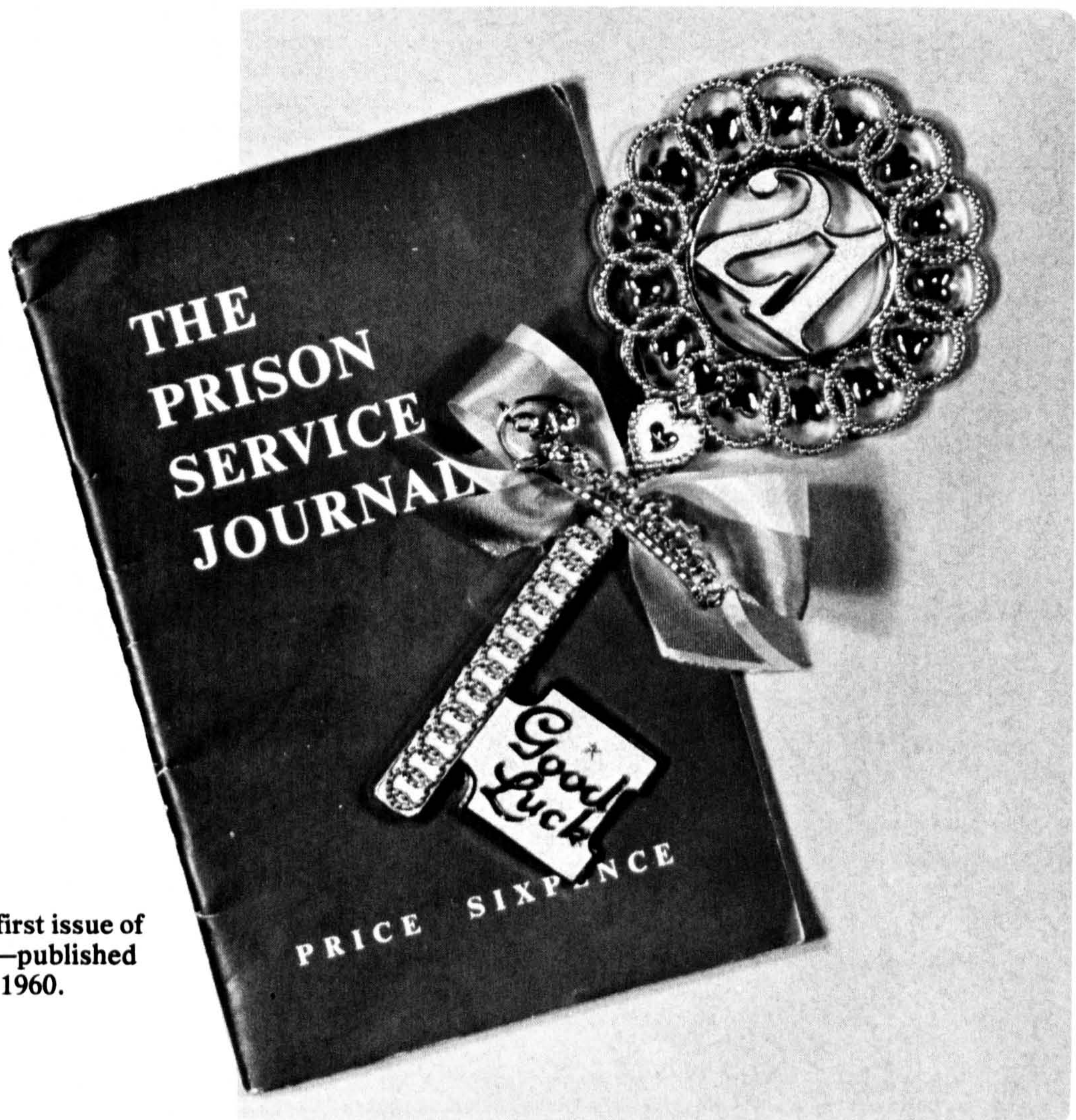


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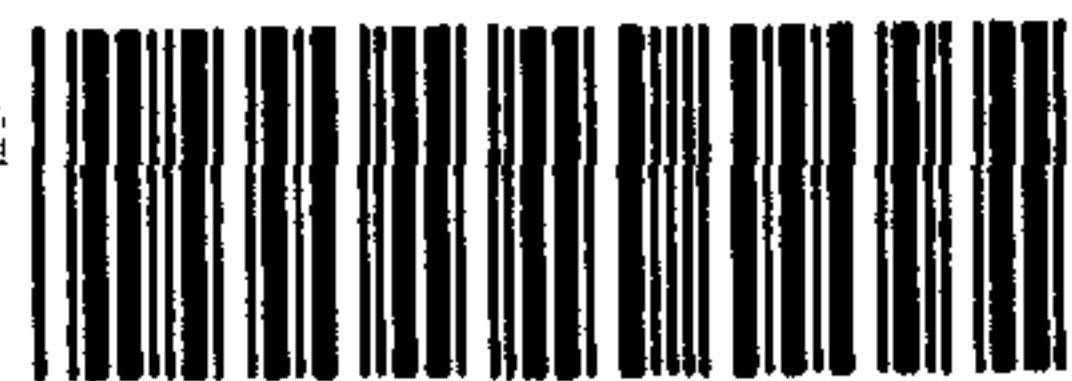
21st
ANNIVERSARY
ISSUE

PRISON
SERVICE

JOURNAL



The first issue of
PSJ—published
July 1960.



PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

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

Comment

It will not have escaped notice that this edition marks the 21st birthday of the *Prison Service Journal* and we are grateful for the encouraging messages of support we have received from many well wishers commemorating this fact. The Journal has undergone some changes since R. A. Butler, the then Home Secretary, commended it to the Service. Mr. Butler's greatest contribution to penological thinking was the White Paper "Penal Practice in a Changing Society". This paper committed the Prison Service to the treatment model and the Home Secretary welcomed the Journal as an important contribution to the exchange of information in the development of methods of penal treatment.

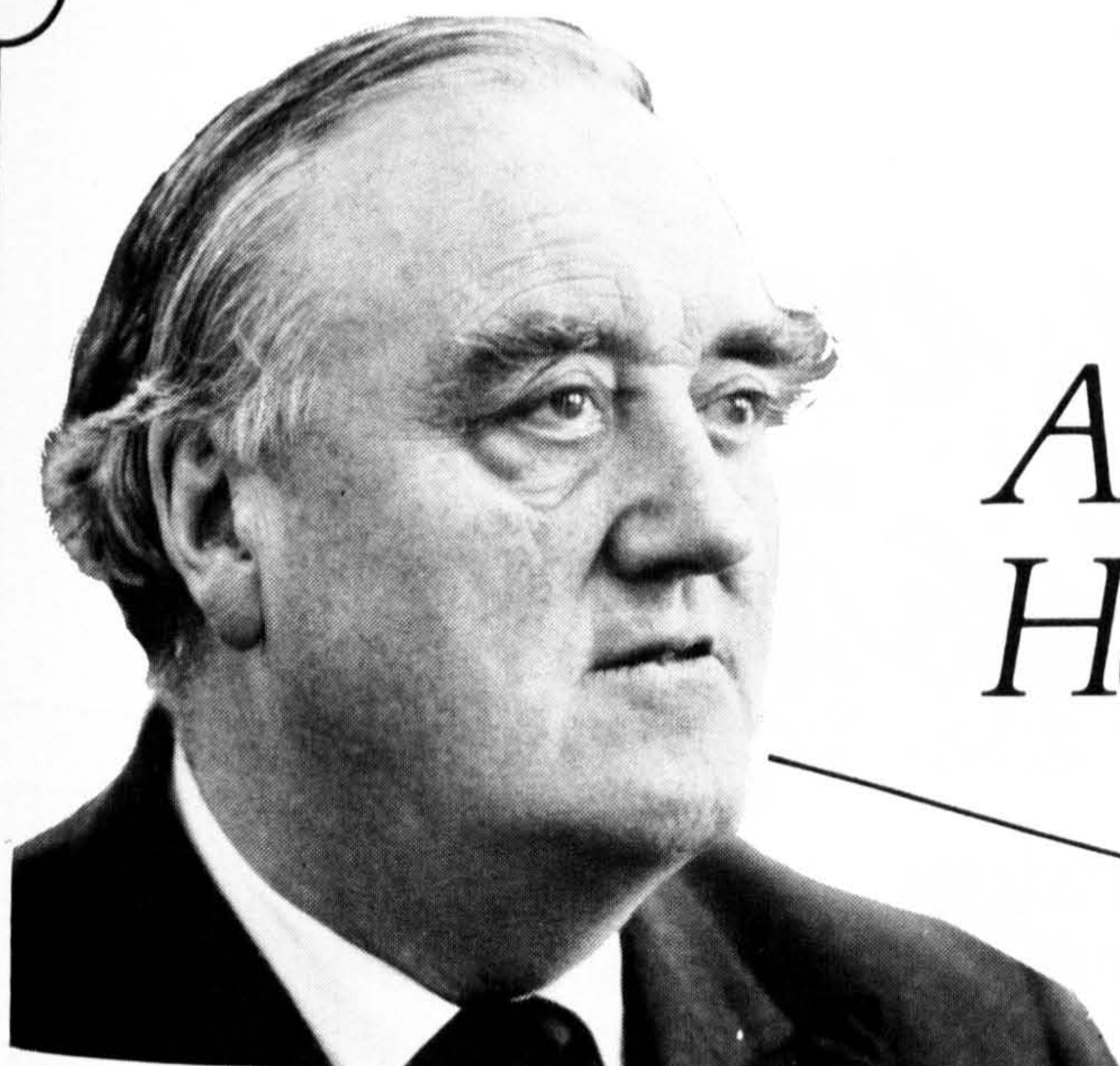
In the years that followed we have seen a gradual erosion of the treatment ideal and its replacement by a growing preoccupation with security. Recently the concepts of "humane containment" and "positive custody" have been voiced so perhaps the pendulum is beginning to swing back. If so the Journal will try to reflect these social changes as it has reflected others in the past.

To look back is natural but the Journal can only flourish if it looks ahead and deals openly with those issues which currently preoccupy the Prison Service. The Journal is not the house journal looked for by the May Committee neither is it completely independent. It is funded and promoted by the Prison Department although the views expressed in its pages are not necessarily backed by them. Some critics argue that because of its peculiar status the Journal cannot command the confidence of those who look for open debate. A close examination of the seventy nine issues that have appeared since it began will give the lie to that argument. The Journal does not adhere to a rigid party line nor is it a stranger to controversy.

The Journal owes a great debt to its first editorial board and especially to its first editor Mark Winston. It is appropriate that an article by Mark Winston appears in this edition but no apologies are made for quoting from the first editorial he ever wrote:

"The Journal will be the product of your interest, support and participation".

This was addressed to the readership of the *Prison Service Journal* in July 1960 and its message is as true now as it was then.



A Message from the Home Secretary



In a foreword to the first edition of the Prison Service Journal 21 years ago, my predecessor at that time, Mr. R. A. Butler (as he then was) expressed the hope "that it would be widely read by those who are interested in, or concerned with, the administration of criminal justice and the treatment of offenders". I am very pleased to acknowledge how well his hope then has been fulfilled. For over two decades, the Journal has sustained a world-wide reputation as a professional forum for those engaged in work with offenders. I commend the Editorial Board for the skill with which it has, over the years, collected and blended contributions from so many and varied sources, and has produced a Journal which is invariably instructive, and at the same time has been a pleasure for the layman and professional alike to read.

The basic purposes of penal practice remain constant, but the system which serves them must itself continually respond in a positive way to the challenge of changing circumstances. Fresh perspectives must be sought on long-standing and intractable problems and both traditional and newly introduced methods need to be continually re-assessed to make sure that they are still effective. The Prison Service Journal has played a very important part in this process for over 21 years. I should like to offer my personal congratulations to all who have been involved in this success, and my best wishes for its continued success in the future.

W. Whitely

Twenty one years later...

Mark Winston

First Editor, July 1960-July 1971

When the Editorial Board, preparing for the Journal's 21st anniversary, asked me to comment "how it was hoped the Journal might develop and how far it has attained or missed these objectives", I felt like those Open Competition candidates who found Sir Alexander Paterson's "And at what have you failed?" a complete conversation-stopper.

The Journal's first editor had a highly successful failure rate before coming to the Prison Service: caned at school, not for naughtiness but rather mathematical stupidity, unable to learn to play and later losing a family heirloom violin, becoming a cinema pianist just as Mr. Jolson found his voice, mastering the ups and downs of the mighty Wurlitzers just as they went out of fashion, reporting funerals and weddings for a weekly newspaper (where else but CONSETT) free-lancing film criticism and losing his Northern innocence in a Fleet Street agency, eventually landing in Germany rather ahead of D-Day and finding, as editor of a prison camp newspaper, that a captive readership can still be critical. Five years later he was learning it all over again as one of John Vidler's staff at Maidstone.

In 1970 the Editorial Board, discussing the policy or non-policy of the Journal, was reminded by Roy Taylor that "at the outset the Editor was Principal of the Staff College... and it is likely that the editor was chosen for his journalistic experience and it was a happy coincidence that he was at the College". Previous experience? Very much on the failure side, you might say. Happy coincidence? Possibly more a tribute to the enthusiasm of people like Ralph Owen, Duncan Fairn and other

Commissioners, in trying to get the right people in the right places at the right time, for it was people like Gordon Hawkins, Gordon Fowler, Norman Jepson and Alan Bainton who were the real support of the editor in the furtherance of the aims of the Journal. Those aims, as Ray Mitchell reminds us in the following article, were "to provide an opportunity for comment and discussion, to inform those inside and outside the service by the publication of news and information, and to improve communications within the service".

Analysis of the first ten years' contents showed:- 62% dealt with human relationships within the Prison Service, 10% with comment on penal matters in England and Wales, 10% on world-wide penological problems, 8% were straight news items, 6% dealt with historical material...and 4% was contributed by prisoners.

This should have provided some improvement in communications. 'Straight' news coverage seems a bit thin, but the Service could never complain about the rest of the world's Press interest in penal problems if not in their solution; perhaps the Journal tried to reach those other parts which the other publications could not or would not reach.

The Journal was launched without gimmicks; it has never been sued, never been attacked by Mrs. Whitehouse, its editors never been chatted up by Harty or Parkinson...Good Heavens, it must be deadly dull...

Please look around your local library reading room shelves, full of worthy publications, less in number than 21 years ago, but still catering for minorities, cranks, learned societies and obscure sects. Of course the Prison Service is none of these, but perhaps it has more than a whiff of some of them in both its public and private image.

But does worthiness need to be dull? I do not think the Journal was ever entirely dull, and the fact that nowadays it is brighter than ever before is thanks to printers like

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Mark Winston was editor of this Journal from its inception in 1960 until he retired in 1971 as a Deputy Regional Director (Operations). His life includes experience as a journalist, a P.O.W., a probation officer and in a variety of posts in the Prison Service. He now continues his benign surveillance of the frailties of his fellow mortals as liaison officer for voluntary organisations in the southern part of the newly-constituted Trafford Borough Council and is thus able to maintain his practical interest in helping lame dogs over stiles.

21 YEARS the Age of Minority?

Ray Mitchell
Preston Prison



About three years ago, Rick Evans and I carried out a survey of how the *Prison Service Journal* was received by staff working in Prison Department establishments. The findings and our comments were published under the title "What do you think of it so far?" (*Prison Service Journal* Number 30, April 1978).

As a piece of market research it had its inadequacies but it did produce some clear indications that the *Journal* was not reaching the wide audience for which it was originally intended. About a third of those who completed the questionnaire had read none of the preceding four editions. Three-quarters of those who had read some editions found the articles of medium or low interest; and the picture was almost as bleak for the book reviews. Uniformed grades liked the magazine least and the reasons given indicated that they felt it was too academic, not sufficiently practical, and often irrelevant to the job. On the other hand, governor grades and probation officers were rather more satisfied with the content.

Rick and I, whilst accepting the difficulties involved in satisfying a very wide range of potential readers, felt that there were several lessons stemming from the survey which the Editorial Board could act upon. They could conduct an advertising campaign to inform or remind staff of the existence of the *Journal*, they could revise or revitalise the distribution of the magazine within establishments, and they could review its contents with the aim of making it more directly relevant to the work of the service. In an accompanying note, the Editor asked for comments, reactions and ideas. He received as much response as a charity collector at a misers'

convention and the article faded into obscurity.

Now here we are, 21 years after the *Journal* was launched with such high hopes and ambitions. In the first edition, Mark Winston described the aims and purposes of the magazine as being to provide an opportunity for comment and discussion, to inform those inside and outside the service by the publication of news and information, and to improve communications within the service. If these ideals had been realised there would have been no need for "What do you think of it so far?" or for me to be now asking what happened to the recommendations made three years ago.

After five years at the Prison Service College, I find myself back in the "field" at Preston. I look in vain for signs that the *PSJ* exists and is of importance and interest to prison staff. A search of the Information Room reveals a nondescript poster advising me that "It's a good idea" and showing a

copy of the *PSJ* falling out of the picture. It may be symbolic of something, but, stuck between a drawing of a Lombrosian "wanted" criminal and a poster urging me to put the plug in the washbasin, it does not really catch the eye. I have a feeling that staff are more likely to plug the basin than 'plug' the *Journal*. As far as distribution is concerned, I still have the impression that it is sold under plain cover for fear it might offend. Even the May Committee appeared not to be aware of the *Journal's* existence as indicated by their recommendation that a house journal should be produced for circulation among establishments (Chaper 5, paragraph 89).

So where do we go from here? Will the *Journal* continue for another 21 years or will it gradually fade into obscurity until it eventually disappears? The answers, I feel, lie partly with the Editorial Board and partly with the Prison Department. Having served on the Editorial Board, I recognise that the *Journal* only actually gets into print because of the interest and dedication of a small group of people, all of whom

continued on page 12



Ray Mitchell joined the Prison Service as an Officer in 1967 and after three years at Liverpool became an Assistant Governor serving at Dartmoor and the Prison Service College, Wakefield. He was Reviews Editor of the *P.S.J.* in 1977/79 and was appointed Deputy Governor of Preston Prison in September 1979.

THE MAGNOLIA TREE

Merfyn Turner

In the garden of one of our houses there is a young Magnolia tree. It is a beautiful tree. We call it Sidney's tree.

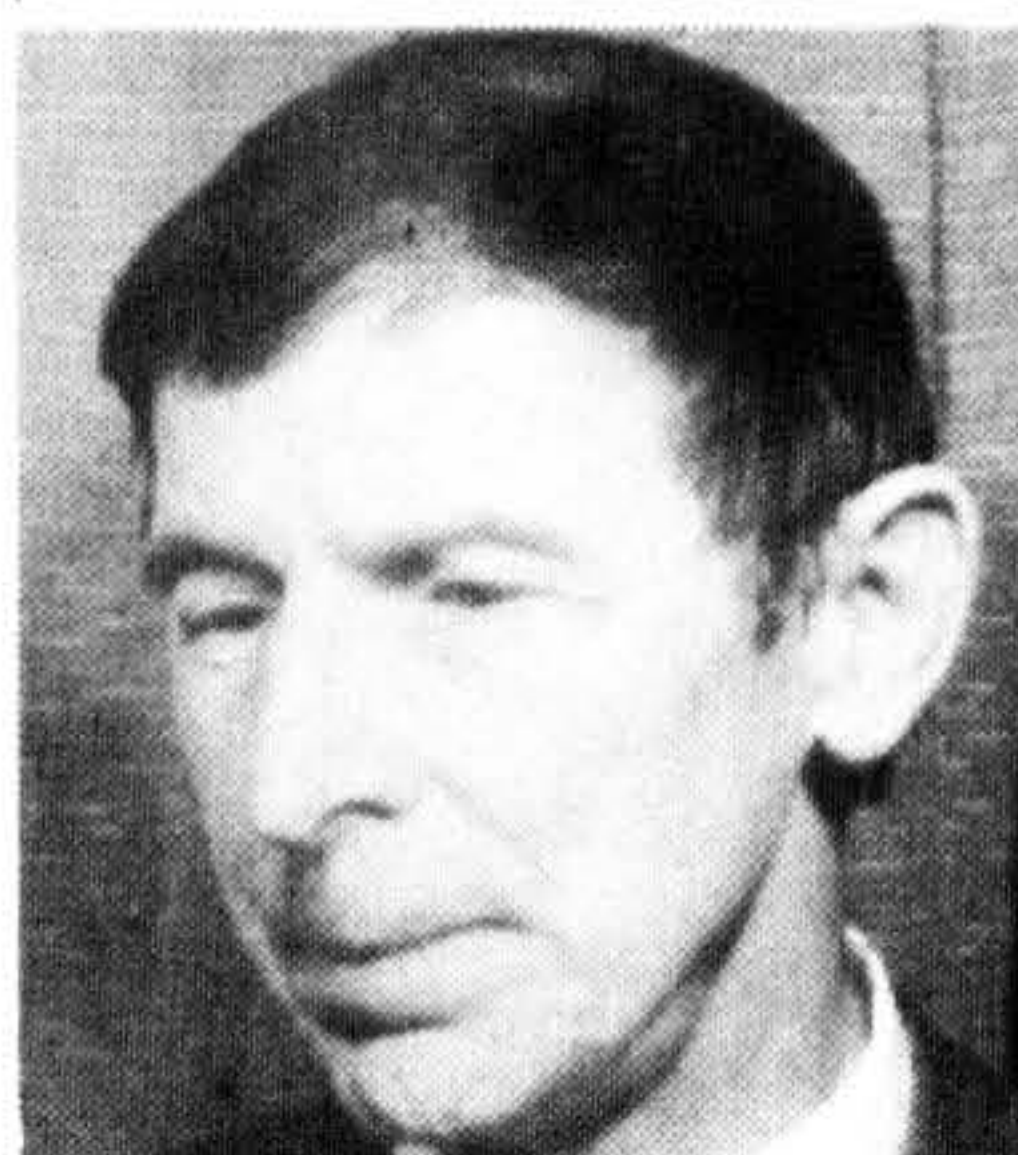
Sidney came to Norman House soon after it opened more than 25 years ago. We thought he was fairly typical of the homeless, friendless, inadequate offenders we hoped to help at Norman House. He was a child in an adult world. He was the leader of a gang. The gang members were boys in school, and their gang activity was football. Sidney organised them, but he would have been ill-advised to describe himself as a performer. He came into conflict with the police and the courts because he stole from shops, using the proceeds as presents for his gang—a classic method, a criminologist explained to me, of buying friendship and esteem. The courts called for social enquiry reports, read them—based as they were on 2 interviews with the prisoner—and sent Sidney to prison. By the time of his fourth discharge he was homeless and virtually destitute, and he came to Norman House where he blossomed in its climate of family and friendly support. He maintained his interest in young footballers, coaching them on week-nights and acting as referee on Sundays. He studied the rules of the game and qualified as a registered youth referee, with a certificate to prove it.

In the football world of junior leagues and the Hackney Marshes Sidney became a much wanted man. When he left Norman House 8 months after his coming, those who are skilled in assessing the success and failure rates of halfway houses and hostels declared him an unqualified success. In our ignorance we made the same mistake also. But within 4 weeks of leaving Norman House Sidney had lost his job and his lodging, and he was facing destitution. He told me his tale of decline when we met, by accident I thought, outside the house in Holloway that we were converting into a long-stay home for Norman House men who flourished while they lived at Norman House and collapsed after they left it.

Sidney liked Norman House's home comforts—a coal fire, a comfortable chair, and a soft, warm bed. But now his survival was at

stake, and he would happily sleep on the floor if we would take him into our new house. I said he should go back to Norman House. He said he was too ashamed of himself to do that. So we put up a bed in the only room that was faintly habitable, and let him move in. That was on a Tuesday. By the week-end the room had become a dormitory for Norman House old boys who suddenly seemed to be engulfed by crises. The conditions were spartan. Dust covered the whole house by day, and we cooked, and ate, and slept in it by night. At last the builders moved out, and our residents took their pick of the empty rooms and settled into a world of new-found splendour.

We did not say how long they could stay, but conceded that our thinking was long-term and it might even include permanence. The men we were meeting in prison always seemed



Merfyn Turner is a teacher by training but most of his life has been spent in experimental social work. He has worked in Cardiff's "Tiger Bay", on a sailing barge at Wapping and with homeless ex-prisoners in London. He has been a prison visitor at Pentonville since 1948 and believes that prison visiting should be compulsory for all magistrates, social workers and members of the Boards of Visitors to enable them to escape from the delusion that they understand prisoners.

He is married to a barrister who is also a magistrate and they have five children, the three girls being triplets. His family are English but he remains obstinately Welsh.

to be on the move, from job to job, from lodging to lodging, from town to town, ceasing their movement only when prison made them immobile. We thought we should contribute substantially to their immobility but within a voluntary framework.

We decided that we would not employ qualified social workers. We wanted to keep the house normal. We looked for motherly housekeepers. Our first choice was excellent on paper, and a disaster in practice. The second housekeeper was less motherly but altogether successful. She stayed for 5 years, and when she left with our blessing she took one of the residents with her, and married him, and created a new home for him into the bargain.

The house offered accommodation for 14 people, shared between Norman House men who needed continuing though diminished support, and a leavening of non-offenders—so far as we were aware—who were seeking good lodging locally. In fact such persons almost wrecked the scheme, and we replaced them with mature students and social security officers who came to London for re-training. The change was successful. It brought stability to the house, and new interests, and the prospect of new relationships for the offender residents, 4 of whom had served sentences of Preventive Detention in their day and had lost the capacity to make friends largely as a consequence of it. As time passed some of the younger residents moved out to get married or to seek their fortune elsewhere, or exceptionally because they had re-offended. The older men stayed on, and grew older, and some died.

Sidney was the first to die. He had been complaining of sickness for some time, but nobody took it seriously. Sidney was not registered with our doctor, but with another who did not take kindly to interference. When he sent Sidney to hospital for diagnostic tests it was already too late. Two days later he was dead.

The funeral was a masterpiece of dignity and decorum. Only Stan went to work that day. His soul was so warped by long spells of Dartmoor and Parkhurst he was beyond the reach of other people's grief. The others stayed at home and wandered around respectfully and uncomfortably dressed, and drank tea as they waited for the action to begin.

At 2 o'clock the morticians arrived with hearse, and coffin, and cars.

Royalty could not have been better served. We stood silent and obedient inside the front door. The Head mortician called our names, and the lesser morticians directed us where we should go, while idle neighbours watched in unspoken appreciation. Strangers stared at us as we headed for the North London Cemetery. The Chaplain was waiting for us, and nobody who heard him paying tribute to Sidney would ever have guessed that he was talking about a stranger, especially as he sent him to his Maker to receive the just rewards of his labour. "I did Hard Labour once", Charlie whispered, "and I never got no reward". After the service we stood around for a while in the manner of other mourners, and then, no longer self-conscious or hesitant, we boarded our limousines as if they were part of our heritage. We were going home again.

It was Sidney's death that stamped the final badge of social acceptability on our house. Neighbours tend to be apprehensive of hostels for prisoners because they are anathema to their way of life. They say the people who live in them—and work in them for that matter—are different. They are strangers who have gone again before they had the chance to know them. The day we buried Sidney was the day we out-neighboured our neighbours. Our hearse was a Rolls, and our cars were magnificent Daimlers, and there were flowers everywhere. We were dressed in sober grey or black, and even Ryan managed to look solemn for the occasion. Our neighbours were impressed because they knew they could not have bettered the performance if Sidney had been one of theirs. When Reg died a few months later we did not need to prove our credentials any more. We knew for certain now that it was not enough to provide a place where people from prison could live acceptably; they needed a home where they could die acceptably also, for the manner in which a man leaves this world tells us all we need to know about his success and failure while he lived in it. Stan, who had refused to take part in Sidney's funeral, moved out of the house soon afterwards.

He had lived with us for a long time. He was a success in the sense that he had committed no crime. But as a neighbour he was a failure. Deep down he was twisted beyond repair. Too much prison had squeezed the last drop of sweetness out of his

system and left him without love for anyone except himself. He left us by stealth, and he concealed his new address. He collapsed and died a stranger in the street, and it was left to the police to establish his identity.

I remember the day Old Bill was buried, and Maud his girl-friend persistently interrupted the service with her moaning. "He won't have no stone", she cried, "he won't have no stone". I realise now that I was wrong to be annoyed with her, for she was trying to protect Old Bill from total obscurity. Maud is dead now, and nobody remembers Old Bill except my wife and I. Many times I have looked for his grave and failed to find it in the undergrowth of wild grass and weed that covers the patch where the rejects are buried. Sidney has no stone either. But he has the Magnolia Tree.

Once I saw a man die in the crowded dining room of a large London lodging house. They rolled him up in a blanket and took him away, and nobody's appetite seemed affected by it. I remember a vagrant who died in Pentonville and his only surviving relative, when she learnt that he had died destitute, told the Chaplain to keep him. People were not born to die abandoned in prisons, and reception centres, and common lodging houses. Such disposal is failure's final insult.

When I look back to our early days at Norman House, and to the very considerable growth and development that has happened since in the field of residential care for homeless offenders, there are moments when I think that we have over-concentrated our activity on the provision of hostels that are stepping-stones which lead nowhere, unless they lead to other stepping-stones, where so many homeless offenders with long history of imprisonment are in fact searching for a safe anchorage. Such provision brings its own problems.

Sinners who turn saints, like alcoholics who go dry, do not automatically make agreeable travelling companions, nor find it easy to tolerate the failings of others. Humility does not blossom overnight. But self-righteousness is not the prerogative of those who have been to prison. It features in the constitution of those who send them there also. We should not be reluctant to cater for permanence. It has stability that is the hallmark of good citizenship. It has the beauty of Sidney's Magnolia Tree. ■

THE SWISS APPROACH TO IMPRISONMENT



The Zinal Glacier, Switzerland

Photograph by courtesy of the Swiss National Tourist Office

Keith Soothill

It caused some surprise to the Swiss that I should visit Switzerland on a Council of Europe Fellowship. Professor Jacques Bernheim of the Institute of Legal Medicine in Geneva welcomed my proposal, but modestly pointed out that 'I would think that the Netherlands and Denmark would give you much more original material and experience'.

However, perhaps the Swiss cannot really appreciate the curiosity of an Englishman for a country which seems to manage so many things so well. Apart from the ability to remain recognised as politically neutral during times of world-wide conflict, there are more contemporary troubles which seem to be kept at bay in Switzerland—virtually no unemployment (the current figure is around 5,000 unemployed), minimal inflation (last year—which was thought to be a bad year—was only around 4 per cent), and the ability to live in apparent harmony with the population almost equally divided numerically between Roman Catholics and Protestants. With that sort of pedigree, it is reasonable to ask whether we can learn anything from their criminal justice and mental health systems. We hear a lot of those 'gnomes of Zurich', but what sort of gnomes are involved in the Swiss prison system?

According to the Swiss, the first mistake is to assume that there is such a thing as a 'Swiss approach' to imprisonment—or, indeed, to anything. The Swiss persist that there are many differences between predominantly French-speaking, German-speaking and Italian-speaking Cantons. There is truth in this. Academics and practitioners in the German-speaking part are more likely to be influenced by ideas from Germany, while those working in French-speaking Cantons are more likely to hear and read of ideas from

France. My own feeling is that the native Swiss tend to be fascinated by the differences which exist within their small country, and perhaps fail to stress the underlying similarities emanating from a common basic framework. These underlying similarities may be much more important than the differences which can more readily be recognised. For example, the political structure may in subtle ways produce a conformity which is accepted without much question. However derived, it soon becomes clear that the basic underlying philosophy of Switzerland—at least in the field of criminal justice—is a paternalistic conservatism which seems acceptable to most sections of the population, irrespective of which language they happen to speak.



Keith Soothill was research officer for the Apex Trust for five years and wrote *The Prisoner's Release* (Allen and Unwin, 1974). He then worked at the Institute of Psychiatry and a Maudsley Monograph on medical remands (with C. N. Gibbens) will be published shortly. He is now lecturer in sociology at the University of Lancaster as well as continuing to act as research consultant to the Apex Trust.

Evolution by Trial and Error

An important contribution nowadays to the basic framework of Switzerland is the *federal* law which underpins the developments in cantonal law. Interestingly, the Swiss Penal Code was formulated way back in 1896, but it only became law in 1942. Furthermore, treaties and agreements between the Cantons regarding, for example, the transfer of prisoners between Cantons, only came into being in the 1950s and 1960s. Before that there had been bi-lateral treaties between Cantons but these were informal agreements brought about by working administrators. This remarkable delay in getting the Swiss Penal Code on the statute book is perhaps illustrative of the Swiss strategy. As a top civil servant in Zurich claimed when we were comparing Germany and Switzerland — 'In Germany the law must be changed first, while in Switzerland we try it first and then make a law to fit it!'. A civil servant in Berne involved at the federal level stressed that 'evolution must be done in the practice'. To facilitate this the federal government may give the possibility for an individual Canton to do something—as an experiment—which is technically against the law.

The general conditions are laid down in the penal code and, while each Canton must conform to the basic requirements, there is quite a range of potential freedom for the Cantons. Nowadays there are considerably less differences between Cantons than thirty or forty years ago. However, any suggestion by me that there was perhaps a systematic trend towards centralisation in Switzerland was so strenuously denied at all levels, that one is inclined to believe that they really intend to maintain their decentralised system.

For the arrangement of penal institutions there are now basically three groups of Cantons—three groups within which the Cantons have made a Concordat or formal agreement with each other. The oldest is the East Switzerland Concordat, which came into force in January 1956; the Central and North-West Switzerland Concordat was established in March 1959, while the French Switzerland and Ticino Concordat was created in September 1966.

The main purpose of the Concordat between Cantons is to provide a whole range of institutions which

otherwise the Cantons individually—and particularly the poorer ones—could not do. For example, the Canton of Zurich runs Regensdorf, which is the main prison within the Canton and at present houses recidivists and dangerous offenders. The present prison was built in 1902 for 300 males and 32 females, taking all kinds of offenders. After the Concordat in 1956, other places took those serving their first prison sentence while Regensdorf became more specialised. The females became fewer and fewer until, with only six inmates in 1972, they were also moved elsewhere. (Nowadays, all female prisoners are sent to Berne which has the only women's institution for sentenced female prisoners in Switzerland. There are about 50 female prisoners, although the institution could house 100 to 120 inmates.)

Regensdorf now has a capacity for 300 inmates but in August 1980 when I visited there were only 195 inmates, of whom just over one third were from other Cantons of the Concordat. Regensdorf is the biggest prison in Switzerland and the spare capacity tends to undermine the proposition that, if there are spare prison places, these will necessarily be filled up. This line of argument has often been used by those opposed to a new prison building programme in England, but some sort of 'bucket theory' (i.e. if you provide a bucket, it will get filled up) does not seem to apply in Switzerland at least. Marshall Clinard (*Cities with little crime: the case of Switzerland*, Cambridge University Press, 1978) also noticed how the prisons operate considerably below capacity—'as a total, an average of only 60.1 per cent of the long-term prisons' capacities were used during the year. Five prisons operated at an average 75 per cent of capacity; seven, between 50 and 75 per cent, and two at under 50 per cent of capacity' (p.119).

What is perhaps salutary for British readers is the concern expressed that this old prison building at Regensdorf is still being used. The cost of rebuilding Regensdorf is in the region of 60 million Swiss francs (3.85 Swiss francs = £1). The federal government can subsidise new buildings up to 50 per cent. However, Zurich as a comparatively rich Canton can only expect a subsidy of around 40 per cent. Nevertheless, the land is available and there is the

enthusiasm to pursue the project among officials of the Ministry of Justice. However, in Zurich, all expenditure of more than 20 million francs *must* go to the popular vote, and expenditure of between 2 and 20 million francs must go to the popular vote if a certain proportion of the population demand it. Anyone brought up in England where politicians are repeatedly telling us how careful they must be not to get too far ahead of the people on such unpopular issues as criminal justice and mental health could learn much from senior civil servants in Switzerland who face the popular vote with confidence that projects in these areas will get a fair hearing from the public—a confidence recently enhanced by the knowledge that Berne had just had a successful referendum for a new penal institution. Perhaps we should reflect on the view of one Swiss official who felt that the inherent conservatism is greater in Parliament than in the popular vote.

Work and Skills

However, despite present optimism, in the past there have been fears of the outcome of the popular vote in proposals for new prison building. The open prison of Saxerriet in St. Gallen which took 'first offenders' after the Concordat of 1956—instead of prisoners going to Regensdorf—was at that time a barracks, and when the new prison was designed in the early 1960s a popular vote to authorise the expenditure was avoided by building as cheaply as possible. With some renovations now being necessary, the present prison director reflects ruefully whether the decision to avoid the popular vote was wise. This prison now has a possible 100 beds of which 91 are occupied at present. As with all Swiss prisons visited, there is a strong work ethos and, unlike most English prisons, everyone does indeed seem to be working productively. At Saxerriet, earnings of between 800 to 1,200 francs are certainly possible. A particular feature of Swiss open prisons seems to be the flexibility and work skills of the prison officers who, with comparatively low staff levels (31 staff at Saxerriet, including the prison director), can manage to organise a wide range of enterprises. The staff-inmate ratio of 1:3 at Saxerriet is in fact lower than most Swiss prisons, where a ratio of about 1:2 is the more usual level.

Interestingly, every prison officer accepted into the service should have completed an apprenticeship in some trade or other. While this aim is perhaps not always maintained, the benefits of such a policy can be seen in the Swiss open prisons. In contrast, one example where such a policy was not so carefully followed was in the opening, three years ago, of the new remand prison, Champ-Dollon, in Geneva, when they had to recruit about 100 prison officers very quickly. Despite favourable staffing ratios—the remand prison of Geneva has an average population of 170 inmates with a yearly turnover of approximately 2,000 and a staff of 150—the prison has faced a barrage of criticism, and one cannot help feeling that the need to recruit staff too quickly contributed to the problems.

Returning to Swiss open prisons, there are two interesting features; the allocation and the containment of prisoners. There do not appear to be the anxieties of allocating drug, sex or even violent offenders to open conditions. There were no overwhelming fears of arousing the wrath of local communities which is the usual—and very real—fear in England. It is difficult to probe the reasons for this difference. Certainly, prison directors stay in the same post for a longer period than governors at our prisons and seem to build a genuine and trusting relationship with the local community.

One must recognise that Switzerland has a long tradition of open prisons, pioneering in the early years of this century. Furthermore, in the past Swiss prison governors themselves have often come from agricultural stock. Hence, during the 1950s, when open prisons were particularly being developed, the Swiss community were dealing with prison directors from a similar background to themselves, while in England our prison governors were so often military men, so that prisons were often regarded as occupying forces rather than an integral part of the landscape.

Keeping them in

The other crucial feature of the Swiss open prisons is that inmates simply do not seem to abscond. Although Saxerriet prisoners have an average of 2½ years' stay, there were only seven escapes during the previous year. Discussions of escapes just does not have the emotive ring which

it seems to arouse in Britain. Prisoners simply seem to be caught and returned to Regensdorf. The elaborate paraphernalia of disciplinary hearings and months of lost remission just does not take place in Switzerland. So why do the prisoners remain? The question is perhaps the wrong one and we should more seriously be asking ourselves why we are so concerned about it all in Britain? Perhaps our very concern aggravates the problem in some insidious way.

The answer in Switzerland, consistently stressed at open prisons, was that the loss of future home leave is the main deterrent. It all seems too easy, but certainly Swiss inmates look upon frequent home leave with the same expectancy as English inmates expect one third remission—and its possible loss is as difficult to bear. At Saxerriet, there is home leave after three months if the inmate has behaved himself, then after every two months, and after nine months, they have home leave after every month. Certainly, the figures are incredibly impressive—of the 903 home leaves in 1979, 99.89 per cent were recorded as returning satisfactorily.

There seems to be a similar pattern at Realta Prison which is also in the Eastern Region of Switzerland and is another open prison which has a strongly developed work ethos. The unique situation here at Cazis is that not only is the prison director a psychiatrist, but he is the director of three institutions—a psychiatric hospital with 290 beds (Beverin), a prison with 112 beds available (Realta), and a home for invalids and old people with 80 beds (Wohnheim-Rothenbrunnen). The administration is common to all three institutions, which is a financial saving, as well as easier interchange between the institutions as a result of Dr. Weber being in charge of all three institutions.

Realta Prison has a total of 61 inmates out of a capacity of 112. In a physically very open but psychologically rather structured environment, the prison tends to be allocated prisoners who are of less than average intelligence. The fact of this prison being half full—yet rather efficient—should be considered more fully. A partial explanation has already been mentioned—many prisons in Switzerland are not usually filled to capacity—but still one must consider why there are rather

different proportions below capacity in many of the prisons in Switzerland. Probably the most likely explanation is that other Cantons are reluctant to send too many inmates across the Cantonal borders, for this will tend to raise the cost per inmate in their own institutions. At Realta, for example, Dr. Weber recovers from other Cantons 27 francs per day for each inmate, while the actual cost is 120 francs for each inmate. In reality, there are some indications that financial considerations may override theoretically more desirable considerations regarding appropriate placements. Equally, as Monsieur Baechtold of Berne pointed out, every Canton that has a prison recognises that it must be run well, for otherwise pressures will mount to get more prisoners transferred elsewhere. Certainly, an overriding concern throughout the system was the desire for everything to run smoothly. Hence, there is an alliance of prison administrators and prisoners (who want the convenience of remaining in the locality for visits etc.) to ensure that there is no desperate need to cross Cantonal borders as a result of poorly-run prisons within the Canton.

While the numbers of people in prison seem light compared with the weight of numbers imposed on the English prison system, there are still both benefits and nightmares for prison administrators in Switzerland. The benefits are very apparent, for Switzerland can run penal institutions of a size which theoreticians and administrators in England can only dream about. The nightmares are less apparent, for the small size and indeed small number of institutions means that prison administrators concerned with allocation do not have an appropriate institution for particularly difficult or complex cases. While many of the allocations may be successful or at least result in no significant harm, others remain fairly intractable and stick out like 'sore thumbs' in the system.

Two examples have occurred at Regensdorf. For many years, Regensdorf housed Donald Brown (more well-known in England as Donald Hume who in the 1950s was acquitted of a murder and then told his story in a Sunday newspaper of how he disposed of the body by cutting it up and throwing the pieces out of an aeroplane). This difficult man deteriorated seriously in

Regensdorf, becoming progressively more violent towards the staff; eventually at the end of his sentence he was repatriated to England where he was immediately admitted into Broadmoor—in fact, there is no institution of real security for the mentally ill in Switzerland.

The second case involved Petra Krause, a Baader-Meinhof terrorist, who was arrested in Zurich in possession of explosives. Spending her time on remand in isolation in a men's prison for approaching two years provoked protests at the severity of her treatment which at least one psychiatrist regarded as akin to torture.

The problem is, of course, that no Canton is interested in having a prison of dangerous offenders, mentally ill persons, drug addicts or terrorists, so the difficulties of these categories of prisoner have tended to be shelved. More recently, there have been moves to consider each of these issues within each Concordat. The likelihood is that where special categories are thought to exist the present practice will continue of housing such prisoners in a unit within a prison, rather than building a special institution. There are two main reasons for this type of approach—the small numbers involved, and the reluctance of the local community to host such institutions. There is, in fact, an indirect benefit from this solution—whereas politically it is not feasible to build, for example, a special institution for dangerous offenders and not fill it, in contrast nobody notices if a unit within an existing prison is not used to the expected degree and can more easily be switched to other uses.

Prisoners on Remand

Finally, what of the remand prisons in Switzerland? In some respects, a remand prison provides the litmus paper of a criminal justice system. It is the centre-point which has to cope with the anger of what has gone before, the frustration of the delay in the proceedings and the anxiety of what might be in store for the inmate. The new remand prison of Champ-Dollon in Geneva (opened three years ago) has provided the focus of interest in Switzerland. Instead of the overcrowding prevalent at almost all remand prisons, Champ-Dollon develops the feeling that there can, in fact, be too much space in a closed prison, so producing physical and psychological

distance between staff and inmates. In fact, a spate of suicides tended to support this view, but the newspapers almost certainly overlooked that while the average population is only 170 inmates with the favourable staff numbers of 150, there is also a yearly turnover of approximately 2,000. Furthermore, it appears that the previous old remand prison in Geneva, which Champ-Dollon replaced, had a remarkably low suicide rate during the previous decade—everyone in such close proximity that there was no privacy to contemplate or carry out a suicide! Anyway, despite its modern building, there is little doubt that all the omnipresent problems of a remand prison still remain at Champ-Dollon.

There is, however, one interesting feature of Champ-Dollon which is worthy of note. The prison medical service is a department of the University Institute of Legal Medicine; besides its consultations at the prison, this service runs a closed unit of 12 beds in the teaching hospital. Certainly, for the last fifteen years since Professor Bernheim's appointment, the government and judicial authorities seemed to have found this approach useful, while, conversely, the academic involvement in prison medicine has allowed for contributions to teaching and research in different fields, such as forensic psychiatry, medical ethics, penal law and sociology of deviance. Geneva's close links between the justice department and the university is in some contrast to Zurich, where there is somewhat more tension between the justice department and the university hospital from which there is only minimal co-operation. Whether Bernheim has really produced a structure by which university and justice department can continue to work together, or whether it all hinges on Bernheim's own unquantifiable personal ingredient remains to be seen.

Medicine and Control

The spectre and dangers of medicine involving itself in prison work has been considered by Bernheim. In a paper entitled 'Academic Involvement in Prison Medicine', Bernheim outlines the idea of a double contract: 'First we have an agreement with the administration which allows us to work in appropriate conditions of freedom and security; in exchange for which we abide by their rules and regulations. The second contract

refers to the classical doctor-patient relationship in which the importance of the patient's consent and the doctor's independence in prescription and confidentiality is stressed'. However, while the guidelines have been clearly laid down, discipline staff, as well as medical staff, still have difficulty in recognising that medical staff should not be involved in matters of social control within the prison. However, at a group meeting of the medical staff, when the possible introduction of giving all medicines in liquid form to avoid abuse within the prison was being discussed, it soon became clear to me that it is not always so easy in practice for anyone to recognise the boundaries of assisting in social control.

So what finally can one say about the Swiss approach to imprisonment? In policy terms, it is one of 'wait and see'. Other countries have their experiments and the Swiss 'wait and see' the outcome. For this reason, Switzerland is not a place to come to witness spectacular innovation, but a place where a cool appraisal is made before any new major departure materialises. The phrase heard in various guises is that 'everything in the penal field *must* move very slowly'. On the other hand, this is perhaps a harsh judgement, for there are innovations in Switzerland which are facilitated by the freedom exercised by Cantons in going beyond a strict reading of the law. Minor modifications developed in this way have often contributed to a more humane system and, while everything may move slowly, it does move. This is in sharp contrast to the spurts, dashes and partial retreats which seem characteristic of many countries. One vivid example of the Swiss approach was a discussion about the new Regensdorf which is beginning to exercise some people's minds in Zurich. It was heartening to hear both a top civil servant and the prison director stress the view that in rebuilding Regensdorf there will *not* be an excessive use of electronic equipment which will only be used as back-up rather than front-line. There was a recognition of the importance that one is dealing with people and hence the importance of relationships between staff and inmates at all times. However, there was also a residual recognition that there may still be a battle against finance

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The following article is a combined effort by the undersigned members of the staff of Brixton prison.

Its timing may seem curious, its birth has been slowed by other events, but it was considered that it should not be aborted. (It is, incidentally, submitted that it would be no bad thing for Brixton to be able to identify itself and be identified for something other than losing Category A prisoners!)

In broader terms it is also considered that the Prison Service Journal may achieve greater significance by having these "work in progress" articles published. Prison history is interesting enough but the making of history should not be ignored. Furthermore, in the present industrial scene, examples of positive officer commitment might well not come amiss.

The scheme meant a great deal to all the contributors, and represents a lot of hard work and commitment, not the least by the local branch of the P.O.A.

Above all we want to emphasise that this was not produced as an effort in self-justification to balance the much-publicised recent escape and its consequentials. Preparations were made well before, the enquiry merely delayed it.

RON HOLD, *Prison Officer*

GLYN JAMES, *Probation Officer*

TONY LEACH, *Senior Probation Officer*

J. L. McLEAN, *Senior Officer*

JOHN MITCHELL, *Principal Officer*

JOHN MOORE, *Principal Officer*

MICHAEL SELBY, *Governor I*

JOHN TALBOT, *Governor IV*

Shared Working at Brixton

In the busy remand prison at Brixton, there has unexpectedly developed a flourishing "shared working" scheme. The interest and enthusiasm on all sides was released by the publication in February 1978 of the National Association of Probation Officers Report "Pilot Developments in Prison". This described the varying progress of the experiment in five nominated prisons of the "development of a new approach to social work in prisons, which involve prison staff and probation staff working together". Although the report was the work of a staff association, Headquarters validation was to be delayed, so it was decided not to wait.

The initial problem was how to harness the enthusiasm and start the project by giving it a firm base. Authority must come from patent staff consent and not on governors'

dictat. Too many schemes have foundered on a governor imagining that his will is sufficient and that he represents in himself the wish of the prison.

Headquarters had provided no encouragement and no machinery for the further development of such schemes, thus some local initiative was necessary and it was decided to use the machinery already available in the local Whitley Council. So at the meeting of 26 April 1976, the "Prison/Probation Development" was first mooted and gained positive support.

This discussion led to the inevitable working party, representing all departments and grades of the prison, which met regularly, worked hard and produced in November 1978 a fully agreed "Guidelines Paper". Those guidelines were most important and have been the basis of

the "shared working" scheme ever since. The paper emphasised the need for constant communication and the primary role of the landing officer in rendering assistance in the first instance, both in relation to receptions and applications. It set out clear guidelines on the types of problems which could properly be dealt with by landing officers, those which still needed to be passed on to the wing probation officer and those where there was an element of discretion. Above all, it stressed that the scheme was voluntary on the part of both the landing officer and the prisoner. Landing officers were not compelled to participate in the scheme, although it was hoped that they would do so, and prisoners retained the right to insist on seeing the wing probation officer, if they desired to do so. The paper also dealt with various technical matters, such as preparation and training, support and consultation and the recording of work carried out under the scheme.

Early in 1979, the scheme was implemented.

The original intention of the Working Party was that the scheme should operate in all three remand wings. In practice, however, it has never been successful on the two trial wings, and the history of shared working in Brixton is of how it has worked in C Wing, the busy magistrates' court remand wing, where immediate problems, needing rapid solution are most often presented. Why this has been so is an interesting study in itself—partly it arises from the nature of the problems that tend to occur, but partly also that the staff from both the prison and probation side at the time were perhaps more enthusiastic about working the scheme. C Wing, therefore, was fortunate in having both readily apparent tasks and enthusiastic staff.

If any such scheme is to succeed, there has to be a positive commitment from every party to it. The Governor must be an enthusiast and must be able to work with and share this enthusiasm with the Senior Probation Officer. He must also play a part in the selection of the Principal Officer who is to go into C Wing as Wing Manager, and express his commitment to the scheme at the first staff meeting of the new wing staff team (at Brixton staff change every 20 weeks) and in particular give his backing to the wing managers and all the landing officers, so that they feel they have support when matters go wrong. The importance of this backing has been stressed especially by the principal and senior officers who have operated the scheme. At the staff meeting, the Governor took the opportunity to stress that the purpose of "shared working" was not to be in competition with nor to replace the probation service, but to work in partnership with them. The importance of recording work that was done with prisoners was emphasised as was the opportunity the scheme gave for positive involvement with men on their landing, in accordance with POA policy. Above all, they were told not to be afraid of making mistakes.

At the same time, the Wing Managers (a Principal and a Senior Officer at Brixton) must also be enthusiastic about the scheme and be able to work with and share this enthusiasm both with the wing probation officer and all the team of

landing officers. The role of the Wing Managers has proved particularly crucial, as they have had the day to day responsibility for running the scheme. One of the Wing Managers who has been involved has described the practical operation of the scheme in the following terms:

"The system agreed on was that the inmate would make an application at 07.00 hours and after the breakfast break his landing officer would interview him and decide whether or not he could handle the problem. If the man did not wish to discuss in full his problem, then he would be referred to the senior officer who would vet the application in a manner so as it could be dealt with at that level or if it was a bit complex, it would be passed to the probation officer for his or her expertise.

Each time assistance was given it was entered on a record sheet by whoever rendered it, landing officers, senior officer, principal officer or probation officer alike.

The extent of staff involvement depended on the judgement of the officer although guidelines agreed that deep domestic or long-standing problems should in fact be passed to a probation officer, as they often involved delicate and professional handling and at this stage of the project, we needed to realise that we did not always have the necessary experience in handling matters like this.

The time factor in dealing with some of these problems also required judgement, as the officer would have to fill in this new task along with his normal duties. So, for example, if the problem was that the man's wife did not know where he was, then a telephone call to her, along with a brief explanation of visiting times, would probably solve the problem. If the problem was a domestic situation involving deteriorating relationships with wife or family, then this would obviously be time consuming and require some delicate and expert handling, so this would be passed on to a probation officer".

It is clear that landing officers have enjoyed this opportunity for greater involvement and that it has led to increased job satisfaction. One principal officer has commented that he felt that it had given his landing

officers a heightened insight into the problems faced by men on remand and another that it helped to break down the stereotypes frequently held by prisoners in relation to discipline staff. Indeed, there have been instances of favourable comments from prisoners about the scheme.

On the other hand, there has been some resistance from inmates and frequently there was the problem of deciding when to respect that resistance and when to try to overcome it. One landing officer with experience of the scheme has described the conditions which he felt to be necessary, if the prisoner was to be able to accept the landing officer in a welfare role:

- "1) the prisoner must have some respect for the officer dealing with him;
- 2) the initial interview has to be done in private;
- 3) replies must be given promptly, without his having to chase the officer to obtain an answer;
- 4) he must feel some confidence that the officer involved is capable of obtaining the desired result".

Facilities, of course, are never ideal and some landing officers have expressed a wish for an outside telephone line on the landings, in order to enable them to participate in the scheme more fully. Nevertheless, the degree of participation was measured, to some extent, by a survey, conducted after the scheme had been in operation for 18 months, of the almost 1,000 (989) record sheets that had been completed. Of these, 529 represented work undertaken by uniformed staff, (389 by landing officers; 92 by Senior Officers and 48 by Principal Officers).

Overall, therefore, there is much on the credit side. It has involved staff in an exercise that was thought to be impossible. The need for continuity and stability has been preached as a vital element—yet the scheme prospered, although the staff change almost completely every 20 weeks. It has found some unlikely adherents: not only the younger, more newly joined officer (who responded indeed enthusiastically), but some of the older, more experienced, who responded with equal enthusiasm. There even developed a heightened morale, which swept the less keen along, and involved them. On one occasion, a certain extroverted Yorkshireman, after a wing meeting with the

Governor, told a less enthusiastic member of the staff, who was creating difficulties, that he would "knock his block off", if he obstructed their scheme! Staff have largely responded to trust, and have not abused in any way the widening of their scope. Nobody has been embarrassed by officers on the landing contacting families and agencies outside. The staff themselves have remarked on how much greater authority they feel they have in their relationships with prisoners. It has shown that "shared working" does not require officers to be detached from normal duties as prison welfare officers and that even in the unpromising soil of a remand prison, any officer on the landing, properly motivated, can participate.

For management, an interesting sidelight has been the examination of the development of the scheme in the local Whitley Council, where it had its birth. This has frequently demonstrated the strengths and weaknesses of representational democracy. On the one hand, representatives not involved in the scheme have professed ignorance of the whole exercise; on the other, the Whitley Council has occasionally been enlivened by real feeling, even acrimony. It is perhaps, questionable, therefore, whether this was the

best way to review an operational scheme, even though, given the manner of its birth, it was almost inevitable that it should continue in that way.

Nor can the scheme in any sense be regarded as an unqualified success. It has only operated in one of the three wings in which it was envisaged, albeit the one which always seemed likely to be a successful base for it. In addition, many of the technical aspects of the scheme have not come into operation. The proposed training programme was never implemented and although one or two individuals have gone off to specialised training courses, the great majority of officers involved have had no training and only sketchy preparation for participation on the "shared working" scheme. There seems to be a reluctance to grasp the nettle of stating unequivocally that if this sort of role is to become part of the expected job specification, then some form of training will be required, and that room will have to be found for this in the face of other competing priorities, in the field of in-service training. In addition, although there has been a fair amount of informal consultation between landing officers and the wing probation officer, this has not developed to the extent that had been

hoped by the original working party, nor has it been formalised in any way. Also, the keeping of the record sheets has been patchy and this has led to some instances where the prisoner has been able to play the landing officer off against the wing probation officer and vice versa, or where there has been avoidable duplication of effort. This has also made it difficult to get a fully accurate picture of the quantity and quality of work carried out under the scheme.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the scheme has enabled interested and enthusiastic staff to become more involved in the welfare problems of the prisoners on their wing and has allowed the probation department to re-assess and re-allocate its own priorities. It even received a brief mention by Lord Hunt in the House of Lords debate on the remand system in HM Prisons (on 24 June 1980): "I come finally to the one good aspect of Brixton Prison...We were very impressed with the fact that, despite the unsatisfactory working conditions, morale among the prison officers is high...; and also to do with it (this morale) is the degree to which officers involve themselves with welfare problems of the inmates on their landings".

21 YEARS: THE AGE OF MINORITY?

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have to fit the demands of that task around a full-time job. Many an article appears in print not because the Editorial Board feel it says something of particular significance to the Service but because someone has taken the time and trouble to produce it. The Board lack the time and resources to chase other potentially more interesting and relevant articles from less motivated contributors. This points up the need for the Editorial Board to be given more official time and better resources with which to do the job. If the Prison Department wants an influential and informative magazine (and the recommendation of the May Committee was fully accepted!) the basis of it already exists in *PSJ*, but the cost will be the inclusion of Editorial Board work in job descriptions and the adjustment of job weight to allow at least two key members the necessary time.

Additional time, therefore, is important but perhaps of more importance is the way in which such

time is used. The Board must identify subjects likely to be of interest to staff at all levels and use their knowledge and contacts to identify potential contributors who can produce interesting, informative and lively prose. Too many articles at present are shrouded in pretentious obscurity which passes in some quarters for academic respectability. If the article has a message then let us hear it loud and clear. If those who are capable of producing such articles are reluctant because of lack of motivation or confidence, they can be harassed or encouraged into putting pen to paper. Of course, it is not easy but it is essential if the *Journal* is to achieve its original ideals.

A quarterly magazine can never be topical in the way a daily or weekly newspaper can, and no one expects it to be so. The absence of such expectation can, however, be used to advantage. It offers the Editorial Board the opportunity of seeking considered and informed opinion

which is not out of date on the day following publication. It offers the opportunity of obtaining a number of contributors who can argue the issues from different stand-points. The *Journal* is ideally situated to provide a forum for debate and this must not be wasted.

I have tried in this short article to be constructive because I do appreciate that in the present conditions it is often a miracle that the *Journal* appears at all. The *May Report*, however, pointed to poor communications as being one of the major problems of the Prison Service and I believe that the *Journal* has an important part to play in improving communications and understanding between all levels in the Service. If it does not succeed in achieving this, however, I fear that my carefully compiled full set of *Prison Service Journals* may become merely collectors' items. I am an optimist, however, and I look forward to expanding my collection for at least another 21 years.

Personal Impressions of a Conference

John Capel

Criminal Justice and the Social Services in the Multi-Racial Society:

What could I get out of attending this Conference?

Working at Dover Borstal, I'd seen the proportion of West Indians and British-born blacks grow from less than 20% of the population to over 30%, so I approached the chance to go to such a Conference with a great deal of interest. At the Borstal, we did quietly discriminate, for the alternative would have been to allow unfortunate situations to develop. To avoid one of the 5 Houses ending up by chance as all black or all white, we had kept simple statistics and allocated trainees according to their ethnic group. Likewise, our work parties and courses could have appeared to be the privilege or burden of one particular group unless we had seen to it that something of a balance was preserved. All that seemed common-sense and in no way a manifestation of prejudice.

Of course, it was not a complete answer. Confrontation between black and white trainees did occur from time to time and there were points of friction. Playing reggae music loud and long, talking in West Indian dialect, playing dominoes with speed and fervour, gaining an unfortunate reputation for 'strong-arming' and other tactics, the blacks did occasionally make themselves unpopular with the rest of the population. On the plus side, however, many West Indians made a tremendous contribution to our sports programme and many worked with great diligence on courses,

achieving excellent results. If there was trouble, it happened in the Borstal Houses where racist leaders sometimes emerged. In such circumstances, a white racist would gain the support of a few white trainees but the sub-cultural pressures on the black minority meant that a black racist leader would get almost total support from his ethnic group. A reputation could therefore grow and an unfortunate stereotype be established, even though there have been leaders among the blacks who, in the face of provocation, have seen to it that nothing unpleasant developed. The

staff (100% white) represented most shades of opinion and acted, with remarkable restraint and wisdom and have always been keen to learn.

The Conference

For me, it was a rare and exciting privilege to take part in 5 days' discussion with participants of such knowledge and experience. There were about 50 of us at Holly Royde College in Manchester: a Metropolitan Police Commander and a number of Deputy and Assistant Chief Constables; 6 Deputy or Assistant Chief Probation Officers; representatives from the Social Services, Local Education Authorities and the Department of Education and Science; a representative from the Lord Chancellor's Office and Justices of the Peace from London, Manchester, Leicester and Middlesex. I was one of the group of 6 whom the prison department invited to attend.

I must make it clear that this account is simply one man's recollection of his impressions,

written months after the event from memory and from notes which were not taken for this purpose: the invitation to write an article did not come until much later. It cannot, therefore, do justice to the full and thoughtful contributions and I apologise for the inevitable omissions and misrepresentations. But it may be of value to record after a period of time the personal impact of the Conference. It was, of course, in the small groups and in the larger plenary sessions that most of the work was done; and the fact that we represented so many disciplines and could call on such a variety of such experiences was of immense value. It is this memory which is most vivid.

The programme was directed by John Shaw, Senior Staff Tutor in Psychology at the Department of Extra-Mural Studies in the University of Manchester, and by Nadine Peppard CBE, Home Office Adviser on Race Relations. There were also about 15 contributors, many of whom stayed and participated after addressing us. These included the Rt. Hon. Merlyn Rees M.P.; David Lane, Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality; and Geoffrey de Deney, then Assistant Under Secretary of State at the Community Programme and Equal Opportunities Department.

Merlyn Rees gave the opening address with the candour, authority and humility that might be expected in one who had faced the responsibilities of a Home Secretary. We were in for a tough week, facing hard questions, and we were invited to employ frankness and receptivity. Merlyn Rees certainly did not shirk from examining the facts and feelings. The high quality of contributions, such as this, was maintained almost throughout the week.

Background

Tom Rees from the Home Office Research Unit gave us the factual background to immigration to Great Britain beginning with the ½ million or so Jews who came here in the 1930s. To get a correct perspective it is essential to grasp the figures accurately and to understand both the legislation and the economic and social factors which have affected the flow of immigrants. A number of fact sheets are available from the Commission for Racial Equality at 10-12 Allington Street, London, SW1E 5EH. One booklet, "Ethnic

Minorities in Britain", (free on request) is especially recommended to anyone looking for training material.

Rod Boggs, an American lawyer specialising in race relations, gave us articulate and impressively comprehensive survey of the U.S. experience. There were some similarities, but many differences for all manner of historical, cultural and economic reasons. He made us aware of 'institutional racism'—that is, discrimination which is practised unconsciously because it has been so much part of the structures and methods of working in society that it has been accepted almost without question. Many assumptions, procedures and decisions have been challenged in the American courts, however, and a new awareness is abroad which must prompt us to re-examine many of our established ways.

Policy

Geoffrey de Deney explained why we needed a Government policy for race relations. In the main, the problems of the ethnic minorities are those of any in the lowest social-economic groups for whom policies and agencies exist. 'Disadvantaged' is, of course, a relative concept: there will always be people who fall into this category, although it is incumbent upon Government to minimise the size of such groups. Three particular causes for disadvantage among ethnic minorities are overt prejudice, unconscious discrimination, and elements in the established institutions and cultures. Legislation is the main plank in Government policy to minimise discrimination and it operates effectively in specific fields such as jobs, housing and education. Section II of the Local Government Act of 1966 gives power to allocate money to provide for Commonwealth immigrants, although local authorities vary greatly in their practices. Other money may be available as grants under the Inner Areas Programme. Then, there is the Home Secretary's Advisory Council on Race Relations, including the Commission for Racial Equality, which allows a dialogue between ethnic minority groups and the Home Secretary.

This leads naturally to David Lane's contribution. As Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality he had 15 Commissioners (2 full-time) and a staff of 229 to cover law enforcement, promotion (or per-

suation), and general services. The local Councils for Racial Equality act as refuges to which individual or representative members of the ethnic minorities may go for advice or to present grievances and suggestions; they are vehicles by which the needs and feelings of the ethnic minorities may be made known to the local community and Government; and they endeavour to be a 2-way bridge between the indigenous population and newcomers. There has to be a great deal of patient listening and learning by all parties and an increasing awareness of each other's hopes, fears, rights, responsibilities, needs, and contributions and of the possibility of mutual benefit if cultural differences are cherished.

A substantial number of conference participants had reservations about the effects of the work of the C.R.E. Few would wish to quarrel with the stated policies and aims but the experience of many who lived and worked in areas having high immigrant populations was that individuals involved in race relations often adopted attitudes and methods which worsened rather than improved the situation.

Education

The well-being of future communities depends, of course, on the attitudes being formed in our schools; so we were fascinated to hear from the Head Teacher of a social priority school in the West Midlands. Mrs. Shirley Willsher gave a very polished and highly coloured account of how successfully she runs her school in an inner-city, multi-ethnic setting. The key to her success seemed to be staff development programmes with emphasis on bringing out healthy conflict. Self-esteem is a key concept. Diversity really only leads to conflict when it is denigrated.

Even more revealing was to hear Carlton Duncan, the black Deputy Headmaster of another Midlands school, say that when he took up his appointment the black pupils understood better than he that he was a token. He told us of his difficulties on coming to England from the West Indies at the age of 20. It was easy for him to see how blacks came to be under-achievers; initial failure resulted in poor self-perception and alienation which reduced motivation. There is neither ethnic content in stories told in nursery schools nor any but patronising or biased references

throughout most school syllabi. Even the pre-school black child is disadvantaged because commonly both parents have to work and cannot escort the child to and from school. The West Indian is victim, generally, of the stereotype which patronisingly labels him good at sport and music but imprecise in intellect or motor skills.

Race Relations Training

Nadine Peppard lamented that the data, materials and opportunities for race relations training were inadequate. Most material is American and of questionable value. We need to be clear about our objectives in designing programmes. And it must not just be a matter of 'us' teaching each other about 'them'. She identified 3 current types of training. The first method of lecture, hand-out and discussion which is widely used can be counter-productive. She warned us of the 'innoculation effect' which can result in a strengthened resistance to understanding and acceptance: people do not like to be preached at in race relations matters. The period of discussion must be long enough to allow feelings to be worked through. We were strongly recommended "Race, Education and Identity", edited by G. K. Verma and C. Bagley (MacMillan, 1979). The other 2 types of training are group work and experimental training. A report in the U.S.A. in 1968, describing racism as the "No. 1 public health problem", had led to Social Action Centres being set up in U.S. forces bases to tackle racial and sexual discrimination and to give training in human relationships. We too need professional and dynamic programmes.

A scholarly assessment of training techniques was made by John Shaw after a warning about 3 types who will not be touched by race relations training: the ethnocentric, the authoritarian and the psychopath. Content training techniques make use of reading, lectures, persuasive communications and the mass media; process techniques involve discussion groups, role plays and small group encounters; other techniques mix these. To effect attitudes and behaviour at work it might be possible to obtain compliance through dismissing those who do not respond or promoting others who do. Another possibility is that people may identify with a programme by being presented with an attractive

picture of the outcome. In the long term, however, the only effective process is internalisation and this change depends on established credibility.

Visits

A welcome break from lectures and discussions was provided by a visit to Oldham where we met members of the Council for Racial Equality. Thereafter, some of us visited a co-operative of Asian women manufacturing simple articles; some visited mosques or temples. I went to a temple used by a group of Gujarati-speaking Asians, mostly from East Africa.

The highlight was an evening visit to a multi-racial club. If this conjures up visions of some dreary church or school hall with knots of coloured people standing around self-consciously, nothing could be further from the case. This was a club with a bar, a small dance floor and disco and with an atmosphere which was completely relaxed. It was a private enterprise which happened to be multi-racial because of its position. We were entertained by Asian, West Indian and English youngsters, the last 2 groups forming a steel-band. I'm afraid we outnumbered them by about 5 to 1 as the club was open solely for our party that evening, but it was good to have informal exchanges in a setting which was conducive to frankness. I wonder though how many of us would have returned happily on another night: the answer would be few, though due to the likely generation gap rather than any racial discrimination.

Recommendations

The prison governors' group agreed some recommendations in the course of one of the exercises. The recommendations were prefaced by some general remarks about prisons being a microcosm of the societies they serve: insofar as Britain is struggling towards a multi-racial society, this will be reflected in the day-to-day life of her prisons. While there have been few breakdowns of control directly attributable to racial conflict, we were aware of the all pervasive, unintended effects of institutionalised racism. While acknowledging that the Prison Service has as great a problem as the other agencies of justice and law enforcement, however, we thought it was faced with many other more immediate problems. It would be

unrealistic to expect resources to be diverted from combating overcrowding, staff shortages and strict cost limits.

What we did recommend was that a senior governor should be appointed as Race Relations Adviser at Headquarters. He would monitor the content of staff training programmes; scrutinise draft policy and operational documents; advise on recruitment; assist H.M. Chief Inspector of Prisons; and liaise with community relations agencies. We recommended the appointment of Race Relations Officers in institutions. We thought all staff training programmes (local, regional and central) should be scrutinised so as to avoid the 'innoculation effect', the danger of labelling race relations as a separate training topic. Yet senior staff need training in recognising their direct or indirect effects on relations with ethnic minorities in institutions. Finally, where social skills and pre-release courses for inmates are operating, we recommend these should include aspects of living in a multi-racial society.

End Piece

The magistrates were the most critical participants, feeling the conference was too general and regretting that it did not focus more on specific items such as legislative and procedural changes and the manifestation of colour problems or racist activity in the court setting. But, like all of us, they gained an awareness of the global position and went away better informed to handle local manifestations of prejudice and personal discrimination.

As always, it is the acquaintances formed and conversations held that remain at the end of such a conference. The personal value of contacting so wide a range of people about such important themes was immeasurable; working out the implications for our institutions is the difficult but essential follow-up. And the conference was not all earnestness: there were lighter moments. At the entrance to the multi-racial club in Oldham, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors from the Department of Education and Science was told by the proprietor that, in normal circumstances, he would not be admitted as "Pakistanis cause too much trouble"! It helps to have a sense of humour in matters of race relations. ■



American Prisons and Chaplaincies

The Reverend P. L. Ashford

Through the generosity of the Alverstoke Fellowship and the co-operation of the Chaplain General of Prisons, it was my privilege to spend the entire month of October 1979 as a Reader of the College of Preachers, Washington D.C. In the year of my visit the College celebrated its fiftieth anniversary as a major conference centre for the Episcopal Church of America where developing ecumenism has led to other denominations sharing the benefit of its facilities and courses. It was my consequent pleasure, therefore, to mix with Episcopal and Roman Catholic Bishops, to meet others engaged in parish conferences, and to share the company of members of inter-denominational preaching courses for which the College is now renowned.

Whilst the main intent of my visit was to consider the American chaplaincy service and make comparisons with the Home Office Prison Chaplaincy, no strict brief was attached to the project. It was possible to take an extended interest in American penology, visit criminal courts, share in the work of prison lay ministries and, of course, visit several prisons.

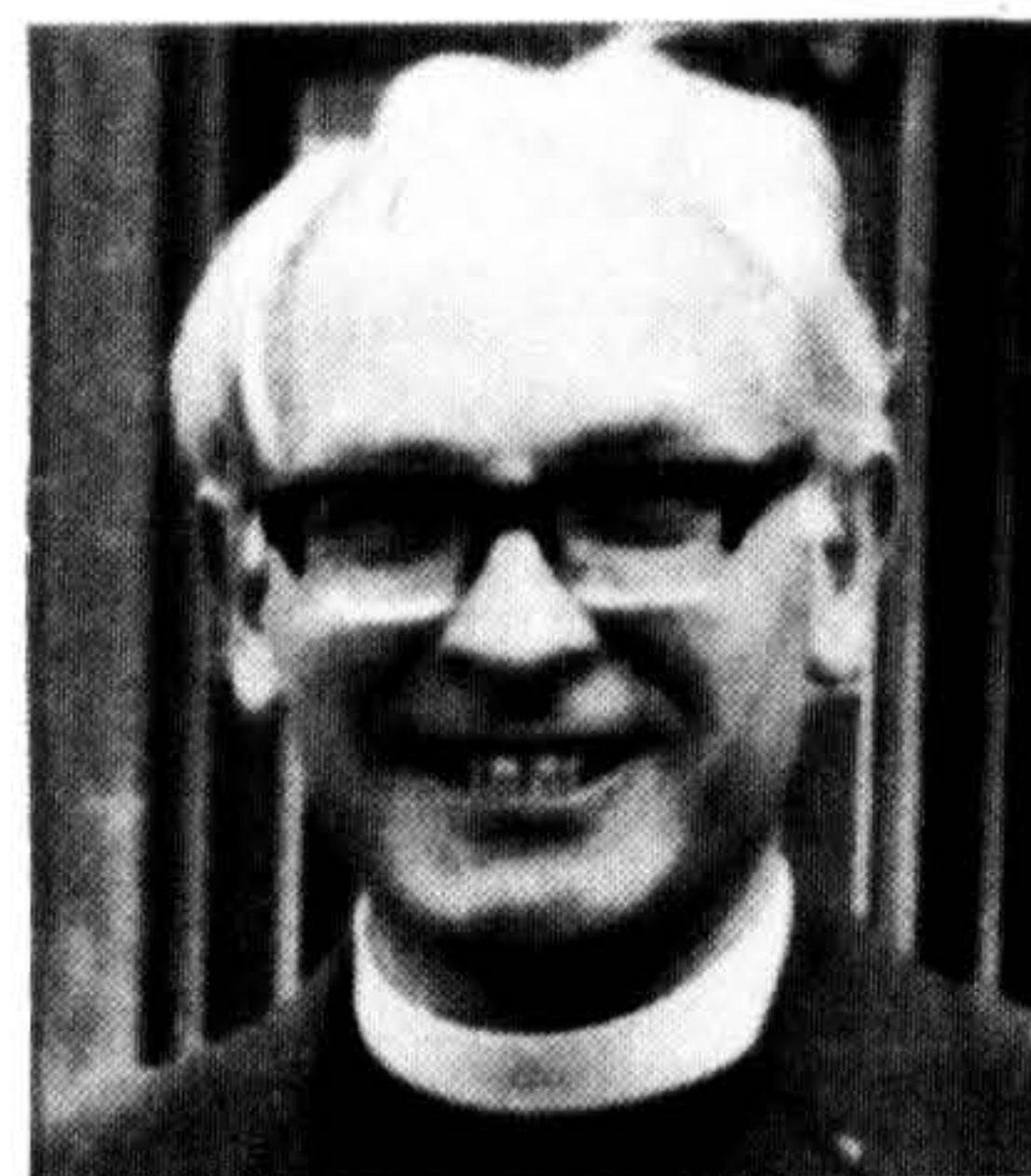
The Courts

It seemed appropriate to begin by visiting Washington's new District Courts, built in 1977, to learn of court structure, procedures and purposes in a building containing 45 courts of varying function. They were, I discovered, to contrast spectacularly with the city 'Night Court' where, every weekday evening, the law is administered at almost breakneck speed. A single magistrate and a harassed desk sergeant consulted on charges, offered advice on pleas and told the accused of their rights, the magistrate then either passing sentence or remanding in custody or on bail to a higher court. The almost frenetic haste of the Night Court was to contrast noticeably with the formality of Higher Courts, and observation of both seemed essential to appreciate the proceedings prior to commitment to prisons like those I was to visit.

The assumed image of American justice evaporated almost at once. It was impossible not to be impressed by the procedures, the almost impeccable courtesy between attorneys and, in particular, the concern for those facing serious felony charges. Throughout the day, I was given the privilege of sitting with the judge, listening to cases of rape, robbery and manslaughter, a narcotics killing and second degree murder. It was a discordant note, by British standards, that almost

invariably the offences had occurred 2 years before or even earlier. Among the judiciary there appeared an impressive sensitivity about their court image and, far from being severe, there was a common disinclination to use prison as a sanction unless it was absolutely necessary. Conversation with one judge for the State of Maryland revealed his reserve to imprison young people in particular because, "within half an hour", it can be expected that they have been raped; an opinion independently corroborated by a policeman to whom I also spoke.

Overcrowding is another cause of reluctance to imprison in some States. In fact, pressure resulting from a suit filed against the government by 150 prisoners in an overcrowded Maryland jail led to courts being told that 'double celling' was unconstitutional and that the prison population had to be reduced to single occupancy of cells by July 1980. Before sentence, therefore, it must be ascertained that a vacancy exists and, if necessary, the parole board may release another prisoner to provide accommodation.



After four years as S.W. Regional Chaplain, Percy Ashford was appointed Chaplain General of Prisons in February 1981. He flippantly claims to have been educated at Wormwood Scrubs, Risley, Durham, Wandsworth and Winchester, previously sailing the seas and attending both College and University in Bristol. He has written a Training Pamphlet for Chaplains on "Attempted Suicide" and considers golf to be his only handicap.

Penal Institutions

It is important to realise that, unlike the Home Office, there are 2 main streams of American justice—State and Federal administrations. My first contact was with the Federal prison system, an administration established as the Bureau of Prisons in 1930, constituting at that time only 7 overcrowded institutions with a population of 12,000 offenders. Fifty years later, there are 49 institutions, camps and community centres.

Visiting a number of penal institutions created an abiding impression of polarised conditions. Allenwood, a small Federal prison with a population of under 500 and situated in an unbelievable 45,000 acres, appeared similar to our own Leyhill Prison, containing a large proportion of 'white collar' offenders, some with very long sentences. However, the sight of almost 80 inmates crammed uncomfortably into each dormitory, others sleeping in corridors, hardly supported the cynical description of Allenwood as a 'Country Club'. Such a description could more accurately be attached to the R. F. Kennedy Center, another open prison in the mountains of West Virginia. First opened in 1969 as a young prisoners' centre, followed by an equally unsuccessful period as a 'co-ed' establishment, its current deployment is for men under 30 years of age and serving a first prison sentence. A tenth of them arrive as 'self commitments', meaning that they present themselves for imprisonment on a prescribed date. Their first sight of the prison must surely create an impression of penal unreality. Its acreage may not be so large as Allenwood's but, with a river flowing through its grounds and a lake stocked with fish for inmate anglers—who cares! Indeed, to the visitor, each apparent extravagance seemed to exist only to be superseded. Eclipsing a fully equipped, 300-seat theatre is an indoor swimming pool with water polo facilities, adjoining an enormous sports hall.

Living conditions are equally palatial, though inmates are contained in cellular confinement before graduating through successive improved conditions of privacy. To criticise a regime of this character is easy, but an essential question is: 'Does the design promote a more relaxed atmosphere and invite inmate responsibility?' An almost

total absence of vandalism suggests that it might. Those to whom I spoke remarked that the environment had increased their respect for people and property: one wondered, however, whether this would be lost on returning to the culture of (say) 'down town' Washington.

Some of the 'closed' prisons I visited were located in equally beautiful surroundings. Dominating watchtowers with threatening guns, however, soon destroyed any initial aesthetic impression. The D.C. Jail in Washington was a particularly interesting State institution which, recently built to replace an 18th Century pen, is presented as a penological showpiece—clean, colourful and palatial. Advanced technology controls its doors, monitors the route of inmates without escort, and even transports them by escalator or elevator. Yet no amount of scientific cosmetic is able to disguise the 'feeling' that exists. The electric chair, unused but still maintained, continues to symbolise the prison ethos. 'The Slammer' is an appropriate term for prisons of its kind.

Much of the tension is, in all probability, deeply racial. The proportion of blacks in prisons is exceedingly high; 65% in Petersburg and almost 90% in Washington whilst, at Lewisburg, the addition of the Mafia noticeably heightens this tension. The manner in which wardens dealt with this situation seemed to vary between the permissive and the severe. At Lewisburg, for example, they had it all under control whereas, at another prison, control seemed almost absent. In 1978 there were four murders and 12 a year or two before. Permissiveness at a women's prison may be gauged by its issue of 'the pill' to inmates after one inmate became pregnant by a prison guard.

What then of routine and security? These often appeared to be good but, in certain instances of staff shortage, it was apparent that routine relied very heavily on inmate tolerance. At Jessup, the equivalent to our detail office was manned by 3 inmates, lightly supervised by one correctional officer. Such dependency on prisoners lessened security observation and had resulted in 30 men escaping only a few days earlier. Better comments could be made about some of the buildings and programmes but, keen as I was to

understand the environment in which chaplains must work, the bleak impressions were the ones that predominate.

The warden of Lorton, commenting about the disappointing conditions in his prison, suggested that too little work produced too much leisure time. In the central prison, only 50% were employed; and, in the maximum security prison, almost none. At other places, labour was far from intensive but often education took its place. At Petersburg, for example, 225 pupils warranted the presence of 21 full-time teachers. At Jessup, the number of teaching staff was inadequate but several classes were tutored by inmates. However, reduced pay was a disincentive to take education.

Among a variety of prison industries were tyre retreading and cable production at Petersburg, and graphic arts and furniture at the R. F. Kennedy Center, Morgantown. At Lewisburg, there was an exceptional organisation and scheme of labour. One large workshop employed almost half of the prison's population working on steel received in its raw state: a large office employed inmates as clerks and draughtsmen, all trained for their work. They were paid up to \$1.50 per hour (double time at weekends) and often earned \$140 (£70) a month. At Lewisburg, too, there was the impressive sight of 40 long-term inmates trained in highly skilled topographical work, producing contour maps for government use. The normality of work plans extended to an annual 2 weeks holiday—inside the prison—with pay. Though less sophisticated, the small County Jail at Franklin ran a commendable 'work release treatment programme'. Local courts expect sentenced prisoners to pay \$5 a day towards their keep and to use their salary in meeting outstanding fines.

Chaplains

The circumstances in which American prison chaplains are expected to minister are often much more difficult than in English prisons. One or 2 chaplains appeared daunted by the degree of evil confronting them, retreating to the protection of their offices, but most accepted the challenge and I hold a lasting impression of their commitment and effectiveness. Most chaplains are qualified for prison

continued on page 21

Looking back

Roy Taylor

A bonus of being middle-aged is that it enables you to look back over a substantial period of time, with prospect of more to come! I now look back to more than 30 years of association with the prison service, 23 of those years spent in the prison service. On reflection the ten years that I was a member of the Editorial Board spanned a decade which marked the closing of one phase in the history of the prison service and the opening of another. Events which now stand out, seemed much less noteworthy at the time.

The twenty years which followed the 1939-45 War was a period of very considerable experimentation and development in the prison service and could be summed up as the making of the modern prison service. New sentences were introduced in 1948, gradually new regimes were developed, schemes were put into practice which affected prisoners' work, leisure and after-care. A range of specialist staff were recruited and in 1954 the P.O.A. formally resolved to strive for a role for its members which would accord with that of the modern prison officer. Sir Lionel Fox was foremost amongst those who pointed the service in acquiring its modernity. 'Modern' became a key word.

The Journal was launched in 1960, at a time when there was much discussion about the purpose of a 'modern' prison service. It was generally assumed that its function was much wider than just the

containment of prisoners but there was uncertainty about how far to go. A number of openings seemed possible. A good deal of interest was pinned on the notion of prison community. Should the purpose include the social welfare of the prisoner and his family, should it be primarily remedial? Where would work, physical education or education itself find a place. The debate of course continues, but with security taking a prominence which it did not in the late 1950s.

The Journal provided one way for furthering discussion in the service and for providing information about developments and achievements. It was not easy to learn about developments in other parts of the system. The opening paragraph of the Home Secretary's message (R. A. Butler) in the first issue catches the feelings of the time:

"I am glad to welcome the Prison Service Journal and wish it well

for the future. The exchange of information among those engaged in this field of social work is an important part of the development of methods of penal treatment. The concluding paragraph of the White Paper on Penal Practice in a Changing Society emphasised that in this development we must always be ready to experiment and to adjust our thinking realistically to the outcome. A Journal such as this can make a valuable contribution to the knowledge and understanding of existing methods of treatment, whether they be long established or novel; and by the examination of problems which are as yet unsolved, it may help to point the way to new lines of development".

From the start, the Editorial Board enjoyed a free hand in the material it published. The Journal sought a path which was independent of Head Office but yet regularly included

contributions from senior members of the administration. It was not a 'House Journal' yet sought to reflect opinion in the Service. It has often been pointed out that it is far from easy to write about a development or a situation when you are in the thick of it. The Journal has received 'reflective' contributions but few written in the heat of the moment. Cartoons and book reviews can provide the means of making a telling point.

The correspondence column which might reflect opinions and comment, has been a relatively tame affair. I recall Editorial Board discussions on how to 'liven up' our correspondence column. Was our readership really made up of all the placid members of the Service? Was the Journal so innocuous as to be scarcely worth a comment? Perhaps a quarterly publication does not lend itself to expression of strong feelings for the urgency has been lost by publication day. However I have some sympathy with the writer of the first letter which was published: 'Sir, as a regular reader, may I ask you to spare us from the repetition of the thirteen pages from the pen of...' never again did we publish a piece of that length. If only more readers had written to us, what might have been achieved! Of course when 'copy' is scarce a long article can be an editor's delight. The work of the Editorial Board was (and probably still is) to produce a balanced fare with each issue which would satisfy the broad range of interest represented in our leadership. It would be easy to provide a Journal of interest for a very limited readership. An element of controversy makes for a lively journal. The Prison Service has never lacked issues which give rise to vigorous discussion, but it has not been very easy to bring these into the pages of the Journal. My impression is that the more contentious pieces have been contributed by those not in the Service which is a pity because it may give the impression that the Journal stands aside from the heat in the kitchen.

The mid-60s saw the shift to greater attention given to security, to changes in emphasis in the functions of prisons, to the complexities of industrial relations. These changes have presented a challenge to the Journal. The focus of discussion has changed. The goals of the Prison Service and the assumptions on which the 'modern' prison service

was based have had to be re-examined. The Journal has contributed to this examination, notably by devoting much of an issue to one important subject. A feature which was not envisaged at the start has been the part which the Journal has played as a link between the Service and the world at large. A glance at the articles which have appeared show them to be wide-ranging and not exclusively

concerned with the Service itself and it also has its informed readership outside the Service.

Editors have kept the Journal in step with Lord Butler's message. It continues to inform and focus on development and I believe contributes to the understanding of the prison system and its place in Society. Sadly, information of itself does not make day-to-day life in prison any easier.

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READERS Write

THE EDITOR

Prison Service Journal

Dear Sir,

Prison Service Journal*Apt title—or misnomer?*

During 1980 I went into print in "Informer"* about a matter entirely unrelated to this letter. I made the statement: "I no longer subscribe to the *Prison Service Journal* because of my personal view that it should not be so titled, but perhaps the 'Fringe-ologists' Journal'."

Nemesis recently overtook me in the form of a telephone call from Alan Rayfield who succinctly asked (detailed?) me to defend my stance by writing a 'Letter to the Editor' "as critical as I liked" on the *Prison Service Journal*, for its 21st Anniversary in 1981. The clarion call to criticise freely at first stirred me to summon up whatever latent journalistic talent I might possess. I repaired to the typewriter, fired by my desire to be brilliantly satirical, yet producing a well-balanced argument which would drastically change the course of the editorial policies of the Journal. The enormity of what I was proposing to do then dawned on me. I am neither an academic, nor, I believe, a person who takes delight in undue criticism of the efforts of others, nor do I wish to denigrate the sincerity and scholarship of contributors of the past. There is, however, some support for my outrageous statement in "Informer" in the fact that the "Committee of Inquiry into the United Kingdom Prison Services" would tend to substantiate my effrontery.

The report states in "Chapter 5—Organisation" (5.89)... "But finding and developing a positive style is an important priority. Having found it, then communicating it effectively is another... with more attractive and discursive bulletins. We must say we have found it remarkable that, apart from the P.O.A. Magazine, there is no publication that circulates throughout the Service, and no Management Newsletter at all. The

case for a House Journal seems unassailable and one is long overdue..."

The May Committee's apparent ignorance of the existence, or its deliberate dismissal, of the *Prison Service Journal* would tend to support my criticism that it is not truly representative of the aims and objectives of the Service as a whole, nor does it totally represent the membership of the Prison Service.

"Communicating it effectively... with more attractive and discursive bulletins". This journalistic and, indeed, management utopia encapsulates aptly why I am reluctant to accept that the *Prison Service Journal* appeals to the people it should, or publishes matter which is totally relevant, or salient, to the running of the Prison Service.

My perception is that the Prison Service consists in the main of some 550 Governor grades, supplemented and complemented by some 20,000 uniformed grades and a further legion of Specialists in various sciences and disciplines.

My contention, therefore, is that the *Prison Service Journal* should have its content slanted at the largest proportion of those which its title suggests it wishes to attract. I believe it does not. My reason for this belief cannot be supported by concrete evidence, as I do not have the time or resources to conduct a market research survey to substantiate my statement. However, at my own establishment, Risley, we sell only on average 5 copies of each edition. (Usually one to the Training Principal Officer, one to a Governor grade and the remainder (dare I say it?) to "fringe-ologists").

I cannot dispute that most of the material published is work which stems from the pens and scholarship of people far more able and knowledgeable than I, but I defend my right to find some of it far too pedantic and even tunnel-visioned.

The analogy springs to mind that if I wish to learn to drive a motor-car, I do not necessarily need to know the chemical breakdown of petrol, nor

the physics of torque or brake-horse power. I need to know how to manipulate the various controls in order to reach my destination without undue mishap to myself or others. I, therefore, believe that sometimes contributors pitch their message at a level far above that which is necessary to stimulate interest.

Which brings me to a further point: possibly even more exasperating—the book reviews. Some of them are, I am sure, even more polysyllabic, convoluted and jargonistic than the reviewed books themselves must be. Do people who review actually vie with each other to be long-winded pseudo-intellectual and obscure? They may be doing the authors and a "frightened off" circle of would-be readers a dis-service. (I do not hesitate to offer those of my colleagues and friends who have 'reviewed' an abject apology, should they deem this perception offensive).

In summary, I contend that the *Prison Service Journal* publishes material which is not always attractive to the majority of people who comprise the Prison Service, and is obscure to, and perhaps even viewed derisively, by a largely unattracted possible readership.

I can offer no panacea, but I am sure that May's advocating of a "House Journal" if it were to be acted upon, and which need not necessarily disbar contributions such as I criticise, would reach a much larger readership than it does currently.

If this were to come about then I could in all honesty throw up my hands, admit the error of my ways, and re-subscribe in the belief that the Magazine was aptly titled *The Prison Service Journal*, even though my real preference would be to see a new style "down-market" Magazine, perhaps entitled *The Prison Staffs' Quarterly*.

Yours faithfully,

KEITH RITCH

Assistant Governor, Risley

*"Informer" is a privately circulated journal to members of the Prison and Borstal Governors' Branch of the S.C.P.S. (Editor).

READERS WRITE (continued)

THE EDITOR

Prison Service Journal

Dear Sir,

Community Service by Order

I was interested in the review of this book by Rick Evans, not having read the work concerned I am dependant on Rick's interpretation, but no doubt this is accurate. There appear to be two main points which arise. Firstly the question as to whether Community Service Orders are a sentence in their own right, or are a direct alternative to Custody. Any ambiguity which is around is due to the wording of the Act, and its interpretation by Judges and Magistrates. This ambiguity can lead to inequity, as a defendant could appear before a Court who see Community Service as a sentence in its own right, and at the time of making an order on that defendant had no intention of imposing any custodial sentence. If a breach of conditions results in action before the

Supervising Court, that Court may well see any Community Service Order as being a direct alternative to custody, and revoke the Order and resentence to a term in custody. This could explain why some Community Service Officers appear to be more generous in the enforcement of the conditions than others.

The second point which is open to challenge is that Community Service is administered by the Probation and After-Care Service, whose experience is in individual treatment. As a general statement this is only true of the management structure, as most areas have recruited staff who are not trained as Probation Officers, and who have a clear responsibility to ensure that the Order of the Court is complied with. These are people in daily contact with the offenders.

Possibly the biggest inequity in Community Service at the present time is the number of hours ordered by the Courts. The experience in two P.S.D.'s for which I have some

responsibility is that in 1980 Orders made by Crown Courts averaged 124 hours each, in one P.S.D. Magistrates' Orders averaged 135 hours each and in the other P.S.D. 168 hours each.

Community Service Orders are a sentence which have an appeal whether the standpoint is treatment or punishment, and are going to be a sentencing option for a long time to come. On the basis of economy alone they can be justified.

I do not have any national statistics for the total number of Orders made in 1980, but if the figure of 50% of Orders being a direct alternative to custody, a conservative estimate is that the daily population must have been reduced by some 3,000. With the numbers currently being catered for in prisons stretching the Prison Service almost to its limits, this must be a welcome relief.

Yours sincerely,

F. W. HAYNES

Senior Probation Officer

AMERICAN PRISONS & CHAPLAINCIES

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ministry before entry. A prior parochial emphasis on clinical pastoral education provides a standard considered to merit entry at \$25,000 per annum. No house is provided but removal grants are awarded. Within the framework of a 5 day week, chaplains are allowed to vary their hours to meet the needs of the institution. All retire on full pension at the age of 55 or after 25 years' service.

The chaplaincies seemed to represent a veritable Council of Churches: Roman Catholic, Baptist, African, Methodist, Lutheran; and, at Lorton Prison, even a full-time Muslim chaplain. Chaplains may be only 'tolerated' by staff, but senior management, at least, gave chaplains considerable liberty to exercise and enhance their ministry. With annual grants of between \$10,000 and \$13,000, they engage 'contract chaplains', each coming under the jurisdiction of the full-time chaplain who agrees terms of service and salary. Denominations recognised by the Federal Bureau have an external 'endorsing officer' with whom the chaplain must liaise before engaging a new contract chaplain.

The religious work at County Jails depends on volunteers but the liveliness of many chaplaincies was due, in part, to them being permitted almost unlimited volunteers to promote attractive Christian programmes. At Lewisburg, an astounding 125 were involved in supporting the ministry though a more usual number, as at Petersburg, was around 60. An example of their involvement occurred at Morgantown where the Chaplain's Hour (or 3 hours as it proved to be) was a musically exciting evening including a film, discussion, and a memorable act of devotion. Muslims squatted beside Christians around a solitary candle in a darkened chapel listening to the Roman Catholic Priest. Then, holding a small lighted candle and embracing their neighbour, many joined in extempore prayer. It was a moving experience as each learned to respect the faith of others, encouraged the next week by the chaplain taking on retreat Muslims, Jews and Christians together.

It was of particular interest to observe the freedom of programme afforded to chaplains to meet the needs of the institution. The end

result was often a pastoral routine similar to our statutory duties, but the absence of an enforced schedule offered chaplains an opportunity for mission which they considered would otherwise be destroyed. Often, the chaplain ate and chatted with those he served. In a tense situation at Lewisburg, on the day of my visit, when an inmate had died because of alleged delay in staff attention, it was to the chaplain that the warden turned. Often, too, the chaplain had a key ministry to staff as well as to inmates; other chaplains were closely involved with crisis intervention, staff training, treatment committees, inmate committees, and other aspects of the institution.

Overall, I was left with an awareness, much more than an impression, that the chaplaincy was important to the penal scene. As a communications channel, it clearly fulfils a service to the total institution that aids the rehabilitative process. But furthermore, by privately and publicly counselling prisoners on their lives and values and by bringing some comfort in discouragement, trouble or agitation, the chaplaincy was essentially a presence of hope. ■

21 YEARS LATER

continued from page 2

Charlie Day (whose dedication has comforted all the editors), to the various and varied contributors, and to the "sponsorship" of many both known and unknown people in Eccleston Square and other spots far removed from the editorial office who allowed the Journal to continue although they may not have gone as far as Ray Mitchell would have wished in providing time for more professional editing.

Assessment of success...or failure, depends (like those priestly pronouncements on half-empty or half-full churches) on the pessimism or optimism of both assessor and assessed. Nobody knows the whole truth about Sir Alexander's own success rate as an assessor, or how many of the self-confessed failures responded to a second chance.

If the Editorial Board were asked to look back and answer that searching "And at what has the Journal failed?" they might answer, pessimistically, that it had failed to be a sensational success, but I think they could suggest, optimistically, that the Journal's survival over 21 years was in itself sufficient indication that it deserved a chance to try and try again. ■

THE SWISS APPROACH

continued from page 9

departments, who see the use of electronic equipment as cost-efficient. To hear from a prison administrator in a country renowned for its perfection in gadgetry that it is not financially cheaper in the long-run if bad relationships between staff and inmates ensue is indeed music to one's ears.

Perhaps it is important that the 'gnomes of Zurich' continue to work well for Switzerland, or otherwise a more depressing type of gnome may be running their prisons in the future!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article stems from a Council of Europe Criminological Fellowship whereby the author visited Denmark, Germany and Switzerland in the summer of 1980. Many persons contributed in direct and indirect ways, but in preparing this article the author is particularly indebted to Professor J. Bernheim of the Institut de Médecine Légale, Geneva; Dr. M. E. Weilenmann of the Kantonale Justizdirektion, Zurich; and Monsieur A. Baechtold, Chef de la section, Exécution des peines et mesures, Division de Police du Département Fédéral de Justice et Police, Berne. ■



From a note sent to establishments with dogs from H.Q.: "Could Dog Handlers also be reminded that they do not visit the Veterinary Surgeon when they feel like it. Unless it is an emergency (injury) they must obtain permission from the S/O D/H I/C Section first."

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Applications should be sent to the Cropwood Secretary at the Institute of Criminology, 7 West Road, Cambridge CB3 9DT, to arrive not later than 31 October 1981.

BOOK REVIEWS

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WRIGHT ON RIGHTS

Legal Rights of Prisoners

GEOFFREY P. ALPERT

Lexington, 1979, £11.50

*There was an Old Man who said, "Hush!
I perceive a young bird in this bush!"
When they said, "Is it small?"
He replied, "Not at all!
It is four times as big as the bush!"*

It is unusual for a book to have an appendix more than twice as long as the text. The appendix in this book is an exhaustive review of prisoners' rights litigation in the United States; the text describes two projects providing legal aid (in England we should say legal assistance) to prisoners.

Until the mid-1960s, American courts adopted a 'hands off' policy in regard to prisons; as English courts did until the Hull Board of Visitors case in 1979. But in 1964 and 1971 the U.S. Supreme Court held that prisoners could bring actions against prison officials under the Civil Rights Act 1871. Previously, the prisoner was 'the slave of the state', but gradually courts recognised that inmates had basic constitutional rights.

Since 1944 it had been held that "a prisoner retains all the rights of an ordinary citizen except those expressly, or by necessary implication, taken away from him by law".

Did this mean that prisoners could have uncensored correspondence and access to law books and lawyers? By degrees the courts decided that it did. Restrictions on access had led to "jailhouse lawyers", whose activities were not welcomed by the authorities; but an important decision by the Supreme Court in *Johnson v. Avery* in 1969 ruled that they must be permitted unless the state provided reason-

able alternatives. Texas, a strict state noted for unpaid prison labour and visits behind wire mesh screens, provided two attorneys and a few law students, but this was held insufficient for 21,000 prisoners, and the number of attorneys was increased to twelve. Another state to provide legal services was Washington, with less than 3,000 felons in prison; it is regarded as more liberal in its penal administration—prisoners can wear their own clothes, for example.

Geoffrey Alpert compares the affects of introducing legal services in the prison systems of two states, taking as his starting point that "The fundamental right of prisoners is access to the courts. Without the ability to challenge prison personnel, policies and regulations, the prisoner is at the mercy of the administrator". The problems dealt with include civil, financial and family matters. In Washington, but not in Texas, institutional grievances, including medical and disciplinary matters, could be included. Another survey had found that over 80 per cent of prison administrators believed that the provision of legal services would not impair the internal order of the prison, but would reduce the negative effect of inmate power groups, especially jailhouse lawyers.

In both states over half the prisoners reported legal problems, of which only a small percentage concerned prison administration. Three quarters of those with problems in Washington used the project, and 61 per cent in Texas. It appears that "the ability to discuss one's legal problems even when no relief is forthcoming is a useful and significant attitude-changing device". In both states those who used the service did not become as prisonized as non-users, their attitude to lawyers and the judiciary improved, and, after using the project, they committed fewer

disciplinary offences. Prisoners' sense of powerlessness was reduced. One prisoner said that the lawyers "really talked to me...I realized that to make it in here I got to get along with the guards, too. And some of them ain't all bad. They just got a job to do".

The review of legal decisions in Appendix B (with footnotes often three times as long as the text) is useful. In 1970, for example, it was held that all outgoing mail from prisoners must be forwarded without search unless a search warrant was duly obtained. In addition, prison officials were prohibited from searching an inmate's incoming mail from attorneys and certain government officials. All other incoming mail could be searched for contraband. Other decisions concern disciplinary proceedings, conjugal visits, personal appearance, access to prison records, and other problems.

Of course many things in United States prisons are still far from satisfactory. Litigation, moreover, is not the ideal method for producing reform, and, even when a decision is made, further effort may be necessary to ensure that it is enforced. But this book shows how, once courts decide to affirm basic principles of fair treatment for prisoners, they can cut through the excuses raised by prison administrators, which seem to have had no more substance than those of the English industrialists who resisted the Factory Acts. Once the dreaded lawyers are allowed proper access to the prisoners, their influence can actually be beneficial. But if the prison authorities dislike litigation, they should introduce reforms, to make it unnecessary, except as a last resort, to remedy the imperfections which are bound to occur in any human institution.

MARTIN WRIGHT

Director

Howard League for Penal Reform

Training in Small Groups

B. BABINGTON SMITH and B. A. FARRELL
(Editors)

Pergamon, 1979, £7.50

The joint editors have achieved, in an admirable way, their desire to present something of the variety of approaches and ideas among practitioners in the British field of small group work. The book draws on talks given at a Seminar on 'Methods and Experiences in Small Groups' in 1970. The first five chapters are written by authors already widely acknowledged as experts in their own field, and each has contributed a postscript covering developments since 1970.

In the sixth chapter Farrell "attempts to clarify the character of what has been

offered"; and in the seventh, Babington Smith offers some psychological and practical considerations. Both, from different professional standpoints, present comprehensive, concise and critical comment which provide an excellent review of the five methods described by the other authors. For this reason I recommend readers, after looking to see what is offered by the authors, to go first to chapters 6 and 7 before returning to read the first five in detail.

Following that plan, John Adair is the first to bat. In his Chapter "Training Leaders" he describes experiments in leadership training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, which resulted in the functional leadership approach, now associated with the Industrial Society, of Action Centred Leadership based on the Task, Team Maintenance and Individual Needs.

Coverdale Training is presented in Chapter

2 by John Waterston. After referring to the method of approach and development of Ralph Coverdale's work with the Steel Company of Wales he describes its development under the leadership of Coverdale and B. Babington Smith with Esso, which Coverdale joined in 1961 as Head of Management Studies. The training is based on "a single learning method; a form of 'learning from experience' through a balanced sequence of preparation, action, and review".

Under the title "The Study of The Small Group In An Organisational Setting", B. M. W. Palmer describes the courses and conferences developed and run by the Tavistock and Grubb Institutes to explore and study Group Behaviour. He concentrates on the small group in the conference setting, its internal behaviour, and its relationship to the total course or conference.

B. Marcus then describes the "Small Group in a Psychiatric Prison". Using his personal experience, Marcus describes the general scene at Grendon Underwood Prison and then paints in the detail of the treatment philosophy in which the small groups play a vital part. These groups, led by prison officers (not medically or psychiatrically qualified), are somewhat unique in providing an opportunity in permissive freedom in a normally strictly hierarchical structure.

Finally, K. B. Low and Harold Bridger describe work with small groups with the British Company of Phillip Industries, which had its origin in the Conference in 1962 aimed to devise means to secure management succession. Their chapter gives details of the pre-course work and post-course phase as well as details of the residential course design and philosophy. Its evolution "from a concern with those inter-personal skills required in communicating appraisals to a recognition of the importance of understanding how a group, faced with tasks, carried out those tasks" is described.

In Chapter six Farrell first highlights the similarities and differences of the five methods and after pointing out that only Marcus described work "within a residential institution and over long periods of time", he deals with the descriptions of the other four methods which he sees as being "far too simple-minded". He grasps the nettle, as he puts it, and offers an alternative description "as a means of clarifying the problem and of exposing the logical difficulties with which group operators seem to be faced". Farrell then refers to the work at Grendon Underwood.

In the final chapter, Babington Smith adopts a similar approach and after comparing the five methods of operation, explores the models and metaphors employed by the authors and concludes with the question of appraising them and their achievements.

The book is one to be read by all who use, or contemplate using, group work as part of training or development in their organisation. It will also be of equal value to students or trainers, managers or consultants, academics or practitioners, and it provokes the reader into further thought and exploration. Farrell says "so if the courses of training offered by Adair *et al* can be made acceptable to Universities and Polytechnics then the contributions they each have to offer will stand a good chance of being clarified and fostered. Perhaps this volume will do something to encourage development in this direction", (p.114). It well could.

R. M. DAUNCEY
Deputy Regional Director
North Region

Restraining the Wicked: The Dangerous Offender Project

IAN DINE, and CONRAD and DIUITZ

Lexington, 1980, £10.00

I found this book readable, interesting and informative. The authors' experience 'in the field' has given a particular edge to the conclusions they draw. The method of gaining information, its collation and assessment, are assisted by the presentation of tables and lists of figures. The sub-title, "The Incapacitation of the Dangerous Criminal", explains the book, which contains a description of research to determine the practicability and cost-effectiveness of such a scheme. It also considers the background to the interest in the idea of "incapacitation" which was used by Bentham to describe, as one aim of punishment, the segregation from society for life, or a long period of time, of those individuals who committed serious (dangerous) crimes.

There are 125 pages separated into chapters which make the work done and the methods employed to do it more easy to understand. Wilson's position is based on the work of Skinner and Skinner who justify incapacitation by a mathematical model. The authors identify the major weakness of this research as its dependence on an assumed definite value for the crime rate per year per criminal. Other studies are noted, particularly that of Wolfgang which indicated that a small number of individuals, (6%), in any group of offenders were responsible for more than half the total offences committed during the period studied.

It is less than fair to quote selected passages. The authors' pursuit of information to substantiate or refute assumptions has been diligent; the tables and diagrams which accompany the text are helpful; and the bibliography, extended by end of chapter notes, is relatively short but comprehensive.

The conclusion reached by the authors is that the proposition is unsound. I reproduce this not to reduce readership of the book, but hopefully to whet the appetite of those who see incapacitation as an answer to the prison population explosion, and for those who are against it as a solution to this present dilemma.

DAVID KEMP
Senior Probation Officer
Gartree

Catastrophe Theory

ALEXANDER WOODCOCK and MONTE DAVIS

Pelican, 1980, £1.25

The authors describe catastrophe theory as a "controversial new way of thinking about change—change in a course of events, change in an object's shape, changes in a system's behaviour, changes in ideas themselves—". Three hundred years of science, they say, have encouraged a one-sided view of change as smooth continuous and quantitative change. "Catastrophe theory is a mathematical language created to describe and classify abrupt changes like the bursting of a bubble or the qualitative shift in our minds when we 'get a pun' or a 'play on words'".

In the first half of the book the authors describe the development of the theory by René Thom based on the descriptive mathematics of shape and form called topology. Topology deals with properties that have no magnitude. A topologist can work in seven-dimensional space but cannot, in the ordinary sense, measure along any of those dimensions. Consequently, while catastrophe theory is well suited to describe the shape of processes, its descriptions and predictions are not quantitative. Instead, they are like maps without a scale; they tell us that there are mountains to the left or a river to the right, but not how far away each is or how large. Recent developments in the application of the theory include attempts to introduce measurement to predict future abrupt changes such as the collapse of a bridge or a prison riot. From our own experience of disturbances at Gartree Prison in 1978, we know how unsuccessful this can be.

We should not however, take this as a condemnation of the theory as topology does not include measurement in the accepted sense. Maybe we are using the wrong variables as alienation and tension are not particularly easy to measure. Possibly catastrophe theory has not yet advanced sufficiently to provide accurate predictions. Are we using catastrophe theory in the wrong way? It was not originally designed as a basis for measurement. Perhaps we should be using it to understand *what* happens when a prison riot occurs and the factors associated with it, rather than to estimate *when* one might take place. Perhaps we should use this increased understanding to define the conditions under which riots are unlikely and identify what other

rises in disorder are of minimal seriousness. We might then plan our prisons to meet those requirements rather than to use the theory to foretell the future.

This was not an easy book to read. It does however, contain some practical examples of how catastrophe theory can be used to provide descriptive models of systems in which there are continuous and sudden changes. As such it provides food for thought. It is a book for the serious reader. It is not for those who want a quick and simple introduction to catastrophe theory.

The book has less value for Prison Service readers than one might have expected. It was published in 1978, and does not cover the successful fitting of the theory to Hull in 1976 after the riot, nor the failure to predict the second Gartree riot in 1978, let alone more recent developments.

PETER HUMPHREY
Senior Psychologist
H.M.P. Long Lartin

The Criminal Jurisdiction of Magistrates (supplement to the seventh edition)

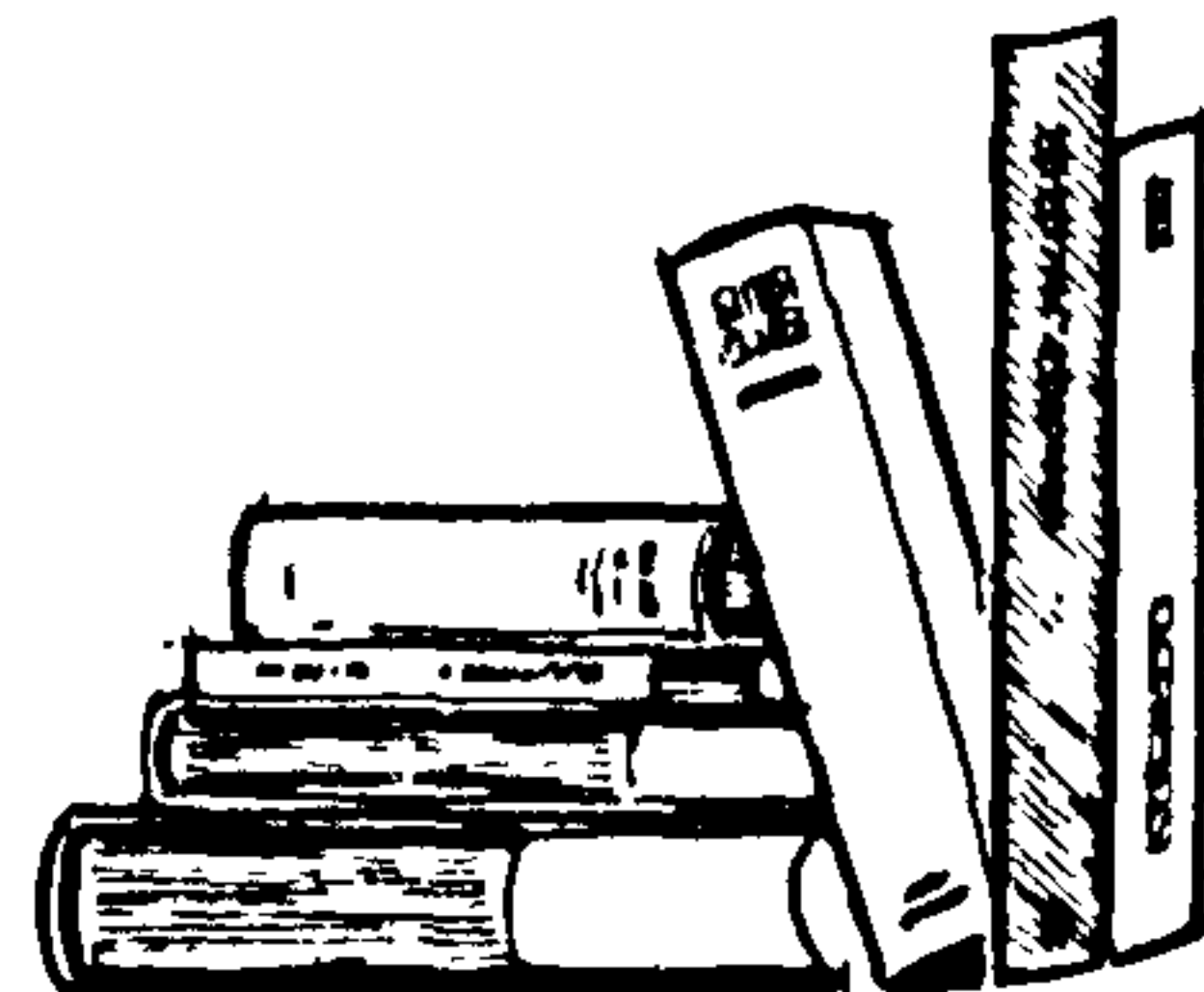
BRIAN HARRIS

Barry Rose, 1980, £4.00

The publication of this slim volume enables the author to rectify the very few factual inaccuracies in the seventh edition, and to keep up to date those practitioners of magisterial jurisprudence who comprise its intended readership.

The supplement exemplifies all the qualities—brevity, accuracy, clarity and ease of access—of the main volume (*PSJ*, October 1980). Additionally, it underlines the author's ability to abstract, from the deluge of relevant material, precisely those aspects which are likely to be important to the practitioner. A valuable working tool.

JOHN MAY
Deputy Governor
Gloucester Prison



We have been asked to point out that *Prison Reform Simulation Game* by J. R. S. Whiting, which was referred to on page 15 of our October 1979 edition, is no longer available from Management Games Ltd. It can be obtained from the author at King's School, Gloucester, until further notice.

any COMMENTS? ARTICLES? THOUGHTS?



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(WINSTON CHURCHILL)



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