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FIFTEEN PENCE

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*new series*

# PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL



*Riverside scene, Guy's Marsh Activity Course held at Hay-on-Wye*

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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  
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## EDITORIAL

TWO events this year highlight the pressures that are to be found within our dispersal prisons. They must also serve as ominous indicators of the quality of life likely to be found within them during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

The first was the publication in early February of a report by Mr. Jack Prescott, M.P., on the riot that took place in Hull Prison last year. The Secretary of State has not yet received the report of the Chief Inspector of Prisons on the same subject but this has not prevented the media from commenting and passing subjective judgements both implicit and explicit. When the Chief Inspector's report is finally completed it may be difficult for it to be viewed with the objective dispassion it deserves. Too many vested interests have taken the opportunity to trumpet their own versions of the cause and course of the riot. One hopes that reason and truth will prevail in the end but the episode shows that the Prison Service cannot exist "entire unto itself" any longer, if indeed it ever did.

The second event was the Secretary of State's statement in the House of Commons on 16 February 1977 when he spoke of the control problems caused by a small but highly motivated group of convicted terrorists. These problems are not peculiar to the United Kingdom but are to be found in most of the major countries of the world on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

Both events show that despite the enormous pressure upon staff both within and without the prison the only course open to the Prison Service is to maintain its professional standards. So long as these standards are observed the Service need not fear the glare of unfavourable publicity nor the activities of unscrupulous men.



Mr. Fox served for ten years in the Cheshire County Fire Brigade, retiring as a Leading Fireman. He joined the Prison Service at Manchester and in 1972 was posted to Risley where he is still serving. For the last two years he has been Fire Officer there and has some very definite views about the need to improve fire precautions in some of our establishments.

# The Danger of Fire in Prison Establishments

**K. J. FOX** S.I.F.E.

*Fire Officer, H.M. Remand Centre, Risley*

THERE is nothing more terrifying for staff than to find that there is a prisoner who, through personal grief or merely attention-seeking, has barricaded himself in his cell and set it alight. Problems begin to multiply. The inmate, not appreciating the dangers of heat and smoke in a confined space, becomes terrified once he realises that he has created an inferno of choking fumes and intolerable heat. At the same time there is the added danger from what appears to be a harmless polyurethane foam mattress suddenly turning into a lethal, deadly, choking object which gives off hydrogen cyanide gas. As the fire gains momentum the inmates' chances of survival diminish. At the same time once the choking fumes begin to filter out onto the landing panic starts to spread to the other inmates. If you were the man on the spot what would you do?

Before you can tackle the fire you should appreciate what you are up against. Before any fire can start there is the phenomenon known as combustion. This can only occur when:

- (a) there is sufficient fuel or material of a combustible nature,
- (b) there is sufficient oxygen
- (c) there is sufficient heat the effect of which is to raise the temperature of the fuel to give off an inflammable vapour.

What type of fuel would we find in a cell? Firstly, the polyurethane foam

mattress, followed by the wooden furniture, clothing, newspapers, pin-ups and pin-up boards layer upon layer of paint on the walls and possibly hobby materials, adhesives, etc., and, of course, the means of igniting the fire—matches! So we can now assume that the inmate who is intent on barricading himself in his cell has all the means at his disposal for creating combustion. What he doesn't realise are the dangers. What starts off as a means of attracting attention turns into a possible death trap.

As far as we, the staff, are concerned, the first five minutes of any fire situation are the most important. If you can confidently tackle and put out the fire quickly you can prevent the fire getting out of hand. Here's what to do:

1. Inform control who will immediately notify the fire brigade and the internal fire party.
2. Tackle the fire with the equipment provided. Here at Risley we have a branch-pipe which, attached to a standard fire hose, will fit through the observation aperture. This means that within a few minutes we can have water going into the cell, quelling the fire and reducing the choking fumes. Precious time and a life may be saved and the dangers to the rescuing staff are reduced by avoiding a possible flashover. At the same time the fire party are forcing the cell door by using a hydraulic jack, or using a sledge

hammer to break through an adjoining cell.

3. Should it become necessary to evacuate the wing, always start at the highest point for remember that smoke and heat always rise. It is also essential to ventilate the landing to reduce smoke thereby making the job of evacuation easier.

All this sounds straightforward and so it is if you have on duty a trained fire officer and a knowledgeable staff who would know what to do and how to do it. At some establishments the fire brigade are some miles away and, with busy roads, could take up to 20 minutes to arrive by which time if a man's life is at stake it could be too late. When the fire brigade do arrive it is essential that they are met at the gate. Remember that they do not have pass keys and will need to be directed to the fire.

With any fire there is panic which is aggravated by smoke. If the fire is sufficiently intense the lighting system could be affected and you may be fighting the fire in darkness in which case it is essential to bring in emergency lighting as quickly as possible. In my experience as fire officer at Risley fires don't usually start themselves. They are the result of arson by man-made incendiary devices left in workshops and timed to set alight hours after the workshop has closed down perhaps by cleaning rags with metal polish poured over them and dropping a lighted cigar-

ette end on top. Therefore, it is essential that staff are trained in how to deal with fire and associated dangers.

In my opinion, therefore, staff training in fire prevention and basic fire fighting techniques is a must in prison establishments which are classed as a Class "C" fire risk. This means that there is a "smoking in bed" fire risk, the possibility of invalid inmates, and inmates dependent on trained staff for their safety.

To give an idea of how this objective can be achieved here's what we have done at Risley.

### BARRICADED CELL FIRES.

I have made a special branchpipe to fit through the observation aperture (see photograph). The specifications are as follows:

3/4 in. light alloy nozzle, tap a thread into the outlet end, screw into this a piece of 3/4 in. galvanised pipe 3 in. long, on to this screw a 3/4 in. gate water valve. Next screw into this a 3/4 in. length of galvanised pipe 16 in. long which has been drilled around its circumference with 3/16 in. holes and in between, saw cuts at 45° angles. The end of the nozzle tapers down to a 3/8 in. orifice. The effect of this branch-pipe is to give a jet and spray through the observation aperture of the cell door onto the fire within. This special branch then connects to a standard 2 1/2 in. hose.

### STAFF TRAINING

If there are any staff to spare we have a fire prevention class. This starts off with a tour of the hydrants. This is most

important. Every member of staff from the governor downwards should know where the hydrants are located. It is also essential that these hydrants are clearly marked. At Risley we have painted the hydrant lids bright yellow and as near as possible I have put in hydrant marker boards (see photograph) — a bright yellow board with a black triangle and the words "Fire Hydrant" in black.

Although a fire hydrant plate means something to a trained fireman it means nothing to the untrained person and therefore easy identification of hydrants is essential.

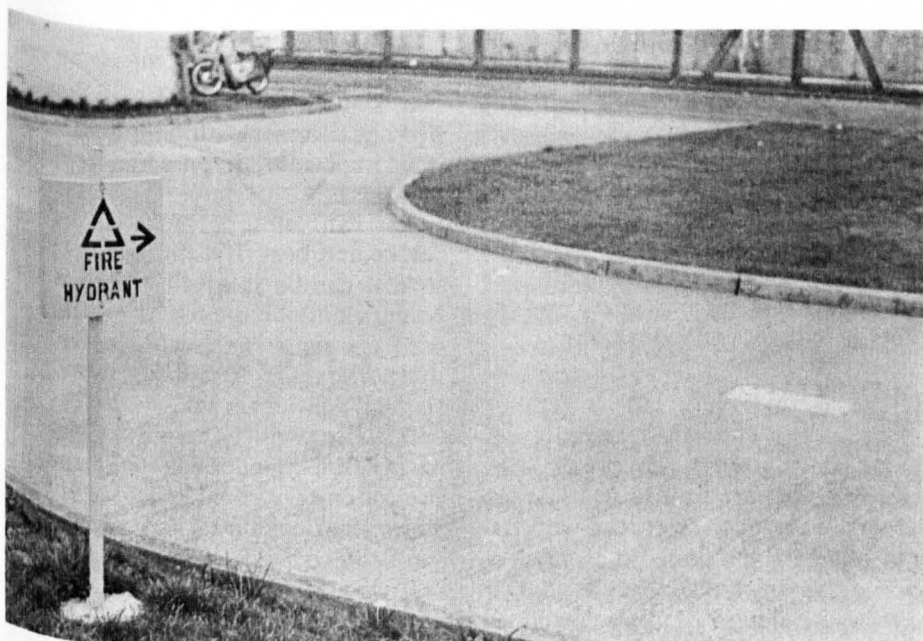
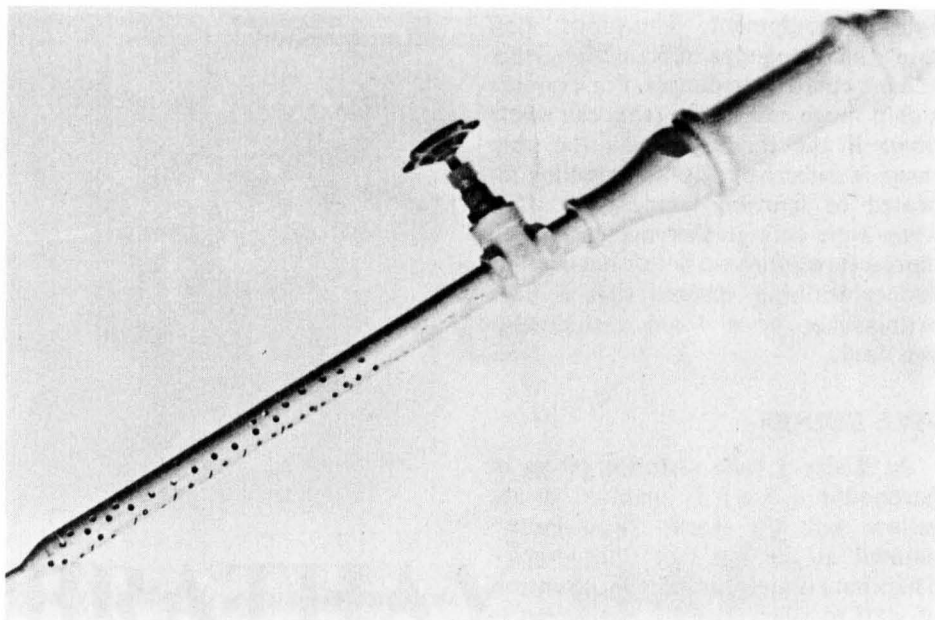
The next part of the afternoon's course moves to a practical demonstration and fire drill! using the hoses, standpipe, bar and key. This can become a comedy show if, when you have con-

nected up your hose line and the branchman, all keen and eager, puts his hand up and shouts "Water on", the hose bursts allowing water to gush out anywhere except the nozzle. The staff stand there red faced and the only ones amused are the inmates who peer at this comic opera through their cell windows. It must be stressed that if your hose is tested regularly and hung up to dry properly this cuts down the risk of the hose bursting through mildew or rot. The security problem created by hanging the hose up to dry after use can usually be solved by consultation with the security officer. My own theory on this is that it is time we discontinued the use of the canvas hose for our type of establishment, and started using duraline hose which is made of plastic and can be used time and time again. It can be rolled and stored away wet without rotting.

### MOBILITY

The movement of equipment from place to place quickly and efficiently can be a problem. At Risley an ordinary one ton handtruck has been converted into a fire tender by making use of scrap wood from the Works Department (see photograph). Our tender carries 800 ft. of hose, two standpipes, a tool box, three 2 gall. water/gas extinguishers, one dry powder extinguisher, two foam extinguishers, one CO2 extinguisher, two B.C.F. 4 hydrants, lid keys, two diffuser nozzles and, of course, the special branch for cell fires.

After staff have been shown the fire tender and had its uses explained they move back to the classroom for a lecture on how to use the portable fire





fighting equipment. Untrained staff using the wrong type of fire extinguisher at a fire could be in danger. For example a chip range caught fire (this can easily occur if the thermostat on the chip range is defective) after the cooking fat heated to ignition temperature. If a water type extinguisher had been used the results would have been catastrophic. Proper training ensured that a CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher or a foam extinguisher was used.

### FIVE POINTS

At Risley I have installed pieces of hardboard 4 ft x 3 ft, painted bright yellow with the words "Fire Point" painted at the top (see photograph). This immediately draws the attention of staff to where the fire equipment is located. In a fire where there is panic people can run past equipment that is lying around on the floor and which is sometimes used as a door stop. Some people even think that fire extinguishers make good coat hangers. Mounted on the boards are two 2-gallon water type extinguishers. Underneath the extinguishers, in 1 in. black letters, are the words "For Class A Fires. For use on wood, paper, cloth and similar combustibles", and in 1 in. red letters "Do not use on electrical or inflammable liquids". At a glance an inexperienced person can see when it is safe to use water type extinguishers without personal risk. Similar boards are under con-



struction explaining on which types of fires it is safe to use chemical foam, dry powder, CO<sub>2</sub> and BCF extinguishers.

It is essential that after any fire all fire fighting extinguishers be recharged and returned to the correct position and any fire hoses used dried properly and rolled up. Good relations with the fire brigade often means useful help. For example getting burst hoses repaired or receiving useful tips on fire hazards from the fire prevention officer who may spot a fire hazard which you have walked past for months. Another point which is of great assistance in fire prevention in our type of establishment is to ensure that ethyl formate, used in reception areas for delousing inmates' clothing is kept in a safe secure place. This substance is highly inflammable and under the right conditions can explode or self-ignite.

If staff could take a moment just to feel the weight of an extinguisher whilst going about their duties they should be able to tell whether or not an extinguisher has been sabotaged. A full 2-gallon water/gas extinguisher weighs about 24 lbs. If it feels light the fire officer should be notified immediately to enable this to be checked and refilled if necessary. It should be stressed that enough time should be allowed for fire officers to check and maintain fire equipment: it is for our safety and the safety of inmates under our care.

### NIGHT STAFF

During the day when there is adequate staff around the prison and, providing they are trained in basic fire fighting techniques, fires can be contained or dealt with until the arrival of the outside fire brigade but at night it becomes a different problem. The security gates are double locked and there

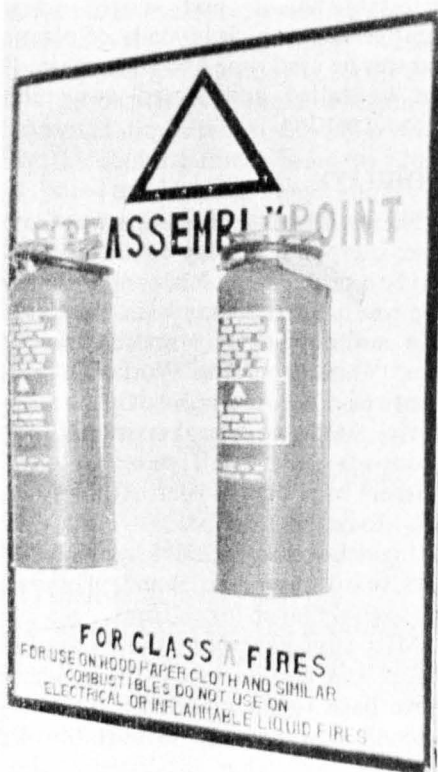
is only a skeleton staff on duty once the evening duty staff have left. If a fire develops after this time the only staff on duty are the night orderly officer, dog handlers and the night patrols most of whom never get an opportunity of receiving fire fighting instruction. Prison fire officers should ensure that the night patrols receive a lecture and demonstration on how to deal with fires at night. This is essential because they are locked in prison wings, in some cases by themselves, and would be expected to deal with a fire until help arrives. The gate officer should be ready to admit the fire brigade when they arrive, and an officer should have been detailed to escort the firemen to the fire. It is essential, therefore that the officer meeting the fire brigade knows the exact location of the hydrants in case the fire is such that hoses and portable extinguishers are insufficient and it is necessary for the fire brigade to tap into a hydrant to obtain more water to quell the fire.

### EQUIPMENT HINTS

If staff have to use water from a hydrant together with hose and branch it is important, if possible, to use a diffuser branch because water used in excess can cause as much damage as smoke and heat. If a diffuser branch is used it can be shut off at source and, being a diffuser branch, it can also be used as a spray which will greatly assist in driving smoke and fumes away from the staff fighting the fire.

It is also useful to have a good supply of portable handlamps with the fire protection equipment. There is nothing worse than having to grope around in smoke-filled buildings in the dark.

If we all try to understand about fire and its dangers and how to deal efficiently with an emergency, then it is



not too frightening a situation to handle. Know what to do and how to do it. Find out where the hydrants are located and understand how to use the fire equipment provided.

However, we can only achieve efficiency in this field by constant instruction, fire drill, fire prevention lectures and ensuring that all equipment is properly maintained.



#### Editors Note

The department's present policy is to replace 2 1/2 in. canvas hose by wall-mounted hydraulic hose reels fitted with a suitable length (normally 30 metres) of 19 mm rubber hose (Type 1, viz. B.S. 3169: 1970). With the correct type of nozzle, hydraulic reels will do all that the special "Risley diffuser" is claimed to do. They have the added advantages of being more readily available and easier to handle by untrained staff. They reduce water damage and will control and extinguish the majority of fires involving Class "A" materials. Installation of hydraulic hose reels is being implemented within priorities and available finance.

The diffuser described is not officially supplied or approved equipment and has not been submitted to controlled proving or safety tests. It compares unfavourably with the hydraulic equipment referred to above.

Evacuation drills are not standard. They depend on the type of building involved and the circumstances at the time of the fire incident. For example in prisons of modern construction, with enclosed staircases, those on the "fire floor" should be evacuated first, and ventilation at the wrong time could increase the fire.



## New Horizons!

*use this journal  
to point the  
way*

# BORSTAL TRAINING AT BRATHAY HALL, CUMBRIA

P. T. DEVLIN

*Assistant Governor*

AG II P. T. Devlin, age 35, joined the Prison Service at Liverpool in 1970, was posted to HMP Winchester as an officer, promoted to Assistant Governor in 1971 and subsequently posted to Hindley Borstal.

THE "Outward Bound" type courses held at Brathay Hall, Ambleside, Cumbria are ideally suited to certain types of borstal trainee and, as a result of this, the Home Office reserves a number of places yearly to be filled by selected candidates from various establishments. The courses are a balance between indoor and outdoor work involving mental and physical challenges. To quote from the director of training, "Events at Brathay are often dramatic and therefore truly memorable". Trainees from Hindley who have attended courses at Brathay have certainly borne out this statement in written reports submitted on their return.

One young man had this to say: "We had a free evening and with it being Saturday night most of the people on the course went to a club in Ambleside. That is where I met Jo. He, like Dave, was a police cadet from the same station as Dave. He was not like most people I knew, he didn't like pop music nor did he smoke or drink. You may be

wondering what he went to the club for. He liked people. Company, people to talk to, is what he was interested in. Inside the club I found myself talking to Jo. I am not a great conversationalist, in fact far from it, but that night I spent four solid hours talking to Jo about all sorts of things such as the course, sport, violence, police, prison, each topic as it came about. I found myself absorbed in it. At times I was completely unaware of what was going on around us. It goes to show how much I enjoyed talking to Jo, what with it being Saturday night, sitting in club and what do I do? Spend the whole night talking to a policeman."

Another reported as follows: "After tea we were told by Gregg that we would have to stand and each one give a brief account of oneself and where we worked. At this statement my nerve dropped. I thought to myself how am I going to tell them I'm from borstal. The introductions were started off by the course organiser Kit Chambers. On the way round a smallish youth called M. O'N stood up and said "My name

is M. O'N, I am 18 years old and I come from London and at the moment I am finishing a borstal sentence." At this statement some of my nerve came back and I thought to myself if he can say that he's from borstal I should be able to. I was relieved when I said mine and when all the introductions were finished I soon found that nobody was bothered that there were two borstal boys among them. The group tutor which we had was a man who loved climbing and the mountains around us. So a lot of time was spent in the mountains or walking past them. I soon got to know the rest of the group I was in, also some who were in other groups. During some of the exercises they became rivals. The main thing was, if you have a problem you could use the information if there is any, or use the resources available, and let those involved have a say in the matter. Listen to all the suggestions, pick the best, then all together put the information you have collected, and you should have a logical answer to your problem.

As the course went on there were different parts where everyone in the group had some skills to offer the others, i.e. we had to get across a river. Between each bank a rope was stretched across. One person was required to go across to attach another safety rope to the safety harness, one already being attached. So like the big tart, have a go at anything, silly sod, I volunteered. So this went alright until the tutor said get back over to the other bank *without* the safety gear. It was at this point that a couple of the lads said there's no way you'll get me on that rope. So we had a problem. As we all did things in a group, we decided that if some did not cross, none of us would. So the rope came down and off we went home. But after a two day exercise we had a bit of spare time so we decided to have another go at it. And I am glad to say we all got over safely.

The last taste of freedom for three months was the Queens Hotel. I did not have to make a decision about coming through the gate because I had already made it before I went. Now I sit here and think of the good guys out there while I'm in here, Malc, Paul, Steve, John, Charlie, Scott, Derek, Graham, Jim, Richard.

Anyway, I think the course has taught me a lot of things especially in understanding people."

These are good experiences. They are the kind of foundation upon which a young man can build for the future. Borstals can guide and select candidates



for this type of course in the knowledge that, providing care has been taken in the selection, the trainee will enrich himself and develop an awareness of his own potential and of the meaning of the word "society".

These and other similar reports are indicative of experiences which are of a far deeper significance to the trainees than many of them have the language to convey. For many it is the first time they have had to make decisions and take responsibility for others. They discover that each member of a group is responsible to the group as a whole and, of the contribution which each can make to the task in hand.

At Hindley borstal the job of selecting suitable candidates for outward bound courses is rendered comparatively simple by reason of the "treatment team" method of through and after care supervision. All Hindley trainees are drawn from the Greater Manchester and Merseyside counties and, in order to provide a unified and personal training system for them, the local Probation Services have seconded officers to work with case loads drawn exclusively from the Hindley catchment area. This has enabled the borstal to allocate no more than two of its own staff to each group of trainees, thus forming a three-way treatment team of probation officer, borstal officer and trainees. Regular two-way visiting by the officers concerned provides the opportunity for a much deeper contact between the borstal staff, the after care supervisors and, the subjects of all this activity, the trainees. It therefore follows that having ready access to a source of information relating to a trainees' life outside borstal and being in possession of knowledge pertaining to his institutional performance, potentialities are much easier to assess. At an early stage in an individual's career at Hindley it is possible to "earmark" him as a candidate for community work in his home

area, as a community service volunteer, for outward bound or city challenge course or any of the many other kinds of activity which already exists as additional training resources. Not all such trainees are subsequently selected of course.

As a result of having after care officers in close contact with the borstal, trainees who are released are not "lost" to us following a couple of written reports on their progress. On the contrary, probation and borstal staff are encouraged to exchange information at their meetings so that keeping in touch with developments during an ex-trainee's licence period, and even beyond, is made so much easier. Since trainees do not normally proceed on CSV placements or outward bound courses until they are approaching discharge, any evaluation of this type of exercise under most other systems would have to take place during the licence period and would mean little, if any, personal contact between Probation Service and borstal; thus much valuable information would perhaps be untransmitted due to the additional burden of having to include it in written reports.

Experience of Brathay Hall courses has frequently provided a major boost to the self-confidence of young men at a turning point in their lives. The fact that some of these have been young offenders, already on the long, slippery slope towards becoming perpetual drains upon the scant resources of society, is justification enough for having sent them. Providing care is exercised in the selection of a candidate the desired results will be obtained at a cost no greater than if the trainee had remained within his borstal and, in many cases, the progress of the final stages of training can be worked through much more quickly than if such a course of action had not been taken.

# Readers Write . . .

THE EDITOR,  
*Prison Service Journal.*

Dear Sir,

On reading *The Welfare of the Prisoner* in the October issue, I found that although I agreed that the role of a prison officer needs to be changed, the suggestions in this article are totally unrealistic. The whole argument is based on the supposed value of relationships between representatives of the service and the prisoners. If these relationships have no effect on anti-social behaviour, then the system will fail.

Counselling, psycho-therapy and psycho-analysis have been used for many years and are the subject of great controversy. There is no evidence that these techniques can cure anti-social behaviour. If they could, one would expect that, by now, some incontrovertible proof would have been found. If these techniques are of such doubtful value in highly skilled hands, what can a relatively untrained person hope to achieve? Yet this article goes even further into the realms of fantasy. Under this system a seconded probation officer will not only "identify individual needs and behavioural difficulties" in prisoners (a sweeping claim that even a psychiatrist would hesitate to make), but will evaluate the personalities of the prison officers and "pair them with prisoners", so that there can be a "dynamic interaction" and a "dialogue of shared experiences" between them.

Somewhere along the way we seem to have miraculously lost the "lack of trust and confidence of the prisoner" caused by "ritual confrontations" created by security considerations and the "need for containment" mentioned earlier in the article. Now, to add the impossible to the highly improbable, the seconded probation officer will manipulate these relationships to bring about a change in the attitude of the prisoner. I am not sure whether this is a case of naivety or megalomania.

The sheer complexity of this idea is airily dismissed with the use of such *avant-garde* and pretentious phrases as "dynamic inter-action". Even if the seconded probation officer had the time and the ability to evaluate the needs of the prisoners and the personalities of the officers so that he could "pair them" and supervise and manipulate the diverse and complicated relationships that would develop, we still come back

to the question: Is such a relationship of any therapeutic value?

Castles in the air are simple to construct, but when translated into reality this particular one would merely produce another inconclusive muddle. It is this building of systems upon insubstantial suppositions, this pursuit of the unattainable which is stifling progress in the service. We are becoming the victims of dilettantes who are so bankrupt of new ideas that they just update the same old ones. For example, supervision and guidance becomes counselling and intervention techniques. Such jargon is being used to cover up stagnation and all too often the creator of such jargon is, like the propagandist, his own first victim.

It is high time we abandoned the philosophy of the unattainable and concentrated on more modest but realisable goals by logical methods.

Personal relationships are too imprecise, uncontrollable and unpredictable to be the foundations of any rational system. Rather we should create a system which makes allowances for the vagaries of inmate-staff relationships. These are, of course, important in that they help to determine the inmates' attitude to the institution, but at an everyday level—what officers would describe as treating a man fairly and decently. This would not influence any anti-social tendencies and the question is, of course, what system?

Man is a social animal, therefore, before we can understand anti-social behaviour it is necessary to determine what pressures and behavioural changes created early primitive societies (hunter-gatherer). Then one must consider the pressures created by civilisation which changed these early societies into those of today. Much of the structure of modern society is inimical to the behaviour patterns, still inherent in man, which created those early social groups. It is in these areas of incompatibility that many of the current anti-social tendencies are to be found. It is in this area that a new approach to treatment should be based. It is not possible to expand this in a letter as it is not a simple concept which can be covered by a few apt phrases.

The social anthropologists, behavioural psychologists and environmental sociologists have had their day and have done very little with it. At the beginning of the article there was a quote which

was obviously meant to show that the service has still not implemented the recommendations nor learnt from the findings of the Gladstone Commission of 1894. To me, however, what it really shows is that, in a large section of our service, the thinking is over 80 years out of date. We are still striving for the impossible.

W. WHIFFEN,  
*Senior Officer,  
H.M. Prison,  
Canterbury.*

THE EDITOR,  
*Prison Service Journal.*

Dear Sir,

Some of us who were in the Service before the last war will remember a wonderful Chief Officer, an ex-CPO, wise, unflappable, loyal and courageous, who once awaited the arrival of the Visiting Commissioner at Lowdham Grange. Oddly there were no applications noted from either staff or inmates, so when Alec Paterson arrived, the Chief truthfully and respectfully welcomed him with, "All correct, Sir, nobody wants to see you!" The memory of this grand ex-CPO has come back to me after reading the most interesting first article in the current *Journal* on *Attitudes to Job Training*, where the authors write: "Most of the officers come from a previous work experience which does not prepare them for work in a large organisation. The number from self-employed or small firm backgrounds is very high". By contrast, before the war and, inevitably, for say 10 years after, a very large number of recruits came from the Forces. Not every ex-RSM was God's gift to the service but amongst the many ex-service men were some very fine men indeed.

J. E. Thomas, in his *English Prison Officer since 1850* discusses this service element at the time of the Gladstone Report but fails to pick it up again in modern times except for one significant sentence on page 50, where he writes: "When the primary task is redefined, then perhaps the para-military structure and the employment of ex-service men will no longer seem appropriate." Has the primary task been re-defined? In the changed recruiting situation of today what have been the gains and losses? It would be interesting, and perhaps not altogether irrelevant to some of the Service's current acute problems to have constructive debate.

Yours faithfully,  
DUNCAN FAIRN



THE EDITORIAL BOARD,  
*Prison Service Journal*

Dear Sirs,

We, as I am sure are many other publishers, are always pleased to send your journal new books on publication for possible review in your columns, and more than happy when a title has been selected for comment. We are always appreciative too of the kind things often said by your reviewers and only very occasionally, since our titles are produced by specialist authors for specialist markets do they attract adverse comment. Perhaps on an occasion, if the format or method of presentation, the position in the book of tables, the type of footnote or marginal notes, the bibliography or perhaps the indexing does not suit the reviewer, this may come in for some criticism and we take due note and bear it in mind for future editions of that particular title.

If none of these things can be faulted, what is left? Perhaps the published price—could that do with a knock?

In this latter direction reference was made recently by your reviewer to one of our booklets (*The Petty Short-Term Prisoner*) and "Its ridiculous price" [sic] ("Book Reviews", PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL, No. 25). Of course he may have been making the remark in a general sense as we all do in these times

of truly swingeing increases in the price of everything we purchase, and we would certainly go along with him there. If, on the other hand he was suggesting to your readers that the publisher had got his sums wrong, then we would like to enlighten your readers and defend ourselves, and other publishers too for that matter, against this sort of criticism.

No one would have the temerity to suggest that any publishers' books are cheap these days, yet the briefest study of the work necessary for the production of a booklet such as *The Petty Short-Term Prisoner* (to say nothing of our own and other publishers major, and much more lengthy works), would reveal that there are few, if any, areas where better value for money may be obtained. We all accept increases in the price of our daily newspaper, our weekly or monthly journal without so much as a murmur yet there has been no comparable percentage increase in the price of books at any time.

We are professional publishers. An amateur publisher would try to meet the "ridiculous price" charge by the simple expedient of printing a larger edition than the probable sales warrant, thus reducing the unit price per copy. Naturally his customer would be happy to purchase a cheap booklet; his printer would happily receive his thoroughly

economic quoted price for the printing and the other happy recipient, eventually, would be the Waste Paper Mill which in these days of world-wide paper shortage, would be delighted to remove the unsold copies produced for a non-existent market. Then there is that other Receiver—he would be the official into whose hands the affairs of the amateur publisher would inevitably pass.

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# SOME LIFERS' VIEWS

JANET J. LAWTON

After qualifying at the University of Essex in 1969, Miss Lawton undertook research into political theory at Belfast University. She joined the Home Office Research Unit at Manchester in 1974 as a Research Officer where she is engaged on work concerning the treatment of offenders.

IN EVALUATING prison sentences, there is arguably a vital place for consideration of the attitudes of prisoners themselves though this may provide only one facet of a many-sided evaluative model. This article is the result of a partial analysis of interviews conducted by Roger Sapsford as part of a more extensive study of prisoners serving life sentences.

Sixty men who were in Wakefield Prison on 19 May 1976 were selected for interview, to include prisoners at three different stages of their sentences. There were 26 newly-received men; 24 who had served six to seven years, and were in the period immediately before "average" release; and 10 in the long stretch after the average time of release has been passed, who had served more than eleven years. Four of these long-term men refused to be interviewed, reducing the total to 56. The sample is not necessarily representative of lifers in general, or even lifers in Wakefield nevertheless, it is hoped that the views of these men may be of interest in their own right.

## ONE REQUEST

Interviewees were asked, "If you could make one request (other than release) and know that it would be granted, what would it be?" Only one man refused to answer this "fairly god-mother" question, thinking it a silly one, and ten would not make any request other than pardon or release; more than one in three wished to turn back the clock, for the offence never to have been committed, or for the dead victim to be alive again. One man in eight expressed concern about his family,

relatives, or other social contacts, wanting to be back with them, helping to support them, or in a prison nearer to them. There was also one in eight whose response was entirely prison-orientated, concerned for example with food, work, or going to an open prison. The remaining answers were individualised, personal ones, ranging from peace in Ireland and having the ability of Renoir, to "to know why I committed the offence..." and "for them to get the person who did do this murder".

## A LIFER PRISON

Two-thirds of the men interviewed said they were in favour of having a prison exclusively for lifers, though a few of these qualified their answers in some way. For example, it was variously suggested that such a prison would be preferable as long as it was not too far away for family visits, as long as it included long fixed-term men, or as long as sex offenders were excluded. It seemed generally agreed among those favouring segregation of lifers that there would be fewer problems and less disruption in such conditions. Almost a quarter of the men either did not give an opinion or said it would not make any difference to them. Only one in nine said he would not like to be in a lifer prison, either because the same faces would lead to boredom, or because having all lifers together would create an explosive atmosphere.

## PRIVILEGES AND PROGRESS

In the course of the interviews, almost half of the men voluntarily mentioned privileges. Many of their comments concerned disparities between prisons,

and more specifically, ways in which other prisons were seen to be better than Wakefield. Points mentioned touched on rates of pay, type of work, discretionary application of rules, accommodation, association facilities and food. One man in nine suggested that lifers should have more privileges than other prisoners, while one in eleven said that privileges should have to be earned—a system which would be likely to favour long-term men. The idea of earning privileges also involves having a degree of control over one's own progress. More than half of the men suggested a need for some measure of personal progress. For some, this could be found already within the present system; for example a move to an open prison might be seen as a "milestone". Others wanted a more direct stake in their own future, so that progress was in part dependent on their own efforts. These men mentioned the importance of having personal or career goals within the sentence, and they wanted more feedback from the Home Office, for example concerning reasons for parole refusal. Release being the ultimate goal, it is not surprising that 96 per cent said they would be happier if they had a release date, even if it was a long time away, so that they would have something to work towards.

This general feeling about the need for a "career" structure, or some goals by which to measure progress, was apparently limited to personal survival in terms of serving a life sentence; the overwhelming majority did not believe they could do much to speed their release, except to keep out of trouble. Only two men thought the lifer himself could

do anything positive to influence his release: "...I presume you need to show a change in personality or behaviour, to show how you accept the prison, to show how you've overcome depression". "Prove you're a good wee boy. Crawl. Call them 'sir'. Perhaps these two comments are simply more forceful ways of saying that a lifer can do nothing except try to fit in and stay out of trouble.

### WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

"Given that you have got to do your sentence, how would you do it? What would you change?" This question was intended to find the topics which seemed to be of prime importance to the men interviewed, or those that came to mind most readily. Answers that concerned segregation of lifers, privileges, progress and date of release, have already been dealt with above.

The most frequently recurring theme was work and wages, mentioned by two men in three.

One man replied to this question: "You should be given something more constructive to do. I have done such mundane jobs. Boring, day in, day out, it dulls your senses; you become slower in thought, you day dream".

Others wanted better working conditions, job training and experience which would be useful outside, better pay (from a little more, to a living wage) and the abolition of disparities in rates of pay among different prisons.

Half of those interviewed mentioned aspects of their immediate environment, such as overcrowding, accommodation and food.

Perhaps not surprisingly, these environmental conditions were raised by two-thirds of the men who were at the beginning of their sentences, but by only one third of those who had already served a number of years.

Also the newly received men appeared to be more concerned about association and education issues than the men who had served more than eleven years.

Three men in five commented on the facilities for leisure and education. There were remarks such as: "Education should be easier to get into. The education people tend to think that it's illiterates that need it most." "Cell hobbies: you should be able to have anything sent in that's allowed. There's so much inconsistency in what is allowed if you're not on a class, for example.

You should be able to make anything, either for yourself or to send out."

A similar number expressed concern about personal autonomy and dignity, suggesting that they should be given more personal responsibility; they wanted to wear their own clothes, and to have more flexibility regarding "lights off". Personal privacy (toilets in cells, uncensored correspondence, visits in private) was also included in this area, in so far as it was seen to affect dignity and self-respect: "You need more incentive. To be able to buy things like soap, shampoos. It would give you a bit more pride. The wages are so small, given the price of tobacco, the people have to go around picking up dog ends. Many are in here *because* they lost their self-respect." "...There are so many indignities in prison that a man's self-respect is hit for six. That hurts more than anything. If you take that away you've taken his life."

Personal autonomy emerged as an issue less frequently among newly-received men than among those with some years already served. This tendency was also apparent in relation to communication and feedback of official views. The new receptions mentioned this only half as often as did the medium or long-term men (possibly because it assumes greater importance as parole eligibility approaches). "There should be more communication from the prisoner to the Home Office, and vice versa, about progress in prison. The reports go in, the prisoner knows nothing at all about what's written. He could be told where he's going wrong, what he has to do."



"Where's all this life I was sent here for?"  
(The Sun)

The prison regime, mentioned by more than one man in two, seemed to be of greater, or more immediate, concern to those serving a prison sentence for the first time than those who had previous custodial experience. Comments about the regime referred to officers' discretion in implementing rules, and to the existence of restrictions seen as unnecessary: "There's too much petty nicking for little things, like having an unauthorised tube of glue in the cell."

In general, the men wanted a freer regime with fewer security measures within the perimeter walls, less lock-up during the day and later lock-up at night: "To be allowed to finish films on television. The more adult programmes come on after eight, and we're banged up at 8.30."

The older the prisoner, the more likely he was to mention family, correspondence, visits, or home leave. These topics were also mentioned more often by those who had more numerous or permanent social contacts on reception. Many comments focused on marriage and family relationships: "Married men should have facilities to spend a weekend with the wife, in the prison—say once a month. A room of some kind, with somewhere for the kids. Otherwise how do you expect a marriage to last when the man only sees his wife for 18 hours a year?"

### SUMMARY

To judge from the responses of this group of 56 men, those at the beginning of a life sentence were particularly concerned with their conditions, with what may be seen as the frame of reference of their day to day existence. Similarly, those serving a custodial sentence for the first time appeared to be more concerned than others about prison regime—possibly because its impact on them was greater. The men who had served a number of years seemed less immediately concerned with these aspects. The greater emphasis placed by them on issues of autonomy and communication suggests that a deeper concern for personal survival emerged after the initial period of adjustment to the prison regime. A majority of those interviewed expressed support for a lifer prison, for having some measure of personal progress, and especially for being given a release date. These findings indicate some of the strategies which may help prisoners to cope with the problems they encounter during a life sentence.

# The Changing Scene

K. S. WALSHE-BRENNAN

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WITHOUT there being a significant increase in the general population there has been an increase in juvenile crime. Since 1961 delinquency has more than doubled and the number of murders committed by children has trebled in a decade. Although aggression has been considered to be a male prerogative, girls are now playing a larger part in the increase in violence.

The president of the Educational Welfare Officers' Association, for example, feels that "girls are learning sex and violence before they are learning how to be women", so that "what used to happen was that violence between girls was confined to pulling hair and a good old-fashioned 'slanging match' but now in several instances, it has been getting hold of their heads and banging them on the floor and 'putting the boot in'". The association notes that "the way girls talked, usually outside school about 'putting the boot in', indicated that they were thinking of violence in a similar way to boys".<sup>1</sup>

In the case of children of subaverage intelligence the raising of the school leaving age seems to cause occasional stress and is commonly associated with truancy as distinct from school phobia. The biblical comment that "idleness teaches much evil" seems as true of today's housing estates and high density flats as of villages in Palestine and Egypt in 1000 B.C. To Machiavelli it seemed a part of life. In "Il Principe" he considered it inevitable, and wrote, "It has been and always will be that evil succeeds good and good evil, and the one is always the cause of the other".

It is ironic that blame for the increase in juvenile crime has been placed on the Children and Young Persons Act 1969. For in theory, like the 1959 Mental Health Act, it was envisaged as one of the most humane acts of our time. The Police Federation wants the act amended because of changes the act has made in the sentencing of juveniles, while to the Justices' Clerks' Society the act appears to be an inept piece of legislation based on unsound principles that cannot work due to a lack of accommodation and manpower. The Society, believing that the act has confused the distinction between a child in need of care and a delinquent, tries to disassociate young children from criminality.

The lower age of the onset of puberty may be responsible for the increase in some sexual offences. In this respect, the Hon. Mr. Justice Bailey has raised the question of whether sex education is beneficial for children attending school. At Manchester crown court, for example, on 22nd May 1975, he stated "Nowadays with all the stress placed on sex education, it is to be expected that with this information, given in the name of education, girls will tend to want to experiment. In fact, tragically many of those who practise this education, will frankly confess it is a good thing for boys and girls to experiment—a view which the vast bulk of society would condemn as wrong and wholly unnecessary".

The British Association of Social Workers, however, does not want the legislation changed. In presenting evidence to a House of Commons

Select Committee examining the workings of the act, B.A.S.W. agrees that the act should not be blamed for any apparent rise in the number of offences by children, as it can only deal with the offender after the anti-social activity has been completed, and thus the act cannot deal with the cause of the deed. The association feels that greater emphasis should be placed on "community treatment"; in other words the child should be given support and assistance to continue growing up within the environment of his own family and neighbourhood rather than being extricated into residential care. The need for some residential care is accepted but only as a last resort. The association stresses that if the act is properly implemented with adequate resources and the appropriate facilities then it would be effective.

The police, on the other hand, feel that many children cannot be adequately contained by the social services departments. It is noteworthy that the number of certificates of unruliness, for which the police can then apply in such circumstances, has doubled since 1969. Examples of cases requiring these measures are absconding from a community home and re-offending after a court appearance. The Magistrates' Association feel that the words of courts are made to mean less and less what they say because of alterations to sentences by the executive. Due to this, it is felt that the credibility of courts is impaired and the distinction process "has gone far enough".<sup>2</sup>

Some residential social workers find



that the advent of delinquents to a community home can cause havoc. Hence, they are not displeased if police prefer not to entrust young offenders to local authorities and social workers. For if the police consider a child should not be at liberty because he or she is a potential danger to the community, then by means of a certificate of unruliness a juvenile can be held in an assessment centre.

Many residential staff prefer this course of action, for not only can such offenders cause damage to home property and assault staff, but delinquents who might be coped with by a certificate of unruliness can introduce to normal children of the local authority home the popular vices of drugs, sexual promiscuity and militant rebellion. With the age of puberty starting at least two years younger than two decades ago, many delinquents seen by the author not yet in their teens when sent to community homes are not only heterosexually but also homosexually experienced with the concomitant danger to other children in the home of syphilis and other venereal diseases. With an increase in V.D. of 300 per cent over the past decade, this danger is assuming greater proportions. Although "the scandal of children behind bars"<sup>3</sup> is aptly named, one wonders if at least this may not be a better place for some than disrupting the efficient and happy regime of children residentially placed and forcing valuable residential social workers to consider other employment.

## HISTORY OF THE ACT

The 1969 Act was preceded by a similar one six years previously. The Act of 1963 attempted to improve what was then a remnant from World War II standards: but it did little apart from raising the age of responsibility. Hence a year later a committee was set up under Lord Longford.

The Longford committee produced a report recommending more reception and observation centres, instead of remand homes. A white paper entitled, "The Child, the Family and the Young Offender", followed re-affirming the committee's recommendation for a family service to shield children appearing before the courts from the penal system. After this came another white paper entitled "Children in Trouble" which concluded that "Juvenile delinquency has no single cause, manifestation or cure. Its origins are many, and the range of behaviour which it covers is equally wide. At some points it merges almost imperceptibly with behaviour

which does not contravene the law." It went on: "A child's behaviour is influenced by genetic, emotional and intellectual factors, his maturity and his family, school, neighbourhood and wider social setting. It is probably a minority of children who grow up without ever misbehaving in ways which may be contrary to the law. Frequently such behaviour is no more than an incident in the pattern of a child's normal development. But sometimes it is a response to unsatisfactory family or social circumstances, a result of boredom in and out of school, an indication of maladjustment or immaturity, or a symptom of a deviant, damaged or abnormal personality".<sup>4</sup>

"Children in Trouble" contained many proposals of the 1965 white paper entitled, "The Child, the Family and the Young Offender". It stressed prevention of delinquency. In contrast to previous measures, the 1968 white paper focussed on possible causes, i.e. social factors. For example paragraph 7 in the general section 11, which noted that "over recent years these two quite distinct grounds for action by society in relation to young people have been moving steadily closer together. It has become increasingly clear that social control of harmful behaviour by the young, and social measures to help and protect the young, are not distinct and separate processes."

In the case of children over 10 and under 14 years of age the white paper added, "The commission of an offence by a child of this age will cease to be, by itself, a sufficient ground for bringing him before a court. In the case of offenders aged 14 or under 17 years, paragraph 16 notes, "Prosecution of an offender of this age (except on a charge of homicide) will be possible only on the authority of a summons or warrant by a juvenile court magistrate".

## THE PRESENT CONFUSION

"Child guidance is now under a cloud" according to Edelston<sup>5</sup> who adds that there are "many weaknesses in our psychological theories", so that it is becoming "a battleground for possession between the medical, psychological and the social services". Psychologists (non-medically qualified) are making a bid, for example, to become directors of area health authority clinics and "treat" patients. In a *British Medical Journal* editorial on the training for social work the issue is raised "we may well ask (while fearing the answer) what the academics are trying to achieve."<sup>6</sup>

In the organisation of social work practice, Howells is reported as threshing out "over inexperience of social workers at client-control base"<sup>7</sup> while Hughes as the director of social services for Suffolk feels that social services "have a lot to learn from the probation service"<sup>8</sup> and Butler finds that "social workers are also having to establish their role in a context of fundamental changes within the administrative structures in which they function."<sup>9</sup>

The only power left to magistrates to place a child in custody is the certificate of unruliness, and there has been a marked increase in their use. For example, 4,645 boys and girls went to prison in 1974 to await trial, although children under 14 years of age are as likely to be cautioned by the police as to be prosecuted. It is possible that magistrates may respond to the availability of facilities in their treatment of offenders, i.e. that more "unruly certificates" arise in the absence of suitable places in community homes. Supervision orders seem little used. One reason for this is that social services do not seem to have produced a workable alternative. While a request for residential accommodation follows in about 19 out of every 20 care orders, there is a shortage of accommodation and many cases are merely sent home.

## SEQUILAE

Social workers regret the increased use of certificates introduced by the act. Staff in social services feel that magistrates probably grant the certificates because of the lack of secure accommodation for young offenders. The number of juveniles placed annually in detention centres has been rising sharply since 1969 and the use of borstal sentences is increasing with the over 15 year old age group despite the 80 per cent recidivism rate.

Soon after the act was passed a Conservative government came to power which meant that sections of the legislation to which the party had objected in opposition were not implemented, e.g. the age of criminal responsibility was not raised to 14 but remained as before at 10 years of age. Thus a child of 10 can be brought to court by the police.

While magistrates cannot send offenders to borstal they can recommend a borstal sentence to the Crown court with the effect that the numbers doubled from 859 to 1,767 in 1973. Although the Underwood Report on Maladjusted Children recommended more residential places, it is difficult in

the present economic crisis to see them provided, just as it is difficult to see implemented the 140 recommendations made by the Butler Report on Mentally Abnormal Offenders (Cmnd.6244) on 1st October 1975.<sup>10</sup>

Local government reorganisation on 1st April 1974 has not helped to solve the placement problem. For example, it has been unable to ensure that the new authorities enjoy the necessary residential facilities for their children. Staffing too can be difficult. It seems unfair that staff in residential homes who enter their careers to look after normal children should be required to cope with delinquents and their relations. Facilities for observation and treatment are unevenly distributed with some authorities having no unit of their own.

### CONCLUSION

Despite the emphasis in the 1969 legislation on community based care for delinquents, as many children are now placed in community homes as in approved schools prior to the implementation of the act.

The only power left to magistrates to place a child in custody is the "certificate of unruliness", and there has been a marked increase in their number.

For example, 4,645 boys and girls went to prison in 1974 to await trial, although children under 14 years of age are as likely to be cautioned by the police as to be prosecuted. Ninety five per cent of care orders result in a request for residential placements; many are merely sent home. Due to this, magistrates may respond to the availability of facilities in their treatment of offenders, i.e. that more "unruly certificates" arise in the absence of suitable places in community homes. Supervision orders seem little used since one reason for this is that social services do not seem to have produced workable alternatives.

It seems unfair to blame the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 for the increase in juvenile crime. Such an increase appears to be in line with the 21 per cent increase in the past recorded year noted by Hill<sup>11</sup> for both adults and young persons of both sexes.

If custodial sentences are necessary for the benefit of the community they could perhaps be provided through the Home Office rather than through the Department of Health and Social Services, local social service departments and local authority homes. Liddiard stresses the need for standards in professional disciplines, adding that

without certain standards "our credibility with the public would be destroyed and in my view the end of social service departments"<sup>12</sup> In the present confusion psychiatrists should not also be confused. They should in fact make clear to delinquents that they should not be "treated" as patients, when in fact they should be dealt with by the Home Office and its facilities.

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# Farewell to Welfare

ROBERT WATERS

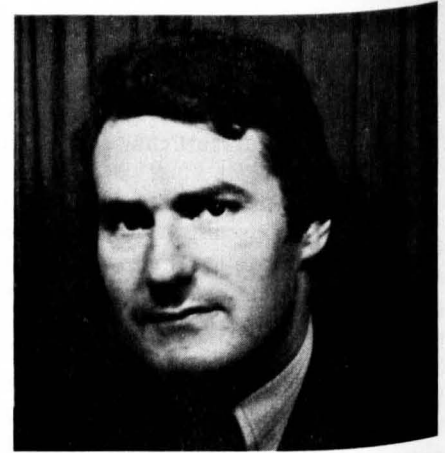
*Probation Officer, Leicester Probation and  
Aftercare Service  
H.M. Prison, Gartree*

WITH effect from 1 January 1977 the term Prison Welfare Officer has no longer been the official designation for Probation Officers working in penal institutions. It seems appropriate to bury with this title some of the myths which have accrued to the name and one hopes that the change of name might also bring about a change of attitude and perceptions. In this article, therefore, I propose to look at some of the similarities between the experiences of Probation Officers in fieldwork and those of institutionally-based colleagues in an attempt to show that the similarities are more significant than the differences. By focussing on the latter too much, both fieldwork and social work institutions are impoverished.

Most of us will be familiar with the rather hackneyed phrase that a prison or institution is a microcosm of society, that is, it reflects in a minute form the same basic characteristics which are to be found in the wider community. My experience of working in an institution so far, in a long-term, maximum security prison, suggests that there are many points of comparison between this and my fieldwork experience, which was in a neighbourhood-based office, covering a small but densely-populated inner-city area. It seems to me that working in an institution brings to a focus tensions and conflicts which fieldworkers are accustomed to working with all the time. Experiences within the institution, however, tend to be more stark, often they are more intense, but fundamentally they are no different from those which I experienced as a fieldworker.

A more critical evaluation of fieldwork practice in some areas of urban deprivation might show that the

Probation Service has little impact. If one is to argue that Probation Officers should withdraw from prisons on grounds of ineffectiveness then certain fieldwork services should have been withdrawn a long time ago. It is often the case, however, that a fieldwork department does not have to produce results, or demonstrate its effectiveness, in quite the same way that a team of Probation Officers working in an institution has to. This is ironic in many ways as the greatest deprivation, in a material sense, which I have come across has been in fieldwork. Typical examples of this material deprivation are poor housing conditions, often involving squatting and eviction; unemployment and chronic dependence on supplementary benefits; widespread disconnection of electricity and gas supplies when, for low income families, there is little chance of the supply being re-connected. These are, perhaps, some of the more common examples where social work involvement can influence events in minor ways. The fieldworker, in such situations, might be able to postpone eviction or disconnection but not avert it all together. Goffman's phrase, which is often applied to workers in an institution, that "each party to the relationship is destined to seek out the other to offer what the other cannot accept, and each is destined to reject what the other offers"<sup>1</sup> could at times be applied to fieldwork practice. I don't believe, however, that it does justice to either. It is by no means unusual, whether in fieldwork or in institutionally-based social work, to be unable to effect major changes, but in spite of this I would suggest that the Probation Service still has a caring role to play.



Robert Waters joined the Yorkshire Probation Service in 1971. After completing his training at the Leicester University School of Social Work, he worked in Manchester until taking up his present appointment at Gartree in July 1976.

Prisons are communities in every sense of the word; granted that they are artificial but they are no less communities for that. Artificiality, moreover, characterises many of the modern housing programmes and developments which give rise to feelings of alienation and isolation on the part of residents.

Within institutions there are several communities, for example, each wing in a prison is a separate community with its own identity, allegiances, network of relationships, and traditions. Whilst not having a static population at least in a long-term prison the population has been in residence for several years and has managed to form relationships with a number of people, a process which is often lacking in outside communities; in fact some prisons have some of the positive aspects of community life which are no longer to be found elsewhere, for example, mutual awareness of the experiences of others (whether used in a positive or negative way); feelings of solidarity and group support by inmates. In fieldwork whether we like or loathe a particular community does not absolve us from the responsibility of understanding that community and seeking to contribute to its better functioning, albeit in small ways. It seems logical to apply the same reasoning to institutions; whether one likes prisons or not, they exist and all Probation Officers must take account of them. They cannot simply be ignored. Unfortunately, however, neither prisons nor Probation Officers working in them are always judged by this criterion. This is shown, not only in the way in which prisons are seen by many people who work outside of them but also comes out in respective attitudes to fieldwork cli-

ents and inmates: for the client of the fieldworker, not having access to certain resources is often accepted as an economic fact of life; the same experience for an inmate tends to be represented as a denial of civil liberties. In some areas however certain prison communities have access to resources in a way in which clients in the wider community would never have, for example, educational, artistic and sports facilities (possibly medical and industrial training facilities also). I am not arguing that prison life is easy as there is no doubting the reality of the deprivation to be experienced therein following the loss of rights and enforced separation from ones family and home environment. I am simply suggesting that the deprivation to be found in communities and institutions must be seen in relative rather than absolute terms. Depending on the community and the prison, and their respective locations, the prison might be more fortunate in terms of meeting the basic needs of its clientele than some of the community facilities. Prisons are capable of the same extremes that communities are. The former, in the words of Sykes, exist in "an uneasy compromise of liberty and restraint"<sup>2</sup> a description which could well apply to many communities outside of the prison. One of the tasks of the Probation Officer in each situation, institutional and community, is to develop a greater awareness of the potentialities and limitations of the working environment.

Developing this theme further about the similarity between the institutional and community facilities, most prisons have the same range of statutory facilities which are to be found in the larger community. In fieldwork, liaison between the various agencies can be poor, with agencies occasionally duplicating the efforts of each other, which aggravates difficulties rather than resolving them. The report of the committee of enquiry into the death of Maria Colwell makes interesting reading in terms of the problems involved in a multi-disciplinary approach and how effective liaison between different agencies is a difficult goal to achieve. Departments in an institution have the same underlying difficulty in liaising and negotiating with each other although this is not always appreciated by those who work outside of them. On a day-to-day basis not all departments in prison are accountable to the same person; each department has different priorities with different resources all

located to each. Often departments have to compete with each other for limited resources, such as typing facilities and office space. Tensions and rivalries on an inter-departmental level are akin to inter-agency tensions in fieldwork. Whilst in prison there are more formal opportunities for sharing one's work it can be hard to reach a satisfactory working relationship with people of other disciplines. Probation Officers in institutions are no less immune from this problem than their fieldwork counterparts.

It is tempting to contrast the autonomy of the fieldworker with the comparative restriction of the institutionally-based worker but like many of the stereotypes this one does not withstand a critical examination. In both situations Probation Officers have a degree of potential autonomy—how much depends to a large extent on the worker. In both situations Probation Officers can react on an *ad hoc* basis to immediate events or they can decide on overall priorities and aims, and work accordingly. In prison it seems to be vital, as a department, for the Probation Service to develop strategies of intervention most relevant to that particular institution rather than become the institutional jack-of-all-trades. There is evidence to show that where Probation Departments in prisons take such initiative they make a valuable professional contribution, (e.g. *Social Work in Prison*, by M. Shaw). Would the fieldworker enjoy the same degree of autonomy *vis-a-vis* the courts in negotiating areas of involvement and priorities? As for the autonomy of the client the reality is the reverse of what one might expect as the inmate probably has a greater choice in dealing with the Probation Service whilst inside than the client of the fieldworker as the latter has sanctions against non-co-operation which are denied to their institutional counterparts. One popular myth about the Probation Officer working in prisons is that he has greater access to his client. This is not always the case as access to inmates in some prisons can be very limited indeed, especially in those prisons where the incentive earnings scheme is followed which means that the inmate will lose pay if he spends time out of the workshop. In my own working situation such difficulties as these have meant that I have worked longer hours in the evening whilst in prison than I did in fieldwork. When one manages to see the inmate, however, there can be plenty of variety of situation, for example, in the cell workshop,

landing or office. In a restricted way, therefore, the Probation Officer in the institution has a variety in the setting in which he sees his clients, possibly even more than the fieldworker who may be limited to office-reporting and home-visiting. The debate in fieldwork whether a probation office should be centralised or de-centralised also has its parallel in prison where the discussion is whether officers should be located on the wings or in the administration block. Inevitably, however, the multi-disciplinary approach in which the institutionally based Probation Officer will be participating, involves losing a certain amount of autonomy. But for whose benefit is autonomy given in the first place? Is autonomy of the fieldworker sometimes a rationalisation for working in isolation?

Finally it is said of Probation Departments in institutions that they are working in a hostile environment which does not share the same goals and values. It is pertinent to ask however, in how many communities are the goals and values of the Probation Service shared? (I have yet to deal with any agency which does this.) Most social work seems to take place in a "hostile" environment and this may become increasingly the case as resources become more limited. Coping in such an atmosphere of conflict, and not simply coping but preserving an attitude of compassion on the one hand, and an awareness of some of the harsh realities of the lives of some clients on the other, is a very difficult task indeed. It is one which many Probation Officers working in institutions have been accustomed to for sometime and as economic cut-backs effect most sectors of society further fieldwork teams may be able to learn from such an example. A recognition, moreover of the inter-dependence of fieldwork and institutionally based social work is essential to the practice of through-care and after-care and good working relationships between both sections of the Probation Service can only be beneficial to clients and their families whether inside or outside of an institution.

I am not trying to argue from the above that prisons, and Probation Officers working in them are above criticism; merely that there are sufficient similarities between working in the field and in a prison to suggest that the same professional skills of Probation Officers can be used to advantage in each situation. In both spheres Probation Officers require a commitment to make the experiences of its clientele



more humane and this means looking at the situation on a broader level. Both sections of the service need a shared resolve to respond to needs (as opposed to wants) whether these are within the community or within the institution. Often, however, the two parts of the service are competitors against each other rather than co-workers. This may reflect the tension between institutional versus community care which is experienced in other areas of life and is by no means confined to social work. So long as resources are spent on two separate and unconnected communities, however, then they will continue to compete for limited resources, and one can only expect resentment from people in the wider community at what appears to be wasteful excess spent on undeserving people. (How many inmates died of hypothermia this winter?) Eric Knapman, writing recently in *Justice of the Peace*<sup>3</sup> argues convincingly from an economic point of view and shows that society's attitude towards crime and punishment is wasteful, even economically indulgent, and concludes his article by saying that "the present system imposes a greater economic punishment on society than upon the offender". His argument is all the more

convincing when applied to the economics of imprisonment especially when one considers that for most offenders the experience of imprisonment does not provide them with the ability to cope on release. The Probation Service is one of the few services which is in touch with both facets of this problem, supervision of offenders in the wider community, and first-hand experience of the reality of imprisonment. Probation Officers, therefore, must surely be in a unique position to approach the matter with a two-fold perspective: on the one hand to help develop community facilities which obviate the need for imprisonment (hostels, day centres, CSO's, intermediate treatment schemes etc), and on the other hand to make imprisonment for those who are sent there a more life-like experience and consequently a better preparation for return to the wider community. (In this respect the new C prison, H.M. Prison Featherstone, is impressive as the ethos is to reflect where possible the reality of the outside world, to the extent of having a Job Centre within the prison. Inmates can apply for jobs, get the sack and hand in their notice in matters relating to jobs within the prison. Also encouraging is the project involving

five prisons where Probation Officers and discipline staff will look together at ways of involving uniformed staff in more meaningful ways. This should be a salutary reminder that the institution as a whole, and not simply the Probation Service, has a commitment to rehabilitation.) Finally, in conclusion, using the words of Margaret Shaw: "The prison can no longer be regarded as an institution cut off from the normal life of the community... Above all it is not sufficient to accept the prison as it stands. In many ways what is needed is to open up the prison and relate it to the community, rather than to expect it to produce change of itself. Better ways of using its potential and alternatives with less isolating effects, must be developed".<sup>4</sup> The combined efforts of Probation Officers, working in the field and in institutions could do much to make this idea a reality.

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## QUESTIONS

MICK HURLEY

Born 1947, married with two children, joined the service at Cardiff in 1969. Posted to Shrewsbury where he served for six years until transferring to Gloucester in 1975.

Silence! called the Usher,  
As he stood beside the door  
And bowed low to his Lordship  
Who administered the law

The Judge then bows and seats himself,  
The lawyers did the same  
And then the Clerk alone did stand  
To call defendant's name

The charge was read, not guilty said,  
And so they called the Jurors  
Who stood to take their solemn oaths  
In various kinds of humours

The Prosecution Lawyer  
Made adjustments to his gown  
Then started to outline his case  
With heavy voice and frown

It is your job, he told them  
When evidence is done  
To decide his guilt or innocence  
Was it he who killed his son

It is my role to prove my case  
To make you really sure  
The defendant must prove nothing  
For this is British Law

He placed his hands upon his books  
And lent as though to rest  
Then stood and called defendant's wife  
To be the first witness

Mrs. Price then took the stand  
She gave a pitious sigh  
Took a long look at her husband  
Tears welling in her eye

She took the oath and gave her name  
In voice you could not hear  
And started to relate her life  
With one she once held dear

The questions finally reached the point  
Upon that fateful day  
When she came home from her mothers  
With whom she'd been to stay

The baby, little Robert  
Was just lying in his cot  
On the pillow by his tousled head  
Was a spreading large red spot

She's called his name and touched him  
But he'd lain there deadly still  
So she'd gone and 'phoned an ambulance  
And said her child was ill

With faltering steps she searched the house  
Her husband for to find  
(When she went he said he'd mind the child  
he'd swore he did not mind)

She found him drunk upon the bed  
And softly did he snore  
And drying on his knuckles  
Was her little baby's gore

The Barrister defending Price  
When his learned friend sat down  
Asked her now in gentle tones  
Why she had first left town

She said "My husband beat me, Sir  
And my nerves were all awry  
And my doctor had advised me Sir  
To have a week away"

This was not the answer wanted  
And the lawyer filled with rage  
"Is it not true that you left him  
For someone half his age"

The Court was stunned and silent  
Every eye on Price's wife,  
Who after struggling to find the word  
Said "Not true Sir, on my life"

"I have never known another man  
Not in that way", she said  
And from the way in which she said it  
Not one person thought she had

The lawyer tried to push this line  
But he knew it was not fair  
So reluctantly he gave it up  
And left it in the air

Mrs. Price now sobbing  
Was led out from the Court  
The next witness was the Doctor  
Who delivered his report

The Doctor gave his evidence  
And the truth it came to light  
Mr. Price would beat his wife up  
When he came home drunk at night

The Doctor then admitted  
He had told Jean Price to rest  
He'd suggested "that she went away"  
The Jury were impressed

The time now stood at half past four  
The Judge looked up and then  
After talking to the Clerk, he said  
"Adjourned till ten a.m."

The Press they went to work at once  
They made Price headline news  
It's a pity we can't hang him  
Seemed to be their combined views

At ten a.m. next morning  
The Court had re-convened  
The Lawyer for Defence stood up  
And toward the Judge he leaned

"I would like to raise a point of Law  
In the absence of the Jury"  
And as the Jury filed away  
He shook with suppressed fury

When the Jurors left the Court  
And the Ushers closed the door  
The Barrister stood up from his seat  
And addressed the Judge once more

"My Lord", he said in accent clear  
I really must impress  
That my client's case is jeopardised  
From this trial by the Press"

The Judge in regal splendour  
From the dais looked he down  
His mind bent on the question  
And wore a puzzled frown

"It is obvious" he answered  
In a slow monotonous voice  
That the people of this country  
Will be giving thought to Price

I will not grant a re-trial  
Though I will not from you hide  
That I gave this matter serious thought  
But No! Request denied

The Jury now returned to Court  
The atmosphere was grim  
Outside the clouds were gathering  
The light was growing dim

When the Usher put the lights on  
The next witness they did call  
'Twas the Doctor first called to the child  
A dapper man and small

"On examining the child" he said  
"The first thing I did spy  
Was a vivid blue confusion  
Half-an-inch from his left eye"

"A cut there was upon his skull  
And it was far from small  
For the babe I would suggest to you  
Was thrown against the wall

Several ribs were broken  
And the left side cheek was blue  
While the iris of his cut left eye  
With crimson was shot through

The cause of death there is no doubt  
Was damage to the brain  
But before he died I'll tell you  
He suffered immense pain"

His evidence completed  
The Doctor left the Court  
And the Policeman who arrested Price  
Was called to make report

Sergeant Wilkins took the stand  
And gave his rank and station  
He answered questions loud and clear  
And showed no hesitation

When I arrived there at the house  
The baby was then dead  
And Price in his unconscious state  
Was still upon his bed

From the smell that issued from him  
I surmised that he was drunk  
And when I finally woke him up  
He staggered from his bunk

I then took him to the station  
And a statement from him took  
And to the Judge he said "Sir  
It's all written in my book"

When did you make your notes out  
Asked the Judge in some concern  
Half an hour after I left him  
Was Wilkins swift return

The Judge said that he may use them  
And the Policeman from them read  
All the questions and the answers  
He alleged that Price had said

When the Counsel for the Crown sat down  
The other Barrister stood  
And from the stillness of his stance  
You'd think that he was wood

From your notes now, Sergeant Wilkins  
It appears that you imply  
That Price gave you a confession  
And I say that is a lie

Wilkins slightly angered now  
Just stood and shook his head  
Then said "Price confessed to killing him  
By beating him till dead"

The Counsel having made his point  
Just smiled and then sat sown  
"The Prosecution rests its case"  
Said the Counsel for the Crown

The Judge adjourned the Court for lunch  
To start at two p.m.  
And Price's barrister went below  
To discuss the case till then

They put Price in the box at two  
His evidence to give  
They asked him first his name and age  
And where he used to live

Tell to us what happened  
When your wife she went away  
And don't let yourself get flustered now  
The barrister did say

Well my wife said she was leaving me  
For someone else, said Price,  
She said he lived in Liverpool  
And that his name was Dyce

I was so upset Sir, when she left  
I sat alone and thinking  
Of how lonely I would be at home  
And then I started drinking

I drank from morning until night  
I did things in a haze  
And so I did continue Sir,  
For almost seven days

I got so drunk I didn't think  
About the little tot  
Till the sudden sound of crying  
Made me look toward the cot

I noticed he was bleeding  
From a cut upon his head  
And I saw that he had done this  
By just falling out of bed

When I staggered over to him  
I tried to pick him up  
But was so drunk that I dropped him  
And he fell upon a cup

The cup it broke and cut his eye  
Then as best as I was able  
I tried to clean the cut up  
So I laid him on the table

He squirmed so much he slipped Sir,  
And I in such a state  
That I could not seem to stop him  
And he fell into the grate

He landed on the edge Sir,  
And it hit his chest and head  
And as he had stopped crying  
I laid him on his bed

My mind was so befuddled  
That I lay down on my bed  
Then the whisky overcame me  
And my senses from me fled

I was awakened by the Policeman  
When he kicked me in the groin  
And I nearly fainted off, Sir  
From the pain within my loin

He took me to the station  
And he knocked me all about  
Then he made me sign a statement  
That another Cop wrote out

His work now done the barrister  
Defending Price sat down,  
And so to cross-examine  
Stood the Counsel for the Crown

You said the baby cut his scalp  
When falling from his cot  
But while there was blood upon the wall  
On the carpet there was not

There were blood stains splattered on the bed  
And also over you  
And on the table and the grate  
No blood spots were in view

Why did you kill him Mr. Price  
I ask you, tell us why,  
The facts are set against you  
So don't bother now to lie

I didn't mean it, Sir, sobbed Price  
I couldn't stop his cry  
I beat him just to shut him up  
And then I saw him die

The shock of his confession  
Took the Court quite unawares  
And the sudden sound of silence  
Seemed to emphasise the stares

The Judge addressed the Jury  
In a firm unwavering voice  
You will now please find Price guilty  
For in this you have no choice

The Foreman of the Jury  
A grey haired man and tall  
Said the finding of Price guilty  
Was the verdict of them all

The Barrister defending,  
His voice resigned and slow  
Started on his mitigations  
Things he thought the Court should know

His parents separated  
Father went when Price was small  
And his Mother a weak woman  
Couldn't handle Price at all

His problem mainly is the drink  
He needs some special treatment  
So I beg, Your Lordship  
In view of this be lenient

The Judge now rose and left the Court  
To think what best to do  
And Price still sitting in the dock  
Took on a sickly hue

Upon returning to the Court  
The Judge sat down, then stated  
"A more vicious deed, I have not heard  
In twenty years related"

"But although I am revolted  
By the crime you have committed  
I will not give you the maximum  
I am in law permitted

Drinking is your problem  
And I aim to make sure  
That before you join society  
Again you take a cure

There's an alcoholic Hostel  
Where you'll go for half a year  
Plus a twelve month prison sentence  
That's suspended for two years"

The Court was stunned and silent  
Not believing what they'd heard  
And they wondered as they travelled home  
Is Justice just a word.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## REVIEWS COMMITTEE:

RICK EVANS (H.M.P. Gloucester)

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## Down The Local

### A TASTE OF PRISON

ROY KING and RODNEY MORGAN

Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976. £2.75

THIS book is an appreciation of the role of local prisons in containing unconvicted prisoners. Although the material for the book was researched at Winchester prison and remand centre in a three months period early in 1971, the authors extrapolate from their findings to comment on the regimes for unconvicted and unsentenced prisoners generally.

The introductory chapter underlines the facts that almost half the people received into prison before trial or sentence are subsequently awarded a non-custodial penalty by the courts; that although the proportion of offenders sentenced to imprisonment is diminishing, the total number is increasing due to the rapidly rising crime rate; and that half of all sentenced prisoners complete their sentences in local prisons. These facts have a significant effect on the treatment of unconvicted and unsentenced prisoners. Some analysis of the types of offences committed by those sentenced to periods in custody might have indicated whether the use of custodial and non-custodial penalties has increased or decreased for specific categories of criminal offences. King and Morgan do not question the validity of penalties imposed by the courts for such categories, the numbers in each category, nor the disposal of the cases. To have made a statement about philosophy of the courts and to have examined the commitments by magistrates' courts, in particular, would have been enlightening, in view of the authors' generalisations about the number of people spending the whole of their sentences in local prisons.

Chapter 2 contains the statement that "the Prison Department has been markedly reluctant to improve matters by taking up the slack in open prisons". The authors should have recognised that those who would once have filled the open prisons are now receiving non-custodial penalties and it is not possible to "take up the slack" with those who are a statistically poor risk for open conditions.

Chapter 3 describes some of the operational difficulties faced by the management in local prisons—overcrowding, delays in effecting the allocation of long-term prisoners, and the lack of places in short- and medium-term training prisons. There follows a discussion of the restricted daily routine and the individual rights which ought to be accorded the unconvicted prisoner. There is only a superficial examination of the problems of ensuring those rights, and I felt that some mention of the staff, and the sensitive role they were required to perform

in the supervision of unconvicted prisoners, would have added strength to the conclusion that "the special provisions (for unconvicted prisoners) means very little in practice".

The following chapter, on the remand centre contains similar criticisms, but with some important additions. The authors point out that there are no special rules for remand centres, but that the provisions which apply are those of the *Prison Rules* (1964) with subsequent amendments. There is a suspicion that magistrates' courts tend to remand young prisoners in custody, before sentencing them with a non-custodial penalty, "to give them a taste of prison" as a deterrent from committing further offences. There is also criticism that staff were not specially selected, received no special training, and had no particular sense of identity with the remand centre. The overall picture is one of gloom: a lack of management planning and an indifference on the part of the Prison Department to the peculiar requirements of young people in custody. There is a great deal of truth in the descriptions, but I know that there have been many improvements and I presume that there have been even more since I left Winchester.

The summary and conclusions are constructive, and should give thought to all those who work in local prisons. They point out that the provisions for unconvicted prisoners are more theoretical than real, but that the exercise of their rights might be affected by the social isolation which led to a remand in custody. The recommendations are all possible, but would require a vastly increased expenditure on both staff and building. I take issue with the recommendation to group staff into treatment and custody teams, for it allows different sections of staff to abrogate certain responsibilities which all should shoulder—and do. But there is a need to reappraise the siting of remand centres and local prisons, and there is a need for increased knowledge by the courts of the conditions of all prisons, and local prisons in particular.

The book's postscript is pessimistic, but reflects the reality experienced by those who work in local prisons and remand centres—an increased number of remands, budgetary control and no foreseeable major improvements. Nonetheless, it is a pity that it has taken so long to publish this study, for although some of its observations are questionable, it highlights areas of difficulty and raises fundamental questions about the treatment by society of unconvicted prisoners.

W. A. WOOD,  
Assistant Governor,  
Gartree Prison

### PSYCHOPATH—THE CASE OF PATRICK MACKAY

TIM CLARK and JOHN PENYCATÉ

Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976. £3.95

THE story begins in March 1975 with Patrick David Mackay, a well built, handsome young man of 22, sitting on the side of a bath observing the body of a priest he had just murdered. But, of course, the beginning is really the end, for this crime was the one which led to his eventual arrest and trial at the Old Bailey.

A year after Patrick's birth, the family moved from Kensington to North London and in 1959 to Dartford. In all this time, Mackay's father, an accountant, had realised that his career was going nowhere and in solace he turned to drink. Normally a mild-mannered man, once under the influence of alcohol, he would often resort to violence against his wife and their three children. As the drinking increased, the more the family were abused and neglected.

At this time, Patrick, perhaps following in father's footsteps, was turning into a bully, terrorising younger, smaller children. When he went on to secondary school, he showed fear that he himself would become the target of older boys and a pattern of truanting began. When Patrick was 10, his father died; Patrick even had the misfortune to learn of the death from other children on his way home from school. He neither saw his father dead nor even went to the funeral, and for a long time refused to believe that he was dead.

In 1963, unable to cope, Patrick's mother had a nervous breakdown. As a result the children were taken into care for about 12 months. Patrick resented the fact that he had been "farmed out". A neighbour who had shown interest in his welfare said that Patrick was showing a morbid interest in death and was developing a cruel streak, particularly towards animals. In 1964, he set fire to a curtain in a church. He was committed to Parkhouse Reception Centre for reports and subsequently was sentenced to three years' probation. The supervising officer commented that it was wrong to refer to Patrick as being naughty; "He'll grow out of it".

September 1964 saw the Probation Order changed to a Fit Person Order. Patrick was committed to a county council home for delinquents, where he remained until his mother successfully applied to have the Order revoked in time for Christmas, 1965. Early in 1966, he made tentative appearances at school, but after a series of violent outbursts was admitted to the adolescent unit of a mental hospital for treatment. After being there 10 days, he absconded. This performance was repeated on several occasions.

Later that year, psychiatrists recommended an approved school for disturbed boys. This advice was ignored and Patrick was sent to Court Lees (a school notorious for the publicity it received soon after that time). Whilst on home leave, rather than return to Court Lees, he made a suicide gesture, resulting in another period in a mental hospital. During 1967, the mother, hoping to make a fresh start, took the family to her home country of British Guiana. This migration was not a success and they were soon back, living for a short time with her late husband's sister and later buying a house in Gravesend.

Violence had by this time become part of Patrick's life and he had assaulted both his mother and his sisters; on one occasion, he attempted to strangle his mother and he had attempted suicide.

In 1968, charged with an assault on two boys Patrick was committed to Ashford Remand Centre and was described by a psychiatrist as a "cold psychopathic killer". Later that year, he was sent to Moss Side but, after several appeals by his mother, he was released in time for Christmas, 1969. There were no conditions of supervision. He was sent to Moss Side again in 1970 and released in 1972. At this time, Patrick was able to project an image of

Prison

calm self-confidence: even so, he found great difficulty in making friends. One man, Father Crean befriended him but was rewarded by being robbed by Patrick.

In 1973, psychiatrists again failed to agree in diagnosis and, when he appeared in court, the Social Enquiry Report failed to give the full facts as known at that time. By this time he was regularly committing crimes of mugging, particularly on old ladies. In February 1974, he committed his first known murder (privately the police considered that there had been several previously), by forcing his way into the flat of an 84 year old widow and throttling her. In March 1975, he murdered an 89 year old widow in much the same way. Later, he made an attempt at suicide by walking up an underground railway tunnel.

Patrick was arrested and was examined by a psychiatrist, who saw no danger in him. The police failed to inform the hospital of his background and Moss Side for some reason was unable to find any record of him. He was discharged but later that same month murdered Father Crean. Through some astute detective work, he was soon arrested and the whole macabre story began to unfold.

This book should be read by all the various experts: psychiatrists, social workers, and even security officers. For one message comes over clearly: the experts could not agree, omitted to report, or failed to pass on vital information. In our work, recording and communications are the tools of our trade and the lesson given by this well researched book should be learned.

FRANK CUTTS,  
Chief Officer,  
Werrington House Detention  
Centre.

## WORK IN PENAL INSTITUTIONS

Council of Europe, 1976

This short but comprehensive and challenging pamphlet is the product of a study made by Mr. K. J. Neale when he was the Director of Industries and Supply, Prison Department. Although intended for a European readership, it is—because of Mr. Neale's experience—of particular relevance to the United Kingdom.

The major theme of the study is that the full potential of work regimes in penal institutions has yet to be realised and that further progress is possible, through the application of good management. Mr. Neale does not, however, deride the past. He is at pains to illustrate the progress that has already been made and it is on such achievements that he bases his confidence in the future.

The background is provided by detailed accounts of all the important aspects of work: these include its rehabilitative value, economic validity, motivation, organisation and prisoners' earnings. The message which emerges from this detail is that the role and structure of institutions must be clearly defined and accepted to enable resources to be allocated systematically. Each competing department within the institution can then be accorded a status upon which more effective management decisions may be based. The short-term compromises which are at present a feature of institutional management (and which appear to result in the closing of workshops as the first reaction to any shortage of resources) are often inefficient and disruptive.

It is difficult to do justice to such an important booklet in a short note. The implications may be summed up by a quote from the preface:

"Attention is invited to the possibility of raising penal treatment to a new plane of performance and viability. The validity of work is endorsed as the foundation upon which a wide range of penological objectives can be tackled".

I can only urge prison staff at all levels so to organise their own work to leave time to read this report.

R.M

## THE END OF IMPRISONMENT

ROBERT SOMMER  
Oxford University Press, 1976. £5.25

A MERE glimpse of the title on the jacket as the book slid out of the large envelope was enough to cause an involuntary tightening of my sphincter. Had someone at last discovered a viable alternative to locking-up offenders? and if they had should I let my review reflect an untypical enlightened, liberated view, or should I succumb to my stronger weaknesses and merely hammer the book into the ground as another shallow, irrelevant, and biased attack against imprisonment?

I resisted the temptation to accept the author's invitation to "impatient readers" to "turn directly to the last few chapters which deal with the precedence, prospects and policies for reform". As I read through the book, my sharpest impression was of Sommer stating what little evidence he had to uphold his case against imprisonment and pre-empting any meaningful debate by the simple device of anticipating most of the likely criticism, and the areas from which it would come. He suggests, for example, that prison administrators are a nice lot of blokes really, fumbling along doing their best. It would appear, according to Sommer, that senior administrators fall into two categories: the good ones who are swallowed up by the system and neutralised by it, and the good ones who see the obstacles well in advance and resign.

Fortunately, some of the examples Sommer cites as brutalising aspects of imprisonment are not yet, and hopefully will not be, relevant to the English experience. One example is the "no-go areas" of some large American maximum security establishments where there is a great concentration of resources on the perimeter and very little staff intervention on what sort of a regime runs inside the establishment. Nor have we yet reached the stage where the time honoured Hollywood cliché of a warden (governor) winning his spurs by "the walk across the yard" has any meaningful parallel in this country.

Sommer has not made enough of the point that penal establishments house a wide variety of offenders, from the petty to the dangerous offender. I don't think he would find much of an argument in this country for alternatives to imprisonment being found for some categories of offenders. It is when Sommer tries to deal with the question of the hardened criminal that his writing is innocent beyond belief and can only really be forgiven if he had never set foot in a maximum security establishment. It is the sort of thinking which is not only irresponsible but highly dangerous.

Although corrections generally may be entering a phase of hiatus and consolidation, as far as treatment/training is concerned, it seems to me that one of the promising trends of the past decade has been the closing of the gap between many academics and practitioners. Unfortunately, this book, and perhaps my review of it, does nothing to add to that promising trend.

T. W. ABBOTT,  
Assistant Governor,  
Prison Service College, Wakefield

## THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF PRISONERS

W. FORSTER  
University of Leicester, 1976. £1.25

IT WILL be no surprise to those who serve in a Prison Department establishment with inmates following Open University courses to learn that prisoners are almost as successful in "external" advanced studies as their counterparts in free society. This is one of the interesting facts recorded in Mr. Forster's paper.

After a brief review of the historical development of education in Prison Department establishments, a development which has accelerated in the last 10 years or so, the paper considers the four major contributors to the provision of higher education for prisoners:

London University External Degree study, University Extra-Mural courses, Workers' Educational Association courses and Open University courses. The Open University, although the most recent contributor, has now become the largest provider. In 1976, 142 inmates in 14 establishments were taking 197 credit courses. Courses through correspondence colleges and from professional bodies are also available. Mr. Forster records disappointment at the relatively small involvement of the W.E.A. and Extra-Mural Departments especially as their contribution can be made at any establishment, whilst Open University courses are restricted by the Prison Department to 14 establishments.

Mr. Forster's study involved five establishments and he carried out in-depth interviews with 53 prisoners—either singly or in small groups—a high percentage of the prison population actually involved in these studies.

For the layman, the paper gives helpful background information about the differences in the nature of establishments, the motivation of inmates participating in the courses, their educational backgrounds and their opinions as to the benefits such studies have brought. All the interviewees were volunteers and Mr. Forster, although agreeably surprised by the open and frank responses of inmates and prison staff, reveals a sound judgment of people, and a "feel" for institutions and how they work.

Not unexpectedly, Mr. Forster found that "all inmates saw their initial approach to education as something of a revolt against the monotony of prison life", but expressed in different ways. He classifies them into three groups:

- (1) those with an educated background seeking to retrieve what would otherwise be wasted time and using their studies to link pre-conviction life with post-release life;
- (2) the educated or professional men seeking to escape the "vulgarity and obscenity of prisons" rather than the discipline;
- (3) prisoners with little previous education, plunging into a new experience and trying to defeat the system.

Enjoyment of personal achievement and a marked feeling of cultural change are two rewards of study which inmates share with fellow students in free society but the feelings are heightened for those in custody. In addition, inmates have rewards in extra contacts with people outside the prison system and an "antidote to their sentence", but they experience extra pressures and stresses. In a closed community, successes and failures are known throughout the institution. The cost of failure is obvious but the price of success can be alienation from the remainder of the society. Indeed, the very act of participating in higher education can lead to alienation, with associated derision, because of the apparent status of membership of an elitist group. The paper spells out other difficulties experienced by prisoners following advanced studies but Mr. Forster sees academic isolation as perhaps the most serious hazard because it can "make education a narrowing rather than a broadening experience"—a point to which all who administer or manage prisoner education programmes will need to pay due regard.

Finally, Mr. Forster draws a number of generalisations from his studies. For some higher education affords "a path towards rehabilitation"; for others, a change of their sense of values. It can enhance the inmate's self-image or enable him to cope with his sentence. In most cases, it will bring, in some measure, elements of all these benefits. Thus Mr. Forster's study goes far in justifying the provision of higher education in prisons. He also sees an area of interest unique to the prison context, namely that of an unusually high concentration of students with little or no previous educational achievement who successfully pursue a course of advanced study.



This paper is a valuable addition to the growing interest and study of education facilities in Prison Department establishments, contrasting with the more widely known basic literacy programmes. The impetus of recent years will be maintained if the Prison Department and the outside contributors take due note of it and seek ways of implementing Mr. Forster's recommendations.

ARTHUR PEARSON  
Deputy Chief Education Officer  
Prison Department

## MARY CARPENTER AND THE CHILDREN OF THE STREETS

JO MANTON  
Heinemann, 1976. £9.50

MISS MANTON has produced a lucid and well written account of Mary Carpenter who lived from 1807 to 1877. She was one of those formidable Victorian ladies who devoted themselves to good causes which had hitherto been neglected. She was also the obedient daughter of Dr. Lant Carpenter, a charismatic Unitarian Minister, and her whole life's work was inspired by her adoration for her father and her God. The Carpenter family came from the aristocracy of the non-conformist tradition and, as the author says, "High-mindedness, protest and reform were bred in their bones". All in all, they must have been an uncomfortable example to their more easy-going friends. Unitarians do not believe in the doctrine of original sin because that would make God the author of sin. One of their numbers, Jared Smith, summed up their view: "We believe men have in themselves the power of being good or bad". Mary Carpenter built her work upon this belief so that for her anyone no matter how depraved could be improved by the right treatment.

Throughout her life she devoted herself to improving the lot of slum children. Her first enterprise was to set up a Ragged School in Bristol in 1846 which so stimulated her that she became concerned with all children deprived of home life and upbringing. Inspired by the fact that in 1849 there were 17,126 children under the age of 17 in prison she published her book *Reformatory Schools* in 1851. Her basic message was that children needed discipline based on love and that prison neither deterred nor reformed but merely produced life-long criminals. She proposed that there should be:

- free day schools for the deprived;
- industrial day schools for young vagrants and beggars who could be sent there by a court order;
- residential schools to which magistrates could commit children who would be paid for by their parents or by the parish.

These proposals were revolutionary in that for the first time it was argued that the child offender should be treated as a *child*.

The remainder of her life was devoted to the practical implementation of these proposals. She was responsible for founding the first reformatory for boys and girls at Kingswood in Bristol in 1852. Kingswood did not continue as a mixed school because the girls proved to be too disruptive so that, following the Reformatory Schools Act 1854, she opened the first girls' reformatory at Red Lodge in Bristol.

So far so good, but Mary Carpenter was not only a strong-minded lady with an influential circle of friends, she was also blind and deaf to the opinions of others if they did not coincide with her own. Unfortunately, one of the people she clashed with was Sir Joshua Jebb, the Director of convict prisons, and her criticism of him and his enlightened penal policies helped to set back the cause of penal reform for decades.

The general cause of her criticism was her non-conformist suspicion of anything connected with central government: the particular cause was the Parkhurst experiment for the training of boys. By the mid-1850's, Parkhurst was a very successful and progressive institution and the legitimate precursor of the Borstal system. It was closed in 1864 partly because it was in advance of its time and partly because of the opposition of Mary Carpenter and her friends who felt it to be wrong in principle to send children to a prison which they believed prepared them for nothing but a life of crime. Sir Joshua Jebb appealed to her to stop her criticism which only served to "brand" an ex-Parkhurst boy and prevent him from earning an honest living because of the resultant bad publicity. It was not to be and, after Parkhurst closed, the state did not provide institutions for the young until after the Gladstone Committee had made its report in 1895.

Mary Carpenter had only the welfare of deprived children at heart but her criticism of the prison system was seized and exploited by a bigoted, frightened, and repressive body of public opinion. Crime was on the increase during the 1860's and the legislative answer was the Prison Act 1865 which by concentrating upon retribution and deterrence helped to produce a savage penal system that became legendary even in Tsarist Russia. To be fair to Mary Carpenter this was the only episode in her life which can be held against her. All her other projects led eventually to an improvement in the quality of life for deprived children who thereby became the responsibility of a society which was made to care by the efforts of Mary Carpenter and those like her.

Mary Carpenter was an important figure in the fight for social justice and reform. It is right that her life's work should be better known and appreciated in our time. This book goes far in providing that knowledge.

ALAN RAYFIELD  
Governor  
Gloucester Prison

## A TIME TO DIE: THE ATTICA PRISON REVOLT

TOM WICKER  
Bodley Head, 1976. £5.95

ATTICA CORRECTIONAL FACILITY is situated in a rural part of New York State. On 9th September 1971, 1,500 inmates gained control of a large part of the institution and took about 40 members of staff hostage. The prison authorities immediately gathered sufficient heavily armed state troopers outside the institution to enable them to regain control, but did not use them straight away for fear of endangering the lives of the hostages. Instead, it was decided to negotiate to see if a peaceful settlement could be reached.

The inmate leaders had such profound mistrust of the prison authorities that they would negotiate only through certain people and organisations they knew, either personally or by repute, and whom they trusted to guarantee any agreement that might be reached with the authorities. The Observers, as the group of invited negotiators was called, worked hard for four days to find some basis for resolving the differences between the inmates and the prison authorities. On 13th September, the prison authorities concluded that the Observers had failed, and sent in the state troopers. The troopers had no difficulty in ending the revolt, but the price was high. In the course of the entire revolt the inmates were responsible for four deaths: in retaking the institution, however the state troopers shot and killed 10 hostages and 29 inmates.

The Attica prison revolt is well documented. Television cameras were allowed into that part of the prison controlled by the inmates, and the Observers, several journalists among them, were in and out all the time. Following the revolt, a New York State Special Commission was set up, and its report was published in 1972.

*A Time to Die* adds an unashamedly personal account of what happened at Attica. Tom Wicker is in a good position to write such an account as he was one of the Observers. There was a large racial element in the revolt at Attica. The relationship between the prisoners and staff at Attica reflected in an enhanced way one of the underlying problems in American society, namely the relationship between the poor black and the rich white. Two thirds of the inmates of Attica were black or Puerto Rican; almost all the prison officers were white. Moreover, the inmates came from inner-city areas, the prison officers from the countryside around the prison. Wicker by background and colour belongs to the latter group rather than the former. However, he had long been concerned about race relations and civil rights and had written of prison matters with some sympathy for the prisoners.

His book is a thorough account of the Attica prison revolt. It is well-annotated and Wicker is at pains to identify the evidence for all his factual statements. There are frequent references to the Commission's report. Yet the book is more than a record of the revolt, for Wicker skilfully interweaves autobiographical detail and a commentary on the racial tension in American society. The result is fascinating and informative.

In many ways it is easier to find the differences than the similarities between the American criminal justice and penal system and the British. Yet the Attica revolt does provide a sobering example of what can happen if too much weight is placed on unproven assumptions. The authorities at Attica assumed that the prisoners would kill the hostages in cold blood if there was an attempt to retake the institution: without this assumption they would not have negotiated at all. At the same time, the inmates, although they had little faith in the prison authorities, did not doubt that the lives of the hostages would be valued more highly than the control of the prison. Both assumptions turned out to be false.

Mr. Wicker, as someone outside the penal system, is in a good position to look at many of its unquestioned practices and assumptions: this he does thoughtfully, and with a sense of what is realistic and practical in American society.

ROBIN HALWARD  
Assistant Governor  
Gaynes Hall Borstal

## DIRECTORY OF PROJECTS 1976/77

CCA, CHAR, Cyrenians, MIND,  
NACRO and SCODA  
Barry Rose, 1976. £2.00

THIS *Directory* has been produced by six voluntary organisations and contains details about scores of centres set up in England and Wales for adult offenders, alcoholics, drug-takers, and people with histories of mental illness. The producers are the Camberwell Council on Alcoholism, the Campaign for the Homeless and Rootless, the Cyrenians, the National Association for Mental Health (MIND), the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders and the Standing Conference on Drug Abuse, though the projects described are sponsored by a wide range of national and local agencies.

The projects are listed by county but are indexed by the management of each unit, by town, by project title and (most usefully) by type of project and target group. All this makes for a very effective directory which will prove useful to anyone working with the families of, or directly with, adult offenders, alcoholics, drug-takers, homeless single people or those with histories of mental illness.

## (1) THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SENTENCING

S. R. BRODY

## (2) IMPACT VOLUME II

M. S. FOLKARD, D. E. SMITH and D. D. SMITH  
Home Office Research Studies Nos. 35 and 36  
H.M.S.O. £1.15 & 80p respectively

LIKE the rest of the Home Office Research Studies, these two reports give value for money. Brody's review of the literature on the effectiveness of different sentences ranges widely, extending and up-dating the discussion in Hood and Sparks' *Key Issues in Criminology*. Although it is a discouraging fact that we have practically no usable evidence to suggest what we should do for the best when we sentence offenders, Brody does his best to be constructive—explaining that the studies he explores have been productive in some ways. We are, as Leslie Wilkins put it some years ago, beginning to discover our ignorance. We also need to learn to be cautious about relying on reconviction rates, to give experiments a chance to run their course without introducing changes which muck them up, and to be more aware of the conflicting aims which lie behind sentencing. Here, Brody is open to criticism, since he concentrates on objectives associated with attempts to control the offender's future conduct—as indeed has most of the research he reviews. There are, however, other aspects of sentencing which cry out for attention. Is sentencing the outcome of a process in which the defendant feels he has been able to make himself understood; is the social worker convincingly acting in his client's interests; and what are the workable limits of "justice" as far as our courts are concerned? Effective sentencing must surely take these issues into account.

The IMPACT report examines the effects of giving high-risk probationers intensive treatment rather than giving them the usual sort of supervision. Broadly speaking, it makes no difference, judging by their likelihood of reconviction within 12 months or so. There are, however, some signs that some probationers do better for the intensive work while others do worse. In a nutshell, the "harder" cases—the more criminal ones without much by way of personal problems—do worse while the less criminal ones, who admit to being beset by personal problems, benefit. The report is, of course, a bit of a smack in the eye for anyone with a naive faith in probation. The writers are not exactly exultant either—they say that the results, as they stand, "do not support a general application of intensive treatment", reduced case-loads or the use of long check-lists of clients' problems.

Disappointingly, the authors do not attempt to take stock of where their work leaves us. Piously, they say that "the feasibility and acceptability of this kind of treatment in probation practice were demonstrated", but they do not relate their negative results to the astonishingly positive ones from Margaret Shaw's *Social Work in Prisons*. We will go on scratching our heads for some time yet.

M.B.

mass of evidence which is marshalled, it is difficult in a short review to do justice to the hard work and scholarship which are signal features of the book.

One of the main themes is the questioning of a stock assumption that there has always been an inevitability about "progress" in social policy—a challenge to the notion, for example, that the National Health Service just had to happen when it did because the time was ripe and opposition was at its lowest point. The authors suggest several alternative ways of approaching such developments, one of the most arresting being the idea that not enough attention is "paid to defeated social policies, to what might have been rather than what is". Using this suggestion as a starting point, one could perhaps interpret penal development very differently. A good, fresh, example is the defeat of the Mountbatten proposal to build a special prison for category A prisoners. Indeed, one might usefully consider what might have been in such a case.

This book does not only set out some alternative strategies for the study of social policy but also puts those strategies into tangible form in the shape of a set of case studies. There is a dutiful caveat about the defects of using case studies, always a source of contention amongst social scientists, but the authors need not have worried. The case studies are so well informed, thoughtful, and readable, that they are, from time to time, gripping. They cover family allowances, the Open University, Health Centres, the struggle for clean air, the abolition of National Assistance, and—for the readership, where it's at—Detention Centres.

As a professional adult educator I was especially interested in the chronology of the Open University. A fair bit has been written about that institution, but much of it by those involved (nothing wrong with that), and much of it concerned with its workings since it began. I happen to be glad that the Open University is in business. But that is not the point. Phoebe Hall in this volume goes right back to source and shows how opposition to it, much of it ill formed, was overcome by important factors such as the interest and autocracy of Harold Wilson and the device of not consulting anybody and keeping people short of information.

Even if the other cases are passed over by readers of this journal, the Detention Centre article is a must. Hilary Land gives a blow by blow account of the genesis and development of the Detention Centre. She is factually accurate and, I believe, right in her assumptions and conclusions. She describes how this isolated commitment to punishment was attacked as it began and how, after a faulty beginning because, for example, of staff shortages occasioned by political decisions, the Centres got under way. She is correct in saying that the mellowing of the regime was due, in part, to the sheer difficulty of staff trying to keep up a pace which, whilst possible in a volunteer boys' battalion in the army, was more difficult to enforce with many reluctant Detention Centre inmates. She also spotlights the problem that the courts were sending boys who had weak hearts. I used to wonder, when I looked at such boys myself, who these stupid judicial authorities were. There is one aspect which could perhaps have been stressed more, and this was the damaging effect the growth of the Detention Centre had on the classic Borstal idea. Especially was this the case after the conversion of North Sea Camp, the symbol of Borstal training, to a Detention Centre in 1963. But this is a detail; if you make any pretence to understand how penal policy is made, you should read the chapter. If you are interested in learning more about the mesh of government activities in which we survive, then read the whole book.

DR. J. E. THOMAS,  
University of Hull,

(Author of *The English Prison Officer since 1850* and many contributions and articles on prisons.)

## THE SURVIVOR: AN ANATOMY OF LIFE IN THE DEATH CAMPS

TERRENCE DES PRES  
Oxford University Press, 1976. £4.00

AMONG other enormities of our century, the imprisonment of vast numbers of men and women in death camps and penal camps of frightful severity, for the 'crime' of race, religion, or political non-conformity, is a fact that will stand accusingly and paradoxically alongside the record of twentieth century man's undoubted progress in many fields.

Terrence Des Pres has given us a remarkable and deeply moving book, authentic and really well documented, with memorable quotations from their inmates, about the concentration camps of Hitler and Stalin. He wants to tell us how human beings can survive the most terrible and protracted assaults on body and mind and yet stay alive, sane and human.

Do not read this book if you have a weak stomach. Do not read it if you wish to remain comfortably ignorant of the incredibly cruel and barbarous things modern man can deliberately do to his fellow man—"bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh". But if you want to see man in his awesome greatness, deprived of everything save the will to live, enduring a nightmare hell on earth and yet preserving a sense of conscience and dignity—man equal to the worst that can happen—then read this book.

Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Belsen and Gulag are some of the names that we cannot speak of save with horror and nausea. Yet from these death camps, Terrence Des Pres can redeem some testimony of hope and life—a few survived and preserved their humanity. How and why is the subject matter of *The Survivor*.

We see men and women as crawling skeletons we see people lining up to begin another day of waking nightmare; we see human beings condemned to live in their own vomit and excrement; we see the doomed, watched by the still living, herded into gas-chambers and crematory pits in such vast numbers that the mind reels at the computation, and we would utterly despair but for the stubborn fact that some who endured these experiences actually survived—as human beings.

These prison camps were an actualisation of the demonic tradition of Hell: "The camps embody, often to minutiae the images and chronicles of Hell in European Art and thought from the 12th and 18th centuries. These representations gave to the deranged horrors of Belsen a kind of 'expected logic'. The death camps of the 20th century are *Hell made immanent*" (Steiner, in *Bluebeard's Castle*, quoted on page 171). Des Pres convinces us of the terrible fact that "the typology of hell was everywhere apparent in the camps".

The marvellous thing is, that in the midst of all this horror, there were acts of sharing and helpfulness, of social collectiveness and resistance. Humanity triumphed. "There was this awful fight for one's bare existence. The essential thing of course, was not to lose the will to live. I realised that *alone* one could not possibly survive. It was necessary therefore, to form little families of two or three. In this way we looked after one another" (Kitty Hart, in *I am alive*, quoted on page 105).

Survival in Hell. That is the theme of this magnificent but terrifying book. We owe gratitude to Terrence Des Pres for the presentation of another testimony, impressively authenticated and written with consummate skill, to the indestructibility of the human spirit.

S. J. DAVIES,  
Rector of Uley, Gloucestershire

(The Rev. S. J. Davies was himself a P.O.W. for two and a half years in a Communist prison camp in North Korea.)

## CHANGE, CHOICE AND CONFLICT IN SOCIAL POLICY

PHOEBE HALL, HILARY LAND, ROY PARKER  
and ADRIAN WEBB

Heinemann, 1975

Hardback £7.00 Paperback £2.90

THIS is a wide-ranging book, covering many aspects of social policy, which tries to examine the traditional approaches to understanding how policy is made and, after drawing these together, suggests some defects and alternatives. Because of the scale of the attempt, and the

Social  
Policy

## PROBATION—100 YEARS ON

A Special Edition of *Probation Journal*  
September 1976

National Association of Probation Officers, 60p  
THE Police Court Mission came into being in 1876 and was the origin of the probation Service. With an encouraging foreword from Buck House, this edition of *Probation Journal* takes stock of the service now. Prison staff are quite well aware of the conflicts which beset their own work—they could usefully look at this short publication to discover how the Probation Service is recognising and living with its own similar difficulties.

The issue sets a useful example by providing a pull-out "discussion starter" by John Hicks on "Probation and sentencing" (25p).

## VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY

Edited by MARIE BORLAND

Manchester University Press, 1976. £5.95

IN November 1974 and March 1975, conferences on "Physical Violence in the Family" were organised by the Extra-Mural Department of Manchester University. Material from the conferences is collected together in this book.

The emphasis is on the physical aspects of violence but recognition is given to the other types of injury which members of a family can inflict on one another. The foreword draws attention to this and to the differences between the phenomena of the battered wife and of the battered child. Situations in which the husband is the victim are in the main omitted from the book.

The first paper is by Sydney Brandon, a psychiatrist. He briefly describes the discovery of the battered child syndrome and its study. Professor Brandon discusses in more detail his own work and uses individual cases to illustrate the pattern of child abuse. He looks at other types of violence, incest and wife battering, and examines the backgrounds of the families, the injuries inflicted, and the problems of remedy; for instance, the effect of imprisonment on a family and the financial dependence of a wife on her husband.

Sociologist Michael Chatterton looks at the definition of violence and the importance of contextual information, such as what those involved view as acceptable behaviour norms and the effect of the media in establishing stereotypes of violence. Rates of detection and police attitudes are examined while the point is also made that it may be necessary to report even a provoked assailant in order to help him.

The paper presented by Frank Bamford, a paediatrician, on "Medical Diagnosis in Non-Accidental Injury of Children" is largely factual while making clear that such diagnosis must be opinion-based. The injuries which can be inflicted on children, and how such injuries can be recognised, are described without over-emphasis on the horrors of individual cases. The importance of the consideration of alternative diagnosis is emphasised and Dr. Bamford outlines other causes of similar injuries.

"The Management of Non-Accidental Injury to Children in the City of Manchester", by John Rickett, is also mainly factual. It describes in a brief and interesting way the organisation and procedures which have been set up in Manchester in an attempt to deal with both physical and other types of violence.

The focus of the book widens again to include the injured spouse. Bert Raisbeck, describes, in "The Legal Framework", the protection and remedies which are open to children and spouses. This is a large, complicated subject which is dealt with concisely, raising some of the problems which are discussed in more detail by Margaret Gregory, a psychologist, in her paper on "Battered Wives".

Recommendations are made which include all the services involved: social, medical, legal, housing and research. The problems and issues of this very necessary "inter-agency collaboration" are raised again in the final chapter but before that Chief Superintendent Mildred Daw outlines the involvement of the police.

It is interesting to note in previous papers the different attitudes of the other agencies towards the police in the two types of case: spouse battering and child injury. As a social worker, Tom Tomlinson, concentrates largely on the problems of Social Service Department in his paper on "Inter-agency Collaboration". The need for both formal and informal contacts is brought out and recommendations are made of ways by which this collaboration may be furthered. Mr. Tomlinson's final point about the importance of the informal level brings us back to the origin of this book and the continuing discussions, as yet inconclusive, involving people in all the disciplines concerned.

The book is not directly helpful to those working in prisons as any mention of custodial sentences emphasises the negative aspects with little discussion of those who, with family violence in their background, are being sentenced. However, the "inter-agency collaboration" all too often includes us.

J. M. KING,  
Assistant Governor,  
Styal Prison.

## THE STRUCTURE OF EVIL

ERNEST BECKER

Free Press, 1976. £2.00

## ESCAPE FROM EVIL

ERNEST BECKER

Collier-Macmillan, 1977.

(Now in paperback) £2.00

SUBTITLED "An Essay on the Unification of the Science of Man", *The Structure of Evil* describes Becker's grand overview of the social sciences and his attempt to prescribe their future development. By showing that we have no reason for studying nature except to find clues for our own happiness, Becker shifts the emphasis from the "is" of scientific fact to the "ought" of human value. Re-orientation of the sciences is necessary he argues, in order to achieve meaning out of different disciplines and to answer the pressing moral and social problems which face man.

As an introduction to the main thesis, we are given an historical survey of the attempts of philosophers and scientists to define the place of man in science. Becker draws together strands from sociology, psychology, psychiatry, anthropology and philosophy to develop his theme that each man is the creator of meaning in his own life. But life has little or no meaning because man uncritically plays only the roles culture allows him—he has no powers and is merely a "cultural artefact". In other words, his alienation can be laid in the lap of society. Lacking a basic conviction, a firm ethic, a commanding perspective from which to view himself and his history, man is at the mercy of his self-perpetuating economic and social institutions.

Becker's solution is to develop a science of man which will guide human endeavour along paths that lead to the maximization of every individual's self-fulfilment. Such a super-ordinate view of man will give direction to science by providing a single organising value—the concept of the ideal type of man—which Becker calls "ethical man". Ethical man chooses his reality and thus is free to fabricate a conviction from his daily encounter with the world. Unfortunately, there can be no concrete prescription of the ideal type because it remains a goal, unattainable and changing with man's needs.

Like the reviewer of *Escape from Evil* (see October 1976 issue of this journal), I am disappointed with the paucity of Becker's solution. There are no specific proposals and it is unlikely that the reader will be able to extract any practical answers. Becker's work, however, is exciting, best suited for dipping into rather than for ploughing through from cover to cover. The books sparkle with brilliant insights and keen judgments; they allow the reader glimpses of the vast perspective which Becker commands.

DAVID JEFFERY,  
Psychologist,  
Gloucester Prison

## SOCIOBIOLOGY—THE NEW SYNTHESIS

EDWARD O. WILSON

Harvard University Press, 1975. £12.00

IT is now some months since Edward Wilson let the rest of the world in on his new science of sociobiology. Its reception was either rapturous or cool, depending upon the reader's attitude to the core question of whether human behaviour is genetically or environmentally determined. Since then, the dust has settled somewhat and the new synthesis does not seem to have generated any significant counter-reactions: but perhaps we have not waited long enough.

What is sociobiology anyway and why should this book be reviewed in the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL?

The new science of sociobiology sets out to analyse and display the general biological principles that govern social behaviour and all forms of social organisation, from the smallest termite colony to the largest of our modern societies. In one sense sociobiology carries the work of Darwin along its logical path. Survival of the species is not the primary goal of evolution. The survival of the species is subsidiary to survival of the genes. Genes, carrying all of an individual's hereditary information, power the decisions that are made in the process of living with others. When danger threatens social grouping of some animals, the older female will turn to defend the young, even at the cost of her own life; why? Simply, that it is genetically more efficient that her offspring who are still of child-bearing age, survive to breed than it would be for her to survive, since she can no longer breed and pass on her genes. It is a salutary exercise to ask ourselves if the "women and children first" tradition is genetically prescribed; if it is, our finest act of altruism may be seen as no more than an efficient method of ensuring the best chances of success for our genes. And if this is the result of evolution what other aspects of our behaviour, over which we believe we exercise complete control, are displayed because they are genetically efficient?

The natural conclusion to such a line of thought is to make all human philosophy and morality subjected to the iron law of adaptability and genetic efficiency. But this is not a licence for unscrupulous leaders to dictate moralities, rather it is a challenge to examine afresh the basis of our moral and ethical codes, and to move away from the purely intuitive basis for such codes. In so doing, we may be faced with a very uncomfortable problem, sociobiology may lay bare why we value such things as co-operativeness and creativeness, pointing out that they are merely the other side of the coin of aggression towards strangers and a desire to own and dominate. In explaining life, as Wilson admits, life itself may lose its magic. So far I have barely hinted at the wealth of material in this enormous book; I do not attempt to give a thorough account of its scope, but it has innumerable examples of animal and insect behaviour sufficient to keep you, on the one hand, endlessly supplied with those interesting bits of information so useful at social gatherings and, on the other, totally fascinated by the variety and richness of non-human societies and organisations and by insights into the bases of human behaviour.

The chapters particularly worthy of the attention of anyone in the Service are those focused on aggression, dominance systems, roles and castes, sex and society, and the final chapter, "Man, from Sociobiology to Sociology".

This is an exciting book, far too comprehensive to be read from cover to cover in one sitting, but one which will repay even the most casual glance. It is written in the easiest and most clear styles so that even 'O' level biology is not necessary as a qualification for its understanding.

M. R. J. GANDER,  
Assistant Governor,  
Prison Service College,  
Wakefield

## PROCEDURE AND RESOURCES FOR MENTALLY ABNORMAL OFFENDERS

Howard League for Penal Reform  
1976. 25p.

THE Howard League was one of the bodies which presented evidence to the Butler Committee (see PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL number 24, page 14). Its comments and proposals, now available in a pamphlet include the idea of community clinics to which the mentally ill can either be referred or refer themselves. Such clinics would provide somewhere for people to get help and would co-ordinate the Probation Service, voluntary agencies, psychiatrists and others.

R.E.

## READINGS IN CORRECTIONAL CASEWORK AND COUNSELLING

Edited by EDWARD E. PEOPLES  
Goodyear, 1975. £6.50

THESE readings gather some of the available American papers about pro-active casework techniques. The perspective, orientation, needs, problems, or motives of the offender must be placed in some framework of understanding relative to the nature of the treatment model. This is the editor's particular aim. There is also a selection of the dozen or so individualised, group and process models of offender classification and treatment which the book reviews.

Anticipating the criticisms of an informal approach to casework/counselling, Peoples insists that his techniques acknowledge the client as an individual. He is critical of caseworkers who reject these concepts as implying a labelling theory because they usually have little knowledge or understanding of them. In passing, he indicts caseworkers who:

- say that no one technique has the real answer;
- feign confusion and build everything on nebulous relationships; or
- lock themselves up with one theory of behaviour.

He claims to speak to the mature caseworker who suspends judgment on the "rightness" or "wrongness" of all methods, learns as much as he can about all theories and applications, and is selective in matching his approach in counselling to the situation.

The general aims of this collection may speak more keenly to the British caseworker. Under certain conditions, the material is appropriate to an institutional setting but the focus is essentially the community and the emphasis is on behaviour change. It presumes that the primary goal of correctional programmes has been the protection of society but acknowledges a decade of disillusionment with the rehabilitative effectiveness of institutions and correctional casework and with the social protection they allegedly provide. Hence the thrust on American "new corrections" has been back to the community and an attempt to develop a process in which both agent and client share responsibility for direction and outcome.

Probation and parole have been used as alternatives to incarceration for more years in America than in Britain. In both treatment situations, the full responsibility for behaviour change rested with the offender. "The caseworker assumed a reactive posture" but, in the drive to "new corrections", the caseworker has a new dimension as a pro-active facilitator. Peoples also offers a distinctive word of caution to the reader entering the field of correctional counselling. Sometimes the best treatment is no treatment at all. He challenges the reader with a variety of theoretical counselling models and applies them to correctional casework in the hope of providing that framework of understanding around which those strategies and skills can be developed.

The readings lead into one another in a helpful manner. Part I presents theories of personal and social development that explain criminality and delinquency. Part II shows how those theories have been used in corrections, reviews the current trends in examining the cause and treatment of antisocial behaviour and then discusses some of the practical aspects of the environment in which casework is conducted. Part III focuses on the style and attitude of the caseworker and the dynamics of the client/worker relationship. Those sections give the reader a grasp of the theoretical assumptions, enable the transition from theory to application and clarify roles in the correctional process. Then comes the range of counselling strategies, starting in Part IV with offender classification and treatment models that primarily serve in one-to-one counselling. Part V moves on to group counselling models and some of the distinctions between group and individual counselling methods. Throughout, one must constantly allow for different probation/parole systems in the States and put up with the Americanisms, but otherwise it is a refreshing collection.

BRIAN BOOTH  
Senior Probation Officer  
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Service

## IMAGES OF LAW

Z. BANKOWSKI and G. MUNGHAM  
Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976. £2.50

THE authors make no bones about their political affiliations. They are Marxists, antagonistic towards the legal systems operating in western society because they see the law, the courts, the legal profession and the general legal paraphernalia as upholding the current structure of society, de-humanising the individual involved and preventing men "breaking free". The blunt Marxist theory is very quickly identified in the preface, there is an acute danger that this could drive the reader into an antagonistic stance, but as one perseveres with the content, despite several obvious printing errors, plus passages that are nothing but tedious repetitions, the book poses one or two questions that we could well consider in an objective manner.

The book is an attack on the socio-legal school which has attempted to remove the strict divisions and hostilities between the lawyer and the sociologist. Examples of recent developments within the socio-legal school have been the rapid extension of legal aid, the availability of representation to defendants, the provision of law centres in poorer working-class areas, and the inclusion into legal training of subjects such as welfare, industrial and social security law. All these factors are pulling the legal profession away from its old middle/upper class image.

The authors based their studies of the legal profession and institutions on Cardiff and they believe the studies have uncovered several worrying aspects about the day to day operation of the system. In particular, they criticise the use made of the legal aid scheme which they allege has:

- simply created more work and greater income for the legal profession;
- encouraged a growth in the influence of the profession and the professional to the detriment of the individual; and
- led to malpractices in which the courts, police and prison services are involved; certain firms of solicitors are recommended to law-breakers by these organisations. In the case of the police, one of the suggestions is that this is done in return for the prosecuting officer being given "an easy ride" during cross-examination by the defence.

Like all Marxist theorists, Bankowski and Mungham see the masses as persecuted and see the courts as an important part of the control exerted upon them by the system. Their answer

is almost inevitable: let the court room be a political theatre, let communities organise themselves rather than being organised and led by the lawyers. This will enable man to break free to find that law itself is not required.

It is interesting that the book does not argue in economic terms. The initial Marxist theory of law—based on the proletariat seizing control and thus being so content with the result that the law will simply "wither away"—is not shouted from the roof tops. Perhaps the author knows that in nations attempting to implement Marxist theology, the legal system and structure has, if anything, become more imposing, obvious and important. Bankowski and Mungham are still highly committed to their political philosophy and the reader learns from the book of their continued support for the predictable array of revolutionary heroes from the United States and from our own industrial problems of 3 years ago (e.g. the Shrewsbury pickets).

As I delved further into the book, a feeling of the authors' political frustration came across. It is a frustration which the socio-legal school created. Could it be that the authors are aware that the extension of legal aid, despite faults in its practical and procedural operation, has been at least partly successful in helping people deal with and use the law, despite the authors' contention that the defendant plays no real part at all, everything being left to the professional?

Equally, could it be that neighbourhood law centres do enable more grievances to be resolved more satisfactorily for the individual? Of more interest for the service are the references to the "professional" and the assumption that he knows best. The pressures of an institution, can make our working world rather narrow and through this we may discount what we see as amateur advice. Occasionally, that advice may be correct and we should learn from well-meant criticism. If we also study arguments that are based more on emotion than fact, we will be able to reply in such a way that displays professional care, knowledge and responsibility.

D. R. SEARY  
Assistant Governor  
Kirkham Prison

## EVALUATING CORRECTIONAL AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS

RUDOLF MOOS  
Wiley, 1975. £11.00

## EVALUATING COMMUNITY TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Edited by MERCEDES MILLER  
Lexington Books, 1976. £8.55

THE trend towards scientific evaluation as an aid to making rational decisions has been strengthened lately by the need to be more cost-effective. Staff training, community services, and other treatment or social programmes are being evaluated more or less systematically: or, as Malcolm Weinstein has it in the title to his paper in the *Canadian Psychological Review* (April 1975), "Two, Four, Six, Eight—Everyone Evaluate!" As the reviews sections in recent editions of the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL indicate, many evaluation studies are now bearing fruit and we can expect to see an increasing number of books publishing the results of evaluations or offering advice on how they should be designed.

For all that, scientific evaluation will continue to be a difficult and frustrating task. There are so many factors to take into consideration and real difficulties in devising effective and reliable measuring devices.

Professor Rudolf Moos has been working for some years on the evaluation of treatment and penal regimes. He recognises that inmates' behaviour is an adaptation to a particular setting and that their responses are reflections of the "social climate" of an institution. Moos



has therefore developed questionnaires which show differences between various "correctional programs" and which he claims can be useful in improving the environment and in detecting institutional tensions before, for example violent crises occur.

The work Moos describes in *Evaluating Correctional and Community Settings* is certainly a step forward in evaluating penal units: his techniques will be seen increasingly around the Prison Service in Britain.

Part IV of Moos' book turns to the evaluation of community-based treatment programmes. Here scientific evaluation is even harder to conduct: in the community, there are more social permutations and reactions than within institutions. Nevertheless, Moos' attempts at evaluating community treatments and comparing these with the "social climates" of family and military settings are convincing.

Mercedes Miller's book also focuses on *Evaluating Community Treatment Programs*. Her approach is entirely different and reflects the intense competition there is between various American consultative companies and academic departments to turn out useable evaluation techniques. Miller ignores such niceties as "social climates" and plugs away at rigorous, if somewhat mechanical, observations of clients by staff. Her book shows that the community centre she evaluated was effective in terms of keeping young men from further crime and that the monitoring process made it easier to identify successes and failures. Generally, though, Miller's work adds little to the advancement of evaluation techniques, and its publication is only really justified because a great deal of her book comprises the forms and procedures used and these may be informative to anyone interested in setting up a similar study.

*Evaluation of treatment*

\* RICK EVANS,  
Senior Psychologist,  
Gloucester Prison



## GAMBLING, WORK AND LEISURE

D. DOWNES, B. DAVIES, M. DAVID and P. STONE  
Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976. £8.25

GAMBLING, as a sociological phenomenon, has received scant attention from sociologists in the past. There are few sociological theories on gambling and even less data. In this context, *Gambling, Work and Leisure*, the first major British study of the subject, should have been something of a pioneering breakthrough. Unfortunately, it is not and, for a variety of reasons, I found the book disappointing.

First, it reads very much as a Ph.D. thesis aimed at impressing an erudite professor rather than informing the general reader. The opening chapters on gambling as a sociological problem and a social problem, which are intended to set the scene, are rather sketchy. There is a brief resume of the three main sociological theories of gambling (i.e. as a form of play, as a personal action and as a symptom of social strain) and this is followed by a sweeping history of gambling in Britain which hints at a greater knowledge than is actually conveyed and thus merely tantalises the reader. The following chapter on research strategy describes in painstaking detail the many difficulties to be faced in setting up a sociological study: it may be important to those who are interested in research methods and wish to critically assess the methodology but, in my opinion, it would have been better placed in an appendix. The remainder of the book, apart from a four page conclusion, is a

presentation of their findings based on a total of 2,000 interviews undertaken in three areas.

Secondly, the original material on which the book is based is rather dated. The project, on which the study is based, began as long ago as 1964 and, as the authors admit, it should have been finished by 1970. This excessive time lag, due mainly to financial problems, has the unfortunate effect of undermining one's interest in the contents of the book. As a picture of gambling in the 1960's, it has some interest, particularly to those wishing to know the effects of the *Gaming and Betting Act 1960*, but one is constantly wondering whether its findings are relevant to the 1970's. References to £.s.d. in the statistical tables, in the context of decimal coinage and rampant inflation, reinforce this feeling, yet the authors have made no attempt to up-date their material with recent developments like the setting up of the Gaming Board, the taxation of winnings, the growth of club bingo and the general expansion of the gambling industry.

Thirdly, I found the book badly written and poorly integrated. There is too much unnecessary jargon and some of the numerous statistical tables are incomprehensible. There is little attempt to systematically relate the initial theories to the data collected—due to pressures of time (!). One is left with "estimates and descriptions of each form of gambling... and data of an exploratory character".

On the positive side, the book does put gambling in the 1960's into perspective. It concludes that the *Betting and Gaming Act* did not open the flood gates to an increasing tide of gambling. There is an interesting analysis of different forms of gambling (football pool, betting, gaming, club bingo and gaming machines). Considerable details are given as to the sex and class of the different categories of gamblers, the frequency and location of their activities, the size of their stake, their winnings, if any, and what they did with them.

These findings show that the frequency of men gambling is three times that of women and that, generally, the conventional wisdom is confirmed: "that the young, the poor (but not the poorest), the lower working class gamble more frequently than the rest". However, these differentials are far more modest than is socially assumed. Those most prone to gambling had parents who regularly gambled, lacked scope in work or leisure and were unmarried.

The book is written very honestly and the many trials and tribulations the authors faced and the limitations of their techniques are freely admitted. They modestly conclude: "as things stand we can at least claim to have cleared the ground of a great deal of presupposition and piecemeal theory stitching and, from the few relationships which have emerged, are better placed to get on with building better theory".

The work is a modest and rather disappointing start to the sociological study of gambling in Britain today. At £8.25, it must be something of a financial gamble for the publishers.

JOHN McCONNEL,  
Assistant Governor,  
Glen Parva Borstal



## LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL REALITY: THE CASE OF TELLING THE CONVICT CODE

D. WIEDER  
Mouton, 1976.

ANYONE who has been around prisons long enough to have had a bath knows that staff and prisoners don't see eye to eye. With a bit of experience, staff get to know what to expect of prisoners and to be able to put any approach or retreat by the prisoner into a context. At

least part, if not all, of the skill of managing difficult men in difficult situations depends on being able to "read" the men and the situations. The promotion examination has long included a test of the ability of officers to demonstrate this capacity to the satisfaction of their superiors. Wieder's book is about how staff develop their "knowingness" and about how they use it. Expanding on an earlier article about a half-way house designed to rehabilitate drug offenders on parole, it asks how staff learn to see the meaning of the actions played out before them and how they get to share these understandings between themselves. Wieder's answer centres on the way talk is used, particularly on the way staff depend on talk to do with the "convict code".

I have not the slightest doubt that the vast majority of us take it for granted that people will talk to each other. It does not occur to most of us to wonder what the outcome of all this talking is. In the case of the Prison Service which is still creeping out from under the shadow of the silent system, staff should be hypersensitive to the consequences of talk. More recently, some sociologists and psychologists have become especially interested in the talk business. From personal experience I can testify that taking an interest in what other people say and the way they say it certainly dents one's own conversational style and tends to get the other people up-tight. One of my discoveries is that other people aren't keen to be listened to too intently. They don't so much want you to hear what they are saying as to get what they mean. The two things are almost never the same! And what I mean is that no-one should tangle with this book unless they are prepared to take the consequences of becoming interested in this subject of talk—and they won't be able to guess what those consequences might be unless they either read the book or at least read this paragraph again.

Wieder starts by discussing the generation of "rules" to explain how people behave and then sketches the origins of the half-way house and the ways residents behave to defeat the staff's efforts. He then examines how staff resort to their understanding of the convict code to explain "troublesome" behaviour on the part of the inmates.

Part II is highly theoretical and demonstrates that Wieder isn't particularly interested in prisons or the convict code as such; he is interested, as the title of the book suggests, in how the staff's ideas about what prisoners are really up to are dependent upon what staff have heard or overheard prisoners saying. Staff consequently develop categories of explanations which account for prisoners behaving as they do. Staff share, test and elaborate these categories, induct new members into their use and construct the reality of the world in which they work.

In some ways, the book is a milestone. Those who work in prisons have the privilege of having a "pure scientist" drop in on them to test his ideas about some of the fundamental questions on how the world comes to look as it does. In some other ways, the book is an exasperation, partly perhaps because it hits close to home, partly because it misses out on the complexity of the situation in the prison and, not least, because it demands closer, more attentive reading than most books.

Staff in prisons have to plot a careful course between, on the one hand, presuming they know for all practical purposes what prisoners are up to and, on the other, not having the confidence to act at all for fear of misreading the situation. Prisoners, too, are in something of a similar bind—a point with which Wieder does not concern himself. For what it delivers, the book is a disappointment—but for what it suggests, it is exhilarating and tantalising.

*Labelling language*

MARK BEESON  
Leeds University

## ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT TO PSJ INDEX

This supplement, prepared by Richard Turbet, Prison Service College Librarian, brings up-to-date the chronological and subject index which was published in the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL Number 22 (May 1976). The first part lists the authors and titles of articles appearing during 1976 and the second part lists contents by topic: subjects new to the 1976 index are underlined.

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