished research from L.S.E., this book goes a long way to show that delinquency is a characteristic of adolescence and that recidivism depends greatly on social disadvantage and our mismanagement of such casualties during their development. Much critical assessment of the methods of prevention, of caring and of the courts is required in order to create a social order, an administration of social welfare and treatment which is more appropriate to modern times and which may ensure that the disadvantaged no longer suffer the most painful social and penal measures.

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## JUSTICE, PUNISHMENT, TREATMENT: THE CORRECTIONAL PROCESS

Edited by LEONARD ORLAND  
The Free Press 1973. £7.95

### CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Edited by ROBERT CARTER, DANIEL GLASER  
and LESLIE WILKINS

J. B. Lippincott Co. 1972. \$9.50

LEONARD ORLAND is a professor of law at the University of Connecticut and a former member of the Connecticut Parole Board. His reader is aimed at adding the lawyer's perspective to the growing number of volumes devoted to the correctional process. In addition to extracts from empirical and subjective accounts of sentencing practice, and the conditions and effects of imprisonment and variations in parole procedures, he has assembled a number of detailed case studies to illustrate the arguments of the text,

"Sentencing: The Way In", Orland's first section, gives the reader a useful insight into the operation of American courts and the extent and importance of pre-sentence investigation. It also highlights the difficulties faced by a judiciary which is attempting to standardise sentencing practice without wishing to totally deprive its judges of their autonomy. The most interesting chapter for me in this first section is entitled "Training the Judge". This shows that bringing judges together to discuss appropriate types and lengths of sentences is unsuccessful. For the most part judges attend sentencing institutes or conferences, "... record their differences, reassure each other of their independence and go home to do their own disparate thing as before".

"Imprisonment: Punishment and Treatment", the second and largest section in Orland's collection, starts by asking the question, "What is prison?" Tromanhauser's account of his first day in Illinois State Penitentiary portrays it as a frightening mixture of bullying, deprivation and squalor which leaves the recipient wondering what prison is all about. Cleaver writing from Folsom describes the fear in which some prisoners live, of their fellows and of the need he felt for privacy and solitude. George Jackson's view of most prison staff is also represented.

Following a delightful poem by Ho Chi Minh, Orland moves to "Empirical Perspectives" and includes two surveys of American correctional institutions which highlight the "good" and the "bad". To the familiar observations of staff and financial shortages is added the claim that at certain institutions concerned with raising cash crops for profit, trusted prisoners are armed with guns and set to guard other inmates. Almost by way of an amusing interlude, an excerpt from the South Dakota Prison Rules is included. Amongst other things these prohibit singing, dancing, whistling and booing.

Orland's final section is devoted to parole. Each state penal system has its own parole board operating quite independently to that of any other state and to the federal board. Each formulates its own rules within the governing legislation and practices vary widely. Some boards see prisoners, explain the reasons for their decisions and make recommendations about the future training of individuals. Others make their decisions in isolation and members do not confer about cases.

The editors of *Correctional Institutions* represent three disciplines (sociology, methodology and criminology) and they have come together to provide a basic text book which will appeal to the layman, the student and the correctional practitioner. They open with a chronological account of the development of the American penal system followed by an appraisal of the current situation. These are particularly helpful to the foreign reader.

The second section explores prisons as communities and seeks to describe and explain the social behaviour of prisoners and the nature and extent of interactions between inmates and guards. I found the opening chapter, an excerpt from Schrag, particularly interesting for this crystallises the relationship between correctional institutions and the outside community by describing how prison officials' duties are defined by conventional values and beliefs. This is followed by an extract from *The Felon* in which Irwin outlines "prison adaptive modes", illustrating the ways in which some prisoners cope with

institutional life and try to draw benefit from it, whether it be for reasons of personal comfort or a desire to become "rehabilitated".

Distinctions between male and female inmate behaviour are drawn in a chapter about women in prison and in one on the social meaning of prison homosexuality. Women, it seems, cope more easily with the deprivation of heterosexual relationships but are more deeply affected by enforced separation from their families.

The third section is concerned with specific programmes in American correctional institutions, but is of more than passing interest because it examines education, counselling, prison industries, disciplinary policy and other facets of prison treatment which are currently in the minds of prison administrators all over the world. One thing that comes across strongly is the apparent willingness of some American states to experiment with their penal systems and try to keep their institutions in line with changing social values.

There is a hopeful theme to the fourth section. It takes the reader through the experiments and practical implications of community involvement in prisons and the treatment of offenders. In the final chapter, Glaser predicts that in the future, prisons will have extensive links with community organisations and that the custody/treatment distinction (that currently divides American prison staff) will be broken down so that all staff become involved in both aspects. Prisons will be small and graduated in custodial security, treatment programmes will be diverse and older, unadvanced offenders will be used to influence young delinquents.

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Each of these text books is valuable in its own way. For someone who wishes to study the American legal process from start to finish, Orland's *Justice, Punishment, Treatment* is clearly an ideal work. It contains plenty of detailed material, although I personally found the case studies rather tedious. Each of the long extracts, "the major problem material", is supported by shorter excerpts or "notes" but unfortunately there is no on-going commentary to guide the reader through the text. *Correctional Institutions* is better organised and the editors have prepared a useful introduction to each section. They appear to me to have achieved their aim of providing an acceptable general purpose book and, for my money, this is the better of the two collections.

PETER LEONARD

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#### MEDICAL REMANDS IN MAGISTRATES' COURTS

KEITH SOOTHILL and PATRICK POPE

Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency 1974, 30p

THIS is a straightforward report of some research carried out during 1969 and 1970. The subject is the practice of remanding for medical (mainly psychiatric) reports in magistrates' courts—a fairly limited practice but a very significant one in terms of affecting people's lives, of cost, and of drawing on the resources of the Prison Service and its medical practitioners. In addition, those remanded for medical reports include the courts' most difficult cases.

Soothill and Pope examined three aspects of medical remands in magistrates' courts: (a) the frequency of such cases compared with the courts' total turnover; (b) whether medical remands resulted in medical disposals and (c) the proportion of medical remands in custody against those on bail. This information was collected in two areas—from Inner London and from a comparable district outside London.

Taking the results from 18 Inner London courts, Soothill and Pope discovered that 8.8 per cent of indictable offenders found guilty had been given medical remands and only 7.5 per cent of this group had received a medical disposal. That is, of every thousand indictable offenders, only about seven received a hospital order or a probation order with a condition of treatment. For non-indictable offenders (who greatly outnumber indictable offenders), medical remands fell to 1.2 per cent of the total turnover and the number of medical disposals was about one in a thousand. Although these numbers may seem small, the vast majority of men and women remanded for medical reports were remanded in custody: for both indictable and non-indictable offenders, the rate of custodial medical remands was 88 per cent.

The remaining three-quarters of the country's medical remands are requested by magistrates' courts outside Inner London. The area chosen to represent these cases was Wessex where Soothill and Pope collected information in a second phase of the research. It is interesting to see how the courts operated differently in Wessex and Inner London. Only 4 to 5 per cent of indictable offenders and as few as 0.3 per cent of non-indictable offenders were given medical remands in Wessex magistrates' courts. But of those remanded for medical reports, 22 per cent received a medical disposal. Furthermore, the percentage of medical remands completed in custody was around 60 per cent: Wessex courts made much more use of remanding on bail than did Inner London courts.

Overall, Soothill and Pope paint a picture of Wessex magistrates' courts moving towards a desirable situation in which medical remanding is used selectively, is useful in terms of outcome and is only ordered in custody when necessary. The figures and context are explained fully by the authors: they break down the information very usefully and discuss the methodology they have used. The report has a table of figures on nearly every page but is not blindly statistical. What emerges is that magistrates request medical remands not on a whim but according to what resources are available in the probation and psychiatric services and to the size of the courts' turnover. For Inner London, the resources are evidently too few and the turnover too large.



#### THE PRISONER'S RELEASE

KEITH SOOTHILL

Allen and Unwin 1974. Hardback £4.95.  
Paperback £2.75

THE author of this book has produced the first critical evaluation of employment for the ex-prisoner. He carefully sets the stage explaining the evolution of after-care from Mrs. Fry's ladies who visited Newgate to the statutory implementation of the after-care concept by the Probation Service in 1966.



The project draws its material from men in Wormwood Scrubs and Pentonville prisons, over a period of three years, who used the services of the Apex Trust. The trust was founded in 1965 at a time when the National Association of Discharged Prisoners Aid Society was being wound up and when it hardly seemed a time to launch yet another voluntary body. But the trust sees its work principally as job finding for ex-prisoners in a more professional and single-minded manner than statutory bodies can provide.

In order to more accurately assess response to this service Keith Soothill conducted some fascinating research in an area where previously there was only a great amount of speculation. He has produced a total of 42 tables showing various correlations and, although initially the average social worker may experience some difficulty in comprehending these, the text is written in a laymen's language which facilitates eventual understanding. The author presents his findings with some possible explanation but does not fall into the trap of theorising, nor does he use his argument to ride hobby-horses. There is even some research upon the men who chose to reject the seemingly marvellous offer of finding them a job upon release (one-third of all those interviewed!), including details of reconviction rates.

The book is broadly divided into three parts: the initial section deals with the record of what help has been offered to ex-prisoners in the past, the other two sections deal with the description of the Apex Trust and its development. The method of analysis employed the traditional comparison of treatment and control groups. A direct comparison of men helped by Apex and those not "treated" in this way showed little significant difference in their subsequent reconviction rate, except that Apex had tended to delay conviction somewhat. Far from this being the setback it seems, the resultant study of variables is used in taxonomic analysis; criteria used include age at time of conviction, age at time of sentence, previous convictions, probation experience, time in last job, and others. These comparisons provide valuable information in the field of re-employment of the ex-prisoners.

The author does not construct prediction scales of success but rather concentrates on categories of men unlikely to be helped by extensive job finding. He charts the performance of groups classified according to their possible risk of conviction. He follows the progress of the groups including those who fail to attend for the interview, or even fail to start the offered job. He also outlines the number of contacts required to set up an interview, even though the applicant may not eventually attend. Of the high-risk group in terms of reconviction, half failed to attend for interview, of the remainder, one-third were turned down by the employers, and one-third of those remaining failed to start the job, so that out of 65 men only 11 actually started a job. Five of these men remained in that employment for more than three months.

What evolved from the findings was a measure which could predict men who are unlikely to be helped. This is a rational approach, a further sophistication of which was a proposed computerised print-out which could outline risk areas (for example, a man unlikely to attend for interview or not likely to take the job even if accepted) which would give the worker some useful guide-lines. The average social worker may have to steel

himself to accept computerised analysis—but how else can we correlate all the criteria to provide a working tool?

Research workers in the penal field should find this book of value and, although it may not be considered compulsive reading by anyone involved in social work who is not versed in taxonomic terms, nevertheless there are implications regarding after-care which should not be disregarded by anyone involved in the finding of employment for ex-prisoners. We have moved away from the Victorian ethic of work purifying the soul into a situation which seems unlikely to change within the next few years and in which the ex-prisoner is at the bottom of the list regarding employment.

This book seems to be talking about resources and how best we can use them. Apex, in offering a service to all, made no discrimination regarding applicants; hence its general acceptance by ex-prisoners but little progress in terms of lowering conviction rates.

Does the average welfare officer in his after-care planning use hunches regarding work prospects? Does the Department of Employment in its contact have the required level of acceptance by ex-prisoners to be effective in its work? Will the advent of the job centres help? These are some of the questions the reader will ask himself as a result of the stimulation provided by this book.

PAUL MARSH,

Senior Prison Welfare Officer,  
Wakefield Prison



### SOCIETY, CRIME AND CRIMINAL CAREERS: AN INTRODUCTION TO CRIMINOLOGY (2nd edition)

DON C. GIBBONS

Prentice Hall International, 1973. £5.45

My favourite book review goes something like this—"Great! This book will change my life. At least, I think it will. Maybe it won't". I wish I could say as much in so few words. I suspect that only an American could write a book 560 pages long (all his own work too) and call it an "Introduction to Criminology". Anyway, the reviewer is up against it, rather as in the Monty Python sketch in which competitors had to summarise the works of Proust in 10 seconds.

As far as style is concerned, although the acreage is vast, the earnest, humourless prose only occasionally sends one to sleep and the book never becomes really unreadable. The jargon is oppressive but mostly used without relish or excess. I was irritated by the type-face and the rather pedantic subdivision in some of the chapters, but otherwise the book is logically constructed and well presented.

The book's main premise is that "law breaking is complex . . . no single explanatory formula will make sense of this behaviour . . . (and) that progress depends on our sorting the heterogeneous assortment of criminal roles into homogenous patterns for study". To reinforce this the author devotes several chapters in the middle of the book to analysing the "role careers" of murderers, sexual and property offenders, and white-collar criminals among others. He uses largely American research to build up a picture of, for example, the self-images and attitudes of rapists, and the effect of family background, social class,

peer group and "defining agencies" on these attitudes. These statements are helpful but even though they go beyond the stage of "most criminals are . . ." to "most rapists/drug addicts/murderers are . . ." they are obviously still generalisations. The author also mentions that, since the first edition, he has realised that it makes little sense to talk about "role careers" for all offenders in the same way as one could about professional criminals. There are some interesting facts: for example, in Philadelphia, though only 18 per cent of the population, blacks make up most of the homicide victims and offenders, and that blacks nearly always kill other blacks and whites other whites. But after a while, the figures lose impact and one yearns for a few interesting case-histories.

In most sections of the book the author's own feelings are restrained and he includes some fair and concise discussion of contemporary disagreements about the scope of criminology, crime causation, aims of punishment and a number of other matters. Occasionally, however, his beliefs do emerge quite strongly in his preference for sociological rather than psychogenic explanations of crime, in his consequent disapproval of labelling criminals as sick by definition, and in a sane and interesting discussion of "treatment" in penal institutions. In particular, he states that "humanitarianism is often confused with treatment" when in fact "treatment has to do with specific efforts designed to modify social-psychological characteristics". He extends this to argue that it is potentially dangerous to make "rehabilitation" the main justification for humane handling since rehabilitation may fail. Similarly, he points out that education and vocational training are not "treatment" and that "vocational training is likely to have some impact only when accompanied by some kind of resocialisation experience in which the inmate comes to modify his attitude towards work". In other words, there is no point in producing a brain surgeon with a severe authority problem.

I was amused by his brisk hatchet-job on pioneers of criminology in chapter 6. We can apparently learn nothing from them since "modern views are not the end product of some multiplicative process, building on the contribution of the criminological 'giants' of the past, but are 'relatively unrelated'". This is mostly due to our more sceptical approach to simple cause and effect explanations of human conduct.

The final chapter is entitled "Will the Challenge (of Crime) be Met?". Gibbons does not seem to think so, since massive changes in the economic system are necessary to get rid of the poverty and injustice of the "other America", described by Michael Harrington and James Baldwin which, for the author, are the root sociological cause of most crime. He advocates caution in our experiments and refers to the Youth Service Bureaux attempt to limit juvenile contact with the courts which has ended up entangling even more kids into the machinery than before.

In conclusion, this is a useful text-book that falls into Francis Bacon's category of books to be tasted, chewed and digested slowly. Some of the chapters are disappointing, but others, particularly those on historical and ethical backgrounds, "becoming a criminal" and "prison social organisation" would repay some attention.

A. C. LEWIS,  
Assistant Governor at Kingston Prison.

## CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

HERSCHEL PRINS

Pitman 1974. Hardback £2.50  
Paperback £1.50

HERSCHEL PRINS, a senior lecturer in the School of Social Work at Leicester University, formerly a probation officer and psychiatric social worker, has produced here an introductory text that deals with both the causes and the treatment of crime. It is a book which will stimulate the interested prison officer to read some of the more comprehensive writings on crime and behaviour; indeed, it contains a useful appendix of additional reading and a clear index of the authors who are quoted. For easy use the book is presented in four parts.

In part one Prins looks at the definition of crime and the purposes of criminal law, using as a foundation the framework set out by Nigel Walker in his *Sentencing in a Rational Society*. Prins uses a wider definition of criminology than simply the "study of crime", and demonstrates clearly to the reader how criminology is inter-connected with, and dependant on, other disciplines. He goes on to consider statistics on crime, reported and unreported crime and the practice of police cautioning. To help the reader here he uses tables which are easy to follow. He concludes with an examination of the implications raised by his discussion in this section.

Part two starts by considering the causes of crime and discusses the complex theories involved in simple understandable language. Prins deals with environmental effects, and the effects of biological inheritance—especially that of chromosomal abnormality, which he explains most clearly. This is followed by an examination of the psychiatric and psychological explanations for criminal behaviour. These include manic-depressive illness, schizophrenia and psychopathy, as well as other factors which may contribute to the development of delinquency, such as intelligence level, immaturity, deprivation and parental attitudes. The pleasing thing about this examination is that Prins takes the trouble to explain the terms he uses for the benefit of a beginner.

Part three has the all-embracing title of "Methods of Disposal". This section covers aspects included in the basic training of prison officers and it certainly provides useful refresher material on the court system and the sentencing process.

First, Prins discusses in separate chapters the penal measures for adults and for young offenders. He talks of the prison system as it is today and identifies accurately one of our major problem areas: that of communication. However, his description is not always accurate for he includes the rank of A.G. III, omits the rank of senior officer, and makes no mention of the move towards consultative management within the Service.

He then considered the mentally disordered "abnormal" offender. This chapter could well prove to be thought-provoking for many prison staff who have the problem of handling such offenders—in many instances before the court formally classifies them as mentally disordered. Prins makes it clear that a lot of work is being carried out on the problem of how best to deal with this type of offender, but he ends with a cautionary note that "we know, as yet, all too little . . .".

Next Prins discusses other special categories of offenders ranging from female offenders to offenders involved in alcohol and drug abuse. Some stress is placed on the importance

of psychological factors in crimes committed by women, and the author includes an interesting quote from Lombroso written over 70 years ago which seems very apt to our present super self-service age: "the large shop with its manifold and various seductions, betrays a woman into crime". In considering the treatment of women offenders Prins questions the present policy of using female staff to deal with women. (This is indeed a provocative statement and one which might usefully have been expanded for it is a subject which would be of interest to male and female staff alike).

In a further chapter in this section Prins deals with sexual offenders, their classification and treatment. He describes three methods of treatment, effectively using brief case studies to demonstrate their use. The term recidivist (which tends to confuse newly joined staff) receives adequate clarification and is followed by examination of two factors which relate to it—alcohol and drugs. He sets out for the reader the difficulties in assessing the extent of alcoholism and drug abuse and describes the research which has been carried out and the variety of conclusions which have been drawn from it. The section concludes with a chapter on social work with offenders. This is clearly the author's forte and I feel he would have been happy to have written far more.

The last part of the book discusses the effectiveness of the penal system and of the measures previously mentioned. In it Herschel Prins examines the question of "what is success", the answer to which is constantly being sought by many people, including prison staff. He leaves the reader feeling more enlightened but somewhat depressed.

*Criminal Behaviour* is a book which draws together under one cover the greater part of the social studies content of prison officer initial training. Throughout the book the author demonstrates his ability to condense material and yet retain the meaning and flow. It will be useful as a source of reference and as a guide to further study; and it certainly has a place on the book-shelves of every training officer and governor in penal establishments.

E. GARTON,

Principal Officer, Wakefield O.T.S.



## ILL-FOUNDED PREMISES

Howard League 1974. 15p

ILL FOUNDED PREMISES is a brief statement of position by the Howard League on penal policy and the present building programme. It is a thoughtful, though not entirely reverent, paper and makes the following main proposals.

It proposes, first, that since overcrowding is largely due to the imprisonment of those who could be treated in the community, provision should be made for them there. Secondly, that the total number of prison places should be reduced so that only those who constitute a real danger should be sentenced to imprisonment. Thirdly, that there should be "a substantial transfer of resources of finance and manpower from the custodial penal system to non-custodial measures, combined with steps to persuade courts to take advantage of the new facilities in the community, parliamentary restrictions on the courts' powers to impose imprisonment, and more training of the judiciary in the effects of penal matters". Finally, new prison projects in the out-back should be cancelled and rebuilding of new establishments "should take place on central sites, but only to the

extent necessary for a much reduced prison population, in smaller units, with adequate facilities for work and other activities".

The paper backs up these proposals with clear argument, and one feels that the writers have done their homework. It is well worth reading.



## USE OF CRIMINOLOGY LITERATURE

Edited by MARTIN WRIGHT

Butterworths, 1974. £5.50

## RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE

D. J. WEST and P. WILES

University of Cambridge, Institute of Criminology, 1974. £1.50

MOST likely, the least understood resource of a library is the librarian, and the former librarian at Cambridge's Institute of Criminology—now the Director of the Howard League—Martin Wright is well placed to provide enlightenment.

The emphasis of the book is helpfully on using the literature. Sixteen contributors, subdividing the literature between them into separate headings, cover a broad territory. The chapters on sociological and psychiatric aspects of crime, criminological aspects of psychology, and those on the treatment of offenders and the history of penal practices are probably the most valuable to Journal readers. The chapters do not give bibliographies or reading lists, as such. Rather, they map out the literature, where to find it, how to follow it up and what to expect from it. Their most obvious appeal would be to the person who suddenly finds that he is responsible for providing a course in criminology or penology. For a student who already has his bearings in the subject, the contributions provide a guide to further reading and a check on the orientations of his instructor.

In its approach, the book perpetuates the segmentation of criminology. This may be a discouragement to those who would like criminology to be accepted as a discipline in its own right rather than as an untidy blend of different disciplines. The approach, however, offers an advantage in introducing perspectives which are too easily neglected. The contributions are uneven—some are highly focussed and rigorously limit the entries, while others are rather broad, throwing in everything but the kitchen sink. A commendable feature of the book, however, is the way the pieces are co-ordinated, with cross references between the sections.

Let us turn from an exposition of how to use the literature to an example of a bibliography. West and Wiles incorporate a brief section which makes suggestions for research into criminal violence before listing items on the subject. They come up with more than 3,500 entries in 19 sections, of which only four produce less than 100. It is significant that the largest section is "Homicide (sic) and Violent Death", with more than 400 entries, and the smallest is "Drug-abuse" with only 53. Such profusion prevails despite the fact that the compilers endeavoured to cover only the period from 1955 to 1970, without any duplications. In fact, there are duplications and there is some uncertainty that all the inclusions are justified. Nevertheless, as one in the series of bibliographies from Cambridge, it will doubtless prove a useful source of references.

MARK BEESON,

Lecturer in Criminology, Leeds University.

## THE SAVAGE GOD

A. ALVAREZ

Penguin 1974. 45p

This book is about suicide. It is written by a poet and literary critic who himself attempted suicide. It is not an impersonal study aimed at producing solutions. Rather, it is an attempt to examine what the meaning of suicide is for those who attempt it. To try and understand this the author turns to literature—because it is something he knows about, and because a writer is “by vocation more fully aware of his motives than most other people and better able to express himself”.

As a prologue to the book Alvarez describes the suicide of Sylvia Plath, the American poetess. He knew her personally and writes of her, and of the events which led up to her death, in a way that deeply engages the reader. This death forms a backcloth to the book. In trying to understand the personal significance of suicide, Alvarez is also asking how necessary is the waste represented by the suicide of Sylvia Plath and so many others.

In the first half of the book, Alvarez examines the history of suicide since ancient Greece, the preconceptions that have been held about the act, the relevant sociological and psycho-analytical theories, and the different feelings and motives of those who have attempted suicide. Although relatively brief, it is remarkably thorough. Particularly lucid are the sections on historical attitudes towards suicide and their context, and on psychoanalytical explanations. The author certainly demonstrates that he knows what he is writing about.

In the second half of the book Alvarez establishes his main focus—the power which the suicidal act has exerted over the creative imagination of writers from the Middle Ages to the present day. He looks at the significance of suicide for Dante, Donne, Cowper and Chesterton, and the romantics of the nineteenth century. Alvarez's examination of their motives increases one's understanding of the inner logic of the act and its “unrepeatable despair”. But these writers considered suicide against a background of the established values of the society in which they lived. Those values were ones which did not support the notion of suicide, so that suicide for the writers concerned had a strictly personal significance. With the twentieth century, however, came a break-up of established values and beliefs. The author suggests that man is now faced with the reality of unlimited technological violence, and of death which is absurd: for if there is no God, death becomes a bad joke. This collapse of values and the sense of universal disintegration which follows from it puts the artist at risk. For part of his gift is “a weird knack of sensing and expressing the strains of his time in advance of other people”. Indeed, it is his duty to express them and to “forge a language which will absolve from and validate absurd death”. But to do this he has to explore his own vulnerability—often his depression and its sources—and this puts him at risk of being overwhelmed by it. In fact, says Alvarez, casualties through suicide have increased greatly among creative artists. This proneness to suicide feeds on the same factors as those of ordinary mortals—which is important, I think. For, though this second half of the book will appeal most strongly to those with some knowledge of literature, nevertheless it does somehow extend the general reader's understanding of suicide now.

*The Savage God* is a very good book. The

argument is clear, interesting and persuasive. The language is impressive. Altogether, I found it difficult to put down. But the question must be asked as to whether the book is relevant to members of the Service. And the answer is: not in any direct sense. The book is written by someone committed personally to understanding suicide, not to finding answers. In fact, Alvarez makes it clear in the epilogue, where he recounts his own attempt, that he does not believe there are answers to suicide which is, in the end, “a terrible but utterly natural reaction to the strained, narrow, unnatural necessities we sometimes create for ourselves”. In an indirect sense, though, the book may be relevant because it certainly brings one closer to the reality of suicide.

MIKE MILAN,

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### SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENTS: DEVELOPING PATTERNS OF WORK AND ORGANISATION

RALPH ROWBOTTOM, ANTHEA HEY and  
DAVID BILLIS

Heinemann Educational Books 1974.

Hardback £5.00. Paperback £1.70

THIS book is not a balanced discussion of the operation and responsibilities of social service departments, nor is it a balanced analysis of all operations involved in one of these departments. Rather, it is a report of the work done with social service departments by the Social Services Organisation Research Unit of the Brunel Institute of Organisation and Social Studies. The book's strength is that it describes the institute's particular approach and the way in which the ideas developed. Its weaknesses are that it is inherently patchy, that it does not give an overview and that many important topics are ignored.

Basically, the method adopted is described as social-analytic and was used by Elliot Jacques in the Glacier Project. It relies very heavily on an analysis of the role structure of organisations and the meaning of those roles to the people involved in them. It starts from the client's statement of the problem which is then investigated with the resources of the client at a rate which he can manage. Using a collaborative approach, the authors provide analysis and stimulate one to look at the problem. The results of such analysis are not prescriptive but are obviously influential in determining the outcome. This approach gives the authors and the reader an insight into the relationships and problems of individual departments. Although most areas of social service departments' operations are considered, the work is of varying depths and reflects current concerns in these departments. It may be that current concerns, of course, are not the most important.

What results are obtained using these methods? In the first place, and most importantly, a number of common relationships within departments are defined fairly clearly and the implications are discussed in some detail. These definitions may be applied not only to social service departments but also to other organisations, partly by way of contrast and partly to find similarities. These definitions are developed in the text and summarised in an appendix which is probably the most useful part of the book.

The second main result is a very useful discussion of particular topics which caused concern in the departments investigated.

These topics are common to other organisations—particularly those in the social services field. For instance, to what extent are social workers professionally autonomous and what are the implications of this for the management and hierarchy of the department? The role of the supervisor of social workers is also discussed in detail and related to managerial responsibilities. Various departmental organisations are described and their advantages and disadvantages for particular situations discussed.

More generally, the working situation of a department is given a considerable amount of discussion and various strategies are analysed in some detail. The organisation of the main services of departments (e.g. fieldwork, day care and residential care) also receives attention. Another area which is discussed quite usefully is the problem of co-ordinating the services provided to individual clients. In many situations, a client receives skilled professional services from a number of sources as well as necessary and practical aids to living. Bringing all these services together and allocating them efficiently is no mean task and this topic is helpfully discussed.

The emphasis on role and role-relationship means some important areas are ignored. It is a tribute to the authors that they have been able to make as much comment about the departments concerned as they have, and this must reflect the extent to which their approach won confidence. But there are omissions from the book. The way in which social workers allocate their time, information on the workloads of social workers and the allocation of priorities are not dealt with. There is other work which is relevant to these topics and it is unfortunate that it could not be brought in. As a great deal of the data was collected in detailed project work or in conferences, there is a lack of *objective* information which might resolve such questions as whether people's perception of the way they allocate their time is correct, or whether there are other factors which need to be taken into account. Again, the book discusses departments very much in isolation. There is little comment on the community and the way managers respond to community pressure. The rest of the local authority receives very little mention and it is particularly unfortunate that corporate planning only rates a very small section, although of course the authors were working at a time when local authorities were barely coming to terms with new developments. Other omissions are any consideration of information systems, the role of research and information on which decisions are made.

The comments, so far, have been made critically because, though the book makes a very useful contribution, it suffers from serious weaknesses. It is too much of a report and at times the authors have indulged themselves in anecdotal discussion of how they came to their views and have not spent enough time on the implications of their work.

This book is not a primer describing the work of social service departments. But for the experienced person who wants to understand them better or wants to gain insight into his own organisation from a study of social services, it is well worth reading. Perhaps the book would have been better if it had been only two-thirds as long or if, alternatively, the space had been taken up with the results of other research and a synthesis made between such information and the helpful approach adopted in this book.

JOHN CROOK,

Chief Social Services Officer, Bradford.

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