PRISON SERVICE
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No 77 WINTER 1990

REGIMES EDITION

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Subscriptions:
HMP Leyhill, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos. GL12 8HL

Reviews:
Trevor Williams, HMP Rudgate, Wetherby, W. Yorkshire LS23 7AZ

Editorial Board

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Comment

A perceptive, regular reader of the PSJ will note a change of format in this edition devoted to regimes. The Editorial Board has spent some time planning a re-vamped presentation of the journal and this edition is the first fruit of their labours. We would welcome comments on the new format as well as the contents dealing with regimes.

As I write in August 1989 the Report of the Review of the organisation of the Prison Department above establishment level has just been published and has caused considerable discussion within the Service. The proposed option of the review team is radical, and if accepted, will involve the dissolution of the Regional structure we have known for many years. Following the radical changes brought about at establishment level by Fresh Start it appears that the Prison Service is liable to face considerable upheaval and change above establishment level during the next two to three years, if the Report's main recommendations are accepted. The Report seeks to address the debilitating dichotomy between operations and policy which it perceives as existing within our present structure above establishment level and proposes a method of integrating the 'two cultures'. It remains to be seen whether the preferred solution succeeds in achieving a more effective integration.

No doubt future editions of the PSJ will reflect the debate and decisions which will flow from this important Report. However, future editions will be steered by a new Editor, John Staples, to whom I have recently handed over the reins of Editorship. I wish him and the Editorial Board every success in the future.

The dichotomy to which Al refers, and here the perceptive reader will notice a change of style as I pick up the pen which Al has used so elegantly for the past two years, has been painfully evident to us all. Alan, a governor colleague and a mild man normally, blasted my ear over the telephone telling me about the latest piece of 'confetti' to have come from the head of a policy divison at H.Q.; 'Doesn't he know how impossible this is! It opens the flood gates!' And Brian, energetic in his desire to provide the Service with policies which are relevant and take us nearer achieving our aims, has become a frustrated administrator feeling out of touch with the people he needs to influence most to effect those policies. This can't be right!

The report sees the problem clearly but can an organisation which we all agree is flawed produce a solution that is free from those flaws. That the Prison Governors' Association and the Association representing senior administrators, the F.D.A., both equally dislike the report may be enough for some to say it must have got it right. For others the use of external consultants will be an assurance that the blinkers have been dropped.

I do not criticise those who prepared the report for I believe they showed imagination and boldness in their proposals. They worked to terms of reference which left little option but for them to provide a report which dwelt upon structure, lines of accountability, limited spans of control.

That concern with only one aspect of organisation reflects how the Service at above establishment level works and is expected to work, each division jealous of its own area of responsibility. To end the division between policy and operations we need to have people at a senior level who take the broad view and ensure that policy is informed by practice and practice directed towards achieving known and agreed policies; the proposed structure may have got it right but that's not enough. The proposals create new work and that new work demands a different management style; new skills need to be learned; strategies worked out; fresh systems put in place; staff appropriately selected and a shared sense of purpose.

If that follows from the Review then we may well be on the road to treating prisoners with humanity. ■

Management, Leadership & Effectiveness

This is a version (edited with the author's consent) of an address given by him, in Spring 1989, to a conference of senior staff from North Regional Prisons; not Governors of prisons, but Governors' principal aides.

AN Joseph
Governor,
HM Prison
Liverpool

Plain Words

What I want to say today is pretty basic stuff, but none the worse, I believe, for that, and I want to start by making a confession. When making notes for this contribution, I asked myself what I recall as outstandingly important from other recent conferences on the various themes of management. Not much I fear; is this because I am a poor listener? I think not; quite frankly I think it's because I am becoming a potential senior citizen and much of the 'New-speak' is hard to swallow. Everything has to be expressed as an acronym. I know a bit about SPAR, but the meaning of the initials still gives me problems and makes me feel a bit inferior when it doesn't spring to mind as quickly as I would like. For a long time, the term LIDS left me just as far adrift. The computer age, clearly, is here to stay but I remain hopeful that 'acronym-speak' will eventually fall away, to be replaced by real words. After all, there is a limit to the number of acceptable four letter words which can be used as acronyms. I wonder if the computer buffs realise that? Do you remember MR 3, when they were talking of Principal Living Unit Managers and Senior Living Unit Managers? Thank God they didn't bear fruit. Perhaps wickedly, I look forward to a computer program on a topic such as 'Criminal Records Administration Procedures'. Much of today's other jargon language still leaves me cold. I have trouble explaining the word pragmatic, with any conviction. What is wrong with 'practical', 'down to earth'? More recently, 'proactive', tends to upset me. The dreadful misuse of that lovely word 'cascade' has also left me a bit bruised. What is the point of this introduction? Well it involves a simple first message. I believe that there is no need for jargon, mumbo-jumbo or New-speak in the task of running a prison. There ***is*** a need for hard work and it ***is*** a job which offers nothing to the clock watcher. This is a firm belief from which I cannot escape. I am not therefore going to talk to you in technical language — mainly because I don't understand it — and I am not going to suggest that management, even my somewhat eccentric style of management, needs innate skills, because it doesn't. What, then, are some of the qualities necessary to function as a prison manager?

Managing Prisons is Different

We need to be fully aware that it is a different job to that of most other managers. That is not to say that different skills are needed, but perhaps these same skills have to be applied in a different fashion? Let me explain why I believe that: I, with other Governor Is, have recently undergone a job assessment by Treasury officials. When I challenged those Treasury officials on the question of our management task, and that includes yours, being different, they had a problem in finding a position in management which they could compare with ours. Eventually they came up with hospital management. "Not so," said I. Generally speaking hospital patients want to be there; they expect to be made well again. They are appreciative of the staff, they have visits every day, and even (the more wealthy, at least) pay insurance premiums towards the likelihood of using the service as a private patient. Hospitals and prisons, I suggest to you, are chalk and cheese. I ask myself how many roof climbing incidents there are at Walton Hospital every year, and where the inmates would be sent if they did misbehave in that way and, I ask myself, how many times the management is castigated or blamed for the deaths which take place there. Our task as managers involves setting standards, working with and getting results from a very disparate group. Our numerically highest group don't want to be with us, don't like us, and get great delight out of upsetting our plans. they habitually damage the fabric of our establishment, wreak havoc on the clothing and equipment we issue to them and see our junior supervisors as the enemy. No other manager in his right mind, I suggest to you, would imagine doing his job under such conditions. The fact that we achieve results at all, flies in the face of all modern management theory.

What then constitutes a good manager in prison terms? Let me begin with a fairly lively suggestion — a suggestion that some would deny, but in that very denial they tell us quite a lot about themselves. I suggest that a successful manager must be a good actor. It is a premise I have made on a number of occasions, to a variety of people. On first hearing it, a good number of people tend to refute the proposition. It is, to some, a threatening comment because it implies that 'we' who work with 'you' are not seeing, or are not even sure about the identity of the real 'you'. Don't let that idea threaten you; analyse it and see if it is a true statement. I am not suggesting fraudulent acting. I am not suggesting deceit. However, the very job we do pushes us into a role, a role which most of us will admit we try to shed when we leave the prison. Certainly our job demands that we play that role 'up front' for a good deal of our working

day. Most of us, I suggest, did not pay much thought to these 'up front' parts of the job when we joined the Service. Some of us saw the job as 'management'. The more ancient of us were recruited by syrupy phrases like 'social work with young people'. When I joined, after a very brief period as a probation officer, I am sure it was my probation training which convinced the recruitment board that I was the man for the job. They never talked about managing prisons. They spoke to me about Borstal work and the role of the Assistant Governor, nothing more exciting or managerially demanding than that. The chairman of my interview board was half an hour late for the interview. I didn't see myself as being recruited to govern a large prison and, I am sure, neither did he. The point I am making is that the job has changed and is constantly changing, and we must be sufficiently flexible to change with it. Even better, if you can be a bit ahead of the change — but count me out — you will really shine.

Gordon Fowler once told me the story of his attendance as a very junior Assistant Governor at a National Assistant Governors' Conference. The conference theme was a very heavy one, well-laced with management terminology and up-to-date thinking for its day. Gordon told me how he went home at the end quite dispirited and confided in his wife that he had been bamboozled by all the technical words and wondered if he was in the right job. He told her that he could never see himself getting promotion when the demands were of a management nature. "Everyone except me" he said "seemed to understand it and was totally at ease with it all. I'll never make it". He, of course, became Deputy Director General, so take heart.

Let us remember, from the Governor's point of view, that the line to the top as far as management and decisions are concerned is a short one. We are accountable to the Regional Director, who is accountable to the Deputy Director General and the Director General. That is all the 'in house' staff but we must not lose sight of the fact that the Director General is directly and personally accountable to the Home Secretary and no-one else. He, in turn, has access to the Prime Minister. It is, therefore, a short line from you, as Governor, to the nation's leader. (In many countries, that would constitute a political appointment with all the risks such a system entails. Count your blessings). It follows that a Governor's input into the Prison Board, via the Regional Director, is of importance to you as managers. The Board is the source of authority for operational decisions and advice to Ministers. You and your Governor are only one step, or one voice, away from it. Your influence with your Regional Director must, therefore, be of real importance.

Leading from the Front

Leadership, I suggest, goes hand in hand with operational management. We have, therefore, two of the three words in our title closely united and surely inseperable. A Governor must have full day-to-day operational direction over his establishment. He must provide a fixed point of leadership for the discipline grades. His overall influence covers every member of staff and every prisoner. Leadership involves the Governor in tactical management, establishing daily priorities for himself and his senior staff — you — and regime adjustments. In an overcrowded Prison Service, the term 'regime adjustments' covers a multitude of possibilities and a complete session looking at the very skills of regime adjustment might be useful.

The leadership role, in my experience, forms a continuing part of all the Governor's duties and frequently manifests itself in the need to maintain and improve standards and staff morale. The nature of prison work at all levels is such that the Governor in charge must be seen to be in the vanguard of all significant events and developments. He cannot do it without the knowledge that he has a good senior management team; he cannot do it without you. How do we achieve this manifestation of leadership? Well, as a fixed, ongoing method, we do it through Governor's rounds, impromptu inspections, support — I mean here, such matters as visits of support to the different areas of the prison. And this is true for you as Functional Managers. The leadership role means motivation of staff; personal interviews and informal discussions with staff; briefing and debriefing of the key managers; generating a group spirit and a group identity. Are you doing it?

No Governor, surely, as I have indicated, could dream of managing a prison without the very positive help of his key managers? The Fresh Start management structure serves to remind us of the role of the senior management group, a small but potentially effective group, whose members have immediate and important managerial input into the next stratum of the management structure. As the Governor leads the prison and the senior management group, so the members of that senior management group must translate his leadership and management to their immediate subordinates. I believe that Fresh Start, with all its flaws, constitutes a good management system. I had initial doubts about the change of role of the Assistant Governor, or Governor V. A lot of Governors of my vintage learned our trade as Assistant Governors and a lot of us, in turn, used Assistant Governors as a very convenient management resource. They were, in name and in duty, Governors' assistants. They were not, however, used effectively in management terms, as we understand them

today. All that has changed. Have you, in your turn, translated that sort of change inside your departments, by using people within the Fresh Start structure? Many of us can recall how Assistant Governors picked up work every morning, when the mail was sorted. They shared that work amongst themselves, often with no real management pattern to justify which particular tasks went to which Assistant Governors. The Governor now has to ponder which is the correct governor grade to receive each and every communication — and, of course, that is how it should be. What did we think, for example, of the Inmate Activities job when it was first proposed? Even in a large prison, the Head of Inmate Activities role was seen as a bit infra dig, because of his lack of immediate subordinates at governor level. What a luxury it is for a Governor now, to have a senior member of his team with direct oversight and control of education, probation, industries and the chaplaincy. What a luxury it is for them, to have such leadership representing them on the senior management group. Surely that was long overdue?

I have to admit that the claim that Fresh Start would free the Governor to spend more time around his prison is not strictly true in my case. I feel that I remain bogged down by administrative work and ridding myself of much of it is proving difficult. This is a serious stumbling block because, management structure or not, staff still like to see the Governor around the prison. He has a role as a visible leader with the time to spend a few minutes with them on the landings, in the workshops, in the kitchen and suchlike. I always felt that it was unnecessary for the Governor and the Chief Officer to go on their daily walkabout, almost holding hands as they did so. On reflection, however, it did ensure that the Governor actually ***went*** round the prison, thereby achieving the aim, regardless of the method. A more sensible system would involve listing the various disciplines to be visited and making arrangements, perhaps no longer than a week in advance, for the appropriate manager (you) to meet the Governor and accompany him on a visit. The point I am trying to make is that the less formal parts of our work will be neglected if we do not structure them. I am talking of the visible leadership role of the Governor; we will ignore it at our peril.

The Governor as Planner

What about the Governor's planning and development roles? Within the policy initiatives and directives laid down by headquarters and region, the Governor is accountable for ensuring objectives are met and the necessary changes achieved. I, for example, have a building programme costing many millions of pounds, which by 1997 will have transformed a traditional Victorian prison into one more appropriate to the needs of the modern penal system. Such a rebuild requires a good deal of monitoring by the Governor, not only to keep within budget and timetable but also to plan for the knock-on effects on such matters as site security, staff resources, health and safety and the size and structure of the prison's population as different wings are put out of and brought into commission. The works department demands — and absolutely justifies — a good deal of the Governor's time. The security department leaps from one neurotic problem to another. Risks are taken, out of near necessity. We sigh with relief when the potential disaster is averted and this, let me remind you, is in addition to the normal ongoing work of the prison. Decisions which I am playing a part in now, with my senior managers, will affect our successors. We, in turn, are living with the building plans agreed by our predecessors. The building programme is, indeed, a good example of the ongoing needs of good management and the fact that what you do today in your prison will affect the work of your successors.

At the same time, we are preparing our prison for a change of role. To an outsider, this task, like the prison building programme, would be seen as additional to the normal work of running a prison, but we work for a Service, where additional tasks have become the norm and a quiet, uneventful year has become a memory.

The Governor as Personnel Manager

Personnel management is an area which makes demands on a governor's time and is a topic which can require the governor to indulge his actor's role. I estimate that personnel management can account for as much as 20 per cent of the working week, yet we, as senior management get precious little training for it. It is a task which tends to sort us out as leaders. Some of us are good at it — and generally like it for that reason. Others hate it — and it shows! It is another example of today's manager being dogged by the past. The conditions of service embodied in Fresh Start will, in time, bring the affairs of the POA branch committee to manageable proportions, commensurate with their true importance in the structure. Historically, we dealt with branch officials who had the power to increase the take-home pay of their members, by arguing manning levels and waving shrouds at us all. As today's managers, we should be rethinking our relationships with the POA branch officials, in the certain knowledge

that whatever else they are trying to push us into, it is not overtime pay. A good seminar topic could well be 'A new approach to the POA'. I spoke about us having to live with our predecessors' view on building projects. I am no less certain that tomorrow's manager will benefit, or suffer, from our current relationships with the unions.

The thoughtful manager does not, however, limit his personnel work to meetings with the unions. A good deal of union dispute material begins and ends at local level, so the staff on landings can, and do, bring their influence to bear when the chips are down. If management is seen under normal conditions as a disinterested bureaucracy, then any reference to the senior management group at the emergency branch meeting will be viewed in that light — and even the moderates won't give you a second thought. If, on the other hand, you are seen as a decent group, who give a bit of thought for your staff, it will be less easy for someone to sell you down the river. The local Whitley Committee is an area of personnel management which historically seems not to have been afforded its proper place in our personnel function, possibly due to the previous status of the POA. Governors and senior managers who have treated the Whitley Meeting as a non-event would do well to review their thinking. I pondered the idea of having regular Whitley Meetings more frequently than once a quarter, only to find that I am not allowed to, without permission from headquarters. I shall be seeking that permission.

The Governor's Budget

The management of financial resources is something of a new venture for the prison governor. When most of us joined the service, the matter of having to run the prison's budget was probably the furthest thing from our minds. I came to the job via a colonial territory outpost, where even the smallest police station had an annual budget with costing heads and subheads. I found it incredible that there was no budget albatross hanging around a governor's neck. It couldn't last of course; by the time I had become a governor, financial accountability was the order of the day. How, I ask myself, would yesterday's governors have survived these new conditions? As part of the answer to that question, let me suggest that they would have modified their attitudes towards their 'stewards' and Administration Officers. Instead of treating them like senior clerks they would have given them their appropriate role as the company secretary, financial manager, personnel officer and chief clerk, rolled into one. The Fresh Start management system has demolished our old view of the AO. Even the earlier term, Management Support Service, has given way to the more appropriate term Management Services. As head of management services, that particular member of our senior management team carries a great deal of accountability. Governors and other members of the senior management group need to ensure that they work with him, that they understand the work he is doing, and that they give him the support which his job demands. In my case, for example, as one of his jobs, my Head of Management Services is looking after an annual budget of 11 million pounds. Someone in Regional Office may try to sneak off with two per cent of it from time to time, but it remains a lot of money. Who organised your Action Plans and your Targets, when you received those totally unreasonable demands from regional office? I am pleased to tell you that, appropriately, my management services group set to work and produced the goods in first class packages; they knew my views and they translated them on to paper.

The Governor As P.R.O.

I move on to a particularly hazardous, but somewhat seductive, part of the governor's role — his relationship with outside bodies. Again, this is a task which is loved by some and hated by others, but it won't go away, no matter how we feel about it. The most obvious group is that we refer to as the media; the press, radio and television. My message on this group is that there are two kinds of news — the good and the bad. The bad is a younger, fitter animal, or so it seems to me, because it travels faster and survives longer, no matter how hard I try to destroy it. Clearly, therefore, it has to be met with a counter-balance in the form of good news. Governors have a good deal of authority for dealing with the local media and I recommend they use it, and use appropriate members of senior management whenever possible, to spread ***good*** news about their prisons. If you have to hatch and rear the good news, as opposed to inventing it, then by all means do so. At least the headlines which include the word 'prison' won't then be regarded by everyone as implying doom and gloom before they read the story.

Talking to outside groups is a time-consuming exercise which is best left to suitable members of staff. The governor cannot attend many such functions and unless he is very careful in his choice of the groups, his attendance at a selected few will tend to devalue the status of subordinate staff who attend the others. Similarly, he should let his managers speak to their subject and represent him as the prison's first choice and not as a stand-in. Let the Head of Residence talk about his work, let the Head of Inmate Activities do

likewise. Let the Head of Management Services play his part.

Like it or not, we cannot manage our prisons without including a group called the Board of Visitors. Maguire and Vagg labelled them 'watchdogs'. I have never seen that as a sensible, intelligent label. Watchdogs are single-minded, four-legged creatures working for one side against the other and prepared and able to inflict injury on the opposition. Perhaps unwittingly, Maguire and Vagg led us to another and better label, when they identified the necessary conditions for the board's role as:

Clarity of purpose
Organizational efficiency
Credibility
Knowledge of the institution
Critical awareness
Tenacity

Now, I believe that clarity, efficiency, credibility, knowledge and critical awareness are qualities which a watchdog can do without, but which a referee needs in abundance. Tenacity is a suitable working aid in both cases. (You may well think that these qualities constitute the foundation stones for the building of a good prison manager). If you agree that the Board of Visitors is more of a refereeing group than a bunch of watchdogs, how you will work with them, and they with you, is a matter of extreme importance. Their real value, or danger, will only be clear to you in crisis. Those on the board who don't really know and understand the prison are the least of our worries. The sensible ones of that group will keep a low profile and we will have no difficulty in debunking the half-baked statements of the others. The more knowledgeable members can expose you, warts and all, to that group we referred to as the media, with all the problems that carries. The fact that it does not happen a great deal is due, I believe to the good relationships which exist between a governor (and his senior management) and the board members, and to their appreciation of the difficulties under which we all labour. Taken to its logical conclusion, that means that just as Board members can criticise us, so can they provide us with valuable support. The press say, from time to time, "Why can't the public see what is happening behind your walls?" The answer is simple. "The public do see behind our walls; we call them the Board of Visitors." This, then, changes the status of the board from a potential threat (a watchdog) to a valuable, quotable ally (a referee). An efficient governor will have the ear of his board members, whilst not forgetting the need, in some individual cases, to drop a gentle reminder from time to time that there is only one governor for that establishment. They, after all, are willing amateurs and should perform within role. I have found it a time-consuming task to encourage Board members to seek the answers to their various questions from the respective functional managers. Surely, without some knowledge of the management structure, they will spend all their time in the governor's office. Our task, therefore, is to ensure that they know their way about the prison — and they know the correct people to speak to — frequently, you! At the end of the day, let us have one thing clear. The Board of Visitors is not part of the prison management — and it is certainly not part of the prison leadership. Help them to stay in role.

The Governor as Problem Solver

The problem-solving demands of a governor's job cover a wide range of activities. As administrators, we have to weigh the often conflicting interests and needs of inmates and staff, against an overall requirement for efficiency and economy. Staff at all levels look to the governor to provide sound advice and guidance on the resolution of their problems. Errors of judgement in our leadership role are quickly spotted and never really forgotten. They will undermine staff morale and confidence in the governor being able to govern. Discipline staff have a high expectation of leadership from their governor; they expect to see evidence of his involvement in the affairs of the prison at every level, no matter how large or how small. The Governor's problem solving role also spills over into industrial relations, where he has always been a key figure. Bearing in mind what I have already said about the POA and the prison management, every governor surely has to maintain management's right to manage. No one else is accountable; he must see that no one else has the power. In my establishment, managers other than the governor are taking a main role in industrial relations, and that includes consultations with the POA. Our historic structure is unhelpful in this regard, as the POA expect to deal direct with the governor. We have to get rid of this part of our history; industrial relations matters do not have to be managed on every occasion, by the man at the top. It doesn't happen in other fields, why should we be so different?

The Governor as Commander

It is the governor's responsibility to ensure that emergency orders are properly drawn up and regularly updated, but that is a task he can and must delegate. What a governor cannot, and ought not to, delegate is the command role. Staff must know that the governor is their commander, in emergency. It cannot be otherwise; subordinate staff must be assured that we will take command,

when the need arises. My own leadership style might well be described as tending towards the eccentric. The fact remains that in command situations a governor with a leaning towards good luck, and an ability to think reasonably quickly on his feet, will score valuable points when he handles an operational problem in an effective and efficient way. I do not want to suggest that anyone should go into an operational problem ***intending*** to breach the carefully prepared operational orders which have been set up to deal with such emergencies. What I ***am*** suggesting is that, on occasions, it may be apparent that greater benefits lie in other directions, rather than in the slavish obedience to a formula for its own sake. I feel that I can rationalise this view by saying that no two emergency incidents are ever the same, so no one set of rules could ever be enough to deal with them. I am talking of flexibility, when flexibility is justified by the cold light of day.

Finally I should remind you that a good actor — that is a stage player — gives all possible credit to his supporting cast. We must do the same. I am not suggesting false praise. I am not suggesting fulsome praise. I am suggesting that due credit be given to staff and repeated as often as necessary, for a job well done. People who are convinced, by events, that they have done a good job as part of a team, will be equally convinced that they have good team leaders. Many people complain about the decreasing sense of comradeship and loyalty in our job, but I still believe that staff will remember leaders with respect, and even affection, if they have ***good*** memories of events in which they have been involved together. ■

Our 'Sharing' says much about Caring

Setting Up a Shared Working System in a New Establishment

Mary C Whyam
Senior Probation Officer,
HM Prison Garth

Garth Prison in Lancashire is a category B training prison for 512 inmates, 100 of whom, it is envisaged, will be life sentence prisoners. Inmates started to arrive in October 1988, following an intensive period of detailed planning by staff and concentration on interpersonal relationships. A new enterprise should be an exciting and demanding challenge. In an atmosphere of hope and anticipation, one can set to work for the future. Setting up the probation department, and in particular a shared work system, mirrors many of the issues which I feel should be at the centre of any philosophy in to work to the Prison Service Statement of Purpose, which stresses our duty to look after inmates with humanity, and to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release[1].

Respect for Individual Worth and Dignity

This should be at the heart of our philosophy and is relevant when dealing with prisoners and, from a management perspective, when dealing with staff. Ian Dunbar's paper 'A Sense of Direction'[2], when dealing with the concept of dynamic security stressed: purposeful activities for prisoners, treating people as individuals and developing good relationships between staff and prisoners. Whilst Circular Instruction 25/86 'Prisoner Throughcare — Shared Working' provided an important framework, it is vital that staff should be encouraged to make contributions in order that they can identify with, and 'own' whatever system is established. At Garth, we attempted to do this by consulting as many groups of staff as possible, starting from the premise that throughcare is seen as a function and responsibility of all departments in the prison, and with a commitment to involve as many prison staff as possible in the shared work task, so as to give them maximum responsibility for a prisoner's welfare needs.

Involvement and sharing is very much in evidence at the monthly meetings of the Garth Groupwork Coordinating Committee. Discipline and specialist staff meet together on a regular basis to plan the setting up and monitoring of group working in the prison, in order to address identified prisoner need as part of the rehabilitative process. Examples of such groups have alcohol education, social skills and drugs awareness as a focus. Not only does this coordinating committee facilitate communication, but it also provides a greater understanding and awarenesss of the improved contribution that can be made by all staff working and sharing their skills together.

An Eclectic Philosophy

It is important to be aware of a variety of experience from various disciplines, but, in the final analysis, the system adopted should be individual in character, and tailored to meet the needs of the particular establishment for which it was designed. At Garth, we made useful reference to the Jepson and Elliot report on Shared Working [3] and decided that our basic approach to the scheme would be through the medium of an integrated wing team, owing much to the Model D scheme at Featherstone which was cited in the report. We have four wings at Gartree, each housing 128 prisoners. The staffing complement of each wing consists of one principal officer, four senior officers, 22 prison officers and one probation officer.

An Induction Period

This is vital, and can be used to begin the consultative process. This is the time when staff begin to learn about one another and the establishment. It is also the opportunity to harness the energy and enthusiasm that is around and to translate this into commitment. Following discussion, we decided to implement a personal officer system, whereby the personal officer would normally be the first point of contact for a prisoner and would, whenever possible, deal with the problem raised in consultation with whomsover it was thought to be appropriate, bearing in mind the nature of the problem. The scheme is aimed at dealing with personal/welfare problems and the expectation is that the personal officer will liaise directly with the wing probation officer. Personal officers are allocated between five and six prisoners each on the wing, and are expected to deal not only with welfare problems, but also to build up a knowledge of the prisoners. This will enable the officer to contribute his judgement of the individual prisoner when required, eg when writing parole/review reports.

The Reiterative Process

This procedure allows for the refining of the system, and, as such, is important in maintaining momentum. It encourages feedback which in turn promotes further involvement. We should be constantly striving to promote an effective, caring, rehabilitative regime, which has sound links with the local community. Sharing at Garth has been extended beyond the walls, to involve almost 50 volunteers in the organisation of our visitors' centre which is available to provide counselling, creche and refreshment facilities for visiting families. The local health visitor is involved, together with groups focusing on welfare rights and the problems encountered by prisoners' families. Volunteers also fulfil an important role by visiting prisoners and it is planned to give them future involvement in groupwork projects. A local vet, acting in a volunteer capacity, has become very involved in promoting pet care programmes at Garth, emphasising the positive benefits of good pet care management, particularly for aggressive and socially-isolated offenders. Several of these developments have resulted directly from feedback, and the reiterative process. Staff from all departments have been responsible for contributing ideas, and have benefited from seeing these taken up by management in a positive way.

Maintaining the Momentum

Once the process is underway, it is essential to keep staff focused on the task. A belief in the long-term goals needs to be translated into results. Difficulties and problems should be addressed immediately and solutions found. The role of the wing probation officer is important here. In addition to his/her role of caseworker/counsellor to individual prisoners, the probation officer is a resource for wing staff. He/she is a source of information and advice on the social work needs of prisoners and is responsible for promoting liaison with outside probation staff, in particular with reference to the parole process, and is available for consultation by any member of the wing team.

On a more formal basis, the probation officer provides regular consultation sessions for personal officers, during which prisoners' needs are identified and progress monitored. Regular reference is made to the wing page 16 — a joint record which is accessible to and should be used by all members of staff when working with prisoners. This record provides documentary evidence of when applications have been made, and of the general day-to-day progress of the prisoners on the wing. Training hours for discipline staff in terms of shared working are never sufficient, and this remains one of the very real weaknesses in a system that hopes that all training prisons will plan for the introduction of shared working by 1 April 1990 [4]. However, to some extent, the balance can be redressed by using consultation sessions to encourage staff to make use of the wing information packs. These have been prepared by the Probation Service as a training aid and provide useful modules on such topics as parole, interviewing, report writing, welfare rights, employment and alcohol

education. One of the advantages of these is that they can be used in situ, on the wing when the personal officer is not required for other duties. Nevertheless, this does not obviate the necessity for long-term and planned training events. Placements for prison officers with probation officers in the field, together with throughcare seminars highlighting the welfare tasks, have proved to be useful and of lasting benefit.

Following consultation with staff, good practice guides for both probation and personal officers have been compiled. These are not only an attempt to identify best practice, but also provide a focus and benchmark against which practice can be monitored. In addition, I, as Senior Probation Officer, have regular meetings with wing managers and wing governors to discuss the operation of the shared work system in the residential units and to monitor progress.

David Smith, a lecturer in social work at Lancaster University, is currently researching and evaluating the shared work system as it has evolved at Garth. His account will be based on the views of staff and of prisoners who are the consumers of the now much advocated shared work system. Hopefully his findings will provide the basis for a future article.

Delegation and Teamwork

Making things happen depends on good delegation and teamwork. Staff are invariably capable of achieving higher standards than those that are initially demanded of them providing that they receive encouragement, feedback, they feel involved, and in turn, provide a commitment to the task in hand.

A special edition of 'Briefing'[5] has recently been devoted to the subject of 'Staff in the Service'. There is an acknowledgement that staff are the most valuable resource of the Prison Service and that their skills and commitment should be fully used.

The concept of shared working, amongst other things, does enhance the professional role of prison officers and promotes a unique role for the probation officer working in the prison setting. Perhaps, more importantly, it demonstrates a great deal about caring — both for staff and for prisoners. It facilitates communication at all levels and contributes positively to the quality of life in the establishment. ■

References

1. *Prison Statement of Purpose in Full* 'Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.'
2. *'A Sense of Direction'* 1985 — Ian Dunbar, Director of the South West Region.
3. *'Shared Working between Prison and Probation Officers'* 1985 — Norman Jepson and Kenneth Elliot.
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Letters

Privatisation

Dear Sir,
I read with interest Nicholas Hopkins' advert for Corrections Corporation of America, (PSJ No. 76. October 1989) and its extension into the remand system of England and Wales. Like most commercials it glosses over any cracks in what is being sold, and rubbishes its competitors in a frantic attempt to wash 'whiter than white', or to prove that '8 out of 10 owners prefer'. I remain unconvinced.

No-one doubts Hopkins' assertion that this entire debate centres on 'the incontrovertible evidence that remand prisoners are held in worse conditions than convicted prisoners', and that this 'is wrong, it is immoral and it must be rectified'. Indeed, almost everyone working in, or connected to the criminal justice system has been saying this for years, with the notable exceptions of — as far as I am aware — Mr Hopkins, Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons Ltd., and John Mowlem & Co. Ltd., all of whom have gained a sudden passionate and humane interest in penal affairs. Where virtually everyone disagrees with Hopkins is in his view that somehow privatisation is going to result in any significant difference for the lot of the remand prisoner, not because we all represent 'vested interest' opposed to CCA, but because history, the American experience of privatisation, and simple morality suggest something quite different.

Let us look at some facts. Hopkins states that historically whilst private prisons may have been corrupt and inhumane, so were 'the public prisons of the time'. Unfortunately Hopkins does not have a very good grasp of history, as there were no such things as 'public' (ie, answerable

to Government, and run by its representatives) prisons until after 1877. Until that time prisons were subject to a wide variety of abuses, depending on the ingenuity or sadism of whoever bought the right to run them. In the late 18th century our greatest penal reformer, John Howard, could still find inmates incarcerated in Bedford Gaol merely because they could not pay the fees of the gaoler. Perhaps Hopkins could reinstate this as 'a profit-sharing scheme'.

The American experience of privatisation is very limited and by no means universally positive. CCA is indeed, as Hopkins is at pains to point out, the largest private penal contractor in the United States, but it currently owns, leases or manages nine facilities containing a total of 1,719 beds — mostly containing illegal immigrants — out of a total prison population of around 800,000. Privatisation is the subject of great debate, but has largely been confined to low-level security prisons in certain Southern Republican States, especially those which have been subject to massive penal overcrowding. One private prison in Florida has already closed and there is absolutely no empirical evidence to suggest that conditions in private jails are any better than in Government facilities. Indeed, a POA team who visited the US to investigate privatisation discovered women prisoners in one private jail being encouraged to strip for their male guards!

On moral grounds the arguments against privatisation still remain overwhelming. The very fact of privatisation substitutes the goal of profit maximisation as the *raison d'être* of imprisonment instead of the goal of the general welfare of the public. The problem with this is that more prisoners would mean more profit, and at a stroke a powerful lobby would be created in our community who would want more, not fewer people on remand. As one private penal investor — Jack Lymon of the Triad America Corporation — put it, the motive behind his jail in Montana was 'to make a buck at it. I'm not going to kid any of you we are in this for humanitarian reasons'. I only hope that Mr Hopkins has a different motivation, given that privatisation is about to happen here in England.

Dr D Saunders-Wilson
HMP & YOI Grendon

HIV/AIDS

Dear Sir,
I am writing in response to Officer Gillan's letter, printed in the July edition of PSJ.

Although mainly addressing the causal link between alcohol/drug abuse and criminality, Officer Gillan's letter touched upon the subject of AIDS, and its presence in prisons.

The Home Office package designed for both staff and inmates, communicates in a simple, straightforward manner, sound, scientifically supported advice and information, yet confusion still appears to exist. Why this state of affairs continues escapes me; apart from Home Office publications, there is a wealth of material available to the public, ranging from scientific journals to leaflets in libraries. Surely, if one is concerned with the consequences of AIDS in one's own workplace, every endeavour should be made to find out as much as possible about AIDS.

Officer Gillan expresses confusion on a number of points, all of which are commonly heard, yet explanations are easily available. Nevertheless, these points continue to cause concern. One such issue relates to being 'told on the one hand that I cannot catch the disease through normal daily contact, while on the other hand I'm told it is a heterosexual disease and we are all at risk'. Quite frankly, what sexual orientation has to do with 'normal daily contact' mystifies me. The implication of the statement is that only heterosexuals indulge in 'normal daily contact', this is obviously ludicrous; normal daily contact means precisely that, contact that is deemed socially normal. To be unnecessarily obtuse or pedantic is dangerous and, does lead to confusion and alarm.

Concern over the transmission of the HIV through normal contact is, however, universal, and has become the subject of several longitudinal studies, particularly in the U.S.A. The U.S. studies focus on the families of those infected with HIV, and have shown that not one person has become infected, despite tens-of-thousands of household contacts, in over four hundred families studied. Therefore the zero documented transmission risk, must reflect an actual risk of extremely small measure. Extrapolating this to other social settings, the risk must logically be even lower. Obviously prisons are not normal settings, but from a social contact context, the vast majority of inmate/staff liaisons fit the criterion of normal contact.

With regard to 'being told it is a heterosexual disease', the answer is simple, it is a 'heterosexual disease' it is a human condition. The concentration upon sexuality is due to the method of transmitting the HIV, namely through the media of blood or semen. Without being too graphic, in both vaginal and anal intercourse the mucous membranes are susceptible to damage and the risk of possible transmission of the HIV is present. Homosexuals run a greater risk of being infected because the anal membrane is delicate and prone to bleeding, therefore their sexual behaviour exposes them more frequently to the mechanism of transmission.

Officer Gillan goes on to say that 'the information pamphlet' for staff 'stressed that we are not at any day-to-day risk, yet in the one issued to prisoners they are advised to avoid body fluid contact' and asks 'are they biologically different to the rest of us?' I cannot see what inference Officer Gillan is attempting to draw. Staff are ***not*** at day-to-day risk because, day-to-day contact is casual as outlined earlier.

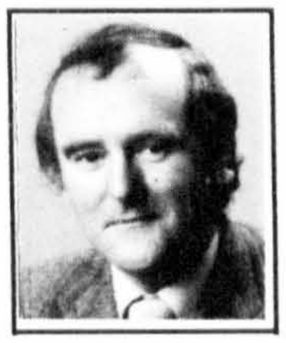
It is also quite right that inmates are told to avoid body fluid contact; so are staff, because this type of contact is ***not*** normal contact, it is ***not*** day-to-day. Any perceived semantic slanting can only be present because it is recognised that inmates, as opposed to staff, are more likely to belong to groups engaged in high-risk behaviour, i.e. intravenous drug use and/or exposure to homosexual behaviour whilst in custody. I would therefore disagree that the information pamphlets, whatever the implied emphasis, are contradictory.

What is obvious, however, is that information about AIDS has not been disseminated sufficiently to allow the majority of staff to have a good working knowledge of the subject and the issues it raises. Whether this is the fault of the Home Office, etc., or the result of individuals' indifference, is something that I cannot comment on, but the answers to questions are there for everyone, all it takes is effort. In the case of AIDS, ignorance is not bliss, it is recklessness, and that merely perpetuates confusion.

A Mariner
Prison Officer
HMP Frankland

Scene from here

Using the Oxygen of Publicity



Professor JE Thomas
Senior Academic Advisor to the Prison Service College.

There can be little doubt that there can be few problems facing a prison service as difficult as the question of its relationships with the public. It is a question that cannot be avoided, since prison services ***are*** accountable to the public. Regardless of how ambivalent or contradictory they are, they have to be met. The public wishes to be informed, has a right to be informed, and will insist upon being informed.

In the past the response of the prison service in this country was simply to refuse to cooperate. This was the style established by the Victorians, after the centralisation of the system in 1877. Before that, an independent inspectorate produced voluminous reports on the local authority prisons which were often very critical. Indeed, it was these reports which were responsible in no small measure for the process of centralisation in the first place. The creation of what the Webbs called a silent world, in almost complete darkness, was always resisted by key figures in the community, but the Victorians could get away with it because of the singularly autocratic base upon which that society thrived. The consequent secrecy, in turn, led to the dramatic discrediting of the regime, and the introduction of reforms which, during this century, made the English service a model for the rest of the world.

Now it is one thing to say that publicity and openness is a good thing in the abstract, but quite another to practise it in any particular organisation. Thus an educational system can mount a programme of information designed to explain to parents the difficulties of educating children, and to give evidence of success. It is not at all the same thing to make available information about prisons and prisoners, quite apart from anything else, because of the knotty question of confidentiality. There are clearly certain things which cannot be revealed, although this begs the question as to what they are. The trouble is that there is often a tendency to use this as a justification for a wall of silence of the kind that the Webbs deplored.

Even if there is a universal, perhaps desperate wish to be more open there are still gigantic hurdles. One which is familiar to a point of being chronic, is the behaviour of much of the press. It is not only that their reports, or even their commentaries are crudely inaccurate, as many of us know to our cost. They are often prejudiced and of course politically biassed to a degree which staggers many foreign commentators. The trouble with the popular press, apart from all the weaknesses already listed, is that they are not so much concerned with words and facts, as with tones. They try to communicate a mood, and in the real complicated world, this does little to raise the level of understanding. If this is the case generally, there can be little hope for the intricacies of educational debate. But rather than excite a contentious debate, this can be illustrated by the failure, despite every effort, to convince them that the people who work in prisons are called officers, the term warder having been abolished in 1921. So even the members of a prison service who wish to make their work more visible have to combat malice, or if we insist upon being reasonable, misunderstanding.

I have been associated with prisons in many countries for the last thirty years, and there is no doubt in that time that there has been a considerable change in the attitude of many in the English and Welsh prison service to the community, and to the obligation to keep the latter informed. When I was a very serious candidate for the assistant governors' course in 1960, having administered prisons in Africa, I asked a governor if I could meet him to learn something about the service. This he did willingly, but he would not allow me to see inside the prison. Some years later, I asked the governor of a borstal if I could bring a study group of adult students on a visit, including as I explained, a number of officers from another establishment. He refused, although I must add that a neighbouring governor agreed with alacrity. I must reiterate too, that there ***has*** been a change, and some establishments now have extensive links with all kinds of groups, notably in the immediate local community, a practice which is called in the American jargon, digging where you stand, by which is meant tackling a problem at the nearest point to you. An especially important example of this is the facility given to students of education by education staff, and I will return to this.

It seems therefore that the prison service has moved from being furtive about what it does, and manifesting hostility to the perfectly healthy enquiry from the public, to reacting sympathetically to many of the requests for information, and help which are made to it. This is excellent, as far as it goes, but I suggest that it does not go far enough. It is reactive, rather than proactive. I want to try to explain what I mean with reference to one area of work, and one in which I am professionally engaged — the education of adults.

Viewed from the broad perspective of adult education, there are two areas of excellence in the prison service. These are the education of prisoners, and the education and training of staff. With regard to the first, prison education officers are well qualified and skilled practitioners who are the same in every respect as the kinds of professionals which the adult in the community, seeking to extend education, can expect to meet. Prisoners have access to libraries which are stocked under the same procedures as those of libraries in the community. Note the contrast with, say, some Australian states where the only books available are those donated by some elderly moralist, locked into a Victorian time-warp, and determined that they should read something improving. Of course, in recent years resources have been cut, but so have they in the broad community. I do not have to rehearse the detailed provision to which many prisoners have access, but I make the point that not enough is known about it by the public, and it is important that this information should be more widely known.

Actually, more is known than is often realised. Each year, for example, a substantial group of experienced and mature people choose to make a specialist study of prison education, learn a good deal, and promulgate their findings widely. It is pleasing to note the willingness of prison education staff at all levels to help in every way possible.

Even more subterranean is the provision of education and training for staff. Training was systemised as long ago as 1896, one of the little known recommendations of the Gladstone report. Since that time staff education has been at the forefront of many sophisticated debates within the service, and while, because of its nature, it can never be regarded as perfect, or sometimes even good, it is much more coherent than any other prison staff training system in the world. Indeed, it is more than that, because I know of very few comparable organisations, outside of prisons, which apply such resource and energy to the attempt to develop a training programme.

In the case of prisoner education, I would like to see much more in that part of the press which thinks, about its scale and its achievements. At the present time it is Canada which is attracting attention in this area because of a limited, though excellent initiative. The reason why this has happened is because of the use of print to explain what is being done. Out of this have come debates which have proved of interest in many countries. It may be claimed that these are conducted in a very limited forum, in academic journals, for example. In some ways these are the most important, for it must be remembered that the 'culture' of a topic such as prison education is debated, and transferred in a limited, but very influential sector of the community. This sector *is* very interested in prison education, and wants to know more about it.

The need to raise awareness about the education of prisoners is real but the need to do so in respect of staff training is even more urgent, for little has been done. If, for example, an enquiry is made about reading on the subject there is hardly any answer. Yet, if observers sat in on a session in one of the training establishments, they would, without doubt, be impressed by the level of discussion, the opportunities presented for learning, and the use to which these opportunities are often put. The dispersal of this information and experience is important for two reasons. The first is that at long last the subject of adult education is moving to the centre of the educational stage. There is considerable interest in how adults learn, and how people can best through training and education, be prepared for their work. The very questions in fact with which the prison service has been preoccupied since 1896. But the basic reason for the advocacy of more attempt at public awareness is that the efforts made by the service in this area ought to be a matter of manifest pride. A beginning might be made with influential and widely read publications such as ***Adults Learning, Studies in Adult Education***, and ***The International Journal of Lifelong Education***.

In a short article it is only possible to give limited examples of the kind of work in the service which should be broadcast. There are many others; my suggestion is that the possibility of exploring these be a matter of constant debate. ■

Prison Regimes: Their Delivery and Development

Text of a paper given by Brian Emes, Deputy Director General of the Prison Service, to members and guests of the Prison Reform Trust on 22 February 1989, as part of a series of lectures on 'Prison Policy in the 1990s'

Brian Emes
Deputy Director of the Prison Service

My theme for this evening is 'Prison regimes: their delivery and development'. 'Regime' can mean almost anything you wish. Classically the word means a 'total system of organisation or government' (and its comprehensive aspect is certainly one I should like to emphasise). It also implies the ethos and nature of a particular system. For me, regime means the total experience of the staff and prisoners living in the organised community in question — in this case the prison system. Prison service staff and governors share that experience with prisoners and are an integral and crucial element in the regime. In fact there are three essential elements of the total prison experience. The first is the physical environment (and I shall want to comment briefly on that aspect). The second element comprises the more easily identifiable set pieces of our regimes — those elements that provide occupation for inmates — work, education, training courses, PE, elements that can most easily be measured (and I shall touch on the monitoring of regimes). But it is the third aspect of the regimes — the way the members of our prison communities behave towards each other — that is, in my view, the most important and the one on which prison governors, in particular, as the managers accountable for the organisational components of the prison system, can have the greatest impact. As the professional head of prison governors, therefore, I attach the greatest importance to this aspect of prison regimes. If staff and prisoners do not feel safe, respected and cared for, then neither well-conceived training courses nor beautifully designed modern prisons will of themselves have much impact. However efficient our management may become the touchstones to the humanity, and therefore the effectiveness of our establishments will remain the concern about and respect for each other that the members of that community manifest. For prisoners this means, amongst other things, an expeditious response to their personal problems, the prompt and proper dispatch of applications and adjudications, for staff a caring personnel policy and for visitors to our establishments courtesy.

I receive two distinct and conflicting pictures of the prison service: the picture painted by the press cuttings which cross my desk daily and the one which I see on my regular visits to establishments. The gloomy picture painted by your advance publicity is the one which is also represented frequently by the media and, to be fair, our apparently daily problems go a long way towards sustaining that impression. But that picture does, in my view, fail to take account of many of the more recent changes and the plans for the next decade. The view from within the prison system does not appear to be so gloomy. Certainly we are constrained by crushing population pressure and an inheritance of outdated and often run down buildings. Overcrowded run down Victorian buildings have meant and still mean that many people have to be held in conditions wholly unacceptable by modern standards. These are a disgrace, and for me and others of my generation who have spent most of their working lives in them, cause for shame. But you are not interested in how this affects me. That is wholly unimportant. What matters is what has been and is being done to improve these conditions for those who live and work in our establishments. Let us look at that for a moment. The Home Secretary has spoken recently about the energetic attempts that are being made to seek alternatives to custody which will ease those pressures and it is not my function to discuss these attempts today.

The first element I identified as critical to the regime of a prison is the physical environment. We are all susceptible to our surroundings but they are even more important in a custodial setting than elsewhere because there is no choice but to remain in them. One of the major priorities is therefore to improve living conditions in existing prisons. The amount of money spent on such work has more than doubled from £30m

in 1987/88 to £80m in 1988/89 and is still rising. There is scarcely an establishment in the country where some major work is not being undertaken. The Prisons Board has required all governors to give priority to establishing a planned maintenance programme which makes maximum use of the professional skills of our works staff. This has an important spin-off in providing additional work for inmates, who not only learn skills which will be relevant on release but also contribute to the prison community in which they are living by improving their own surroundings.

The most significant element in improving existing living conditions is the drive to abolish slopping out as quickly as possible.

Emphasis on slopping out turns the attention to the Victorian prisons which epitomise for most people the environment in which a prison sentence is likely to be served. But this is of course a misconception. Over half our existing prison places — some 26,000 — have been built since 1960. The eight new prisons opened in the past few years all have integral sanitation, as do the eight now under construction. During the next seven years the prison estate will be fundamentally altered by the addition of another ten prisons. In planning the forward programme, the regime has been taken as the critical starting point for design. A design team has been working inside the Prison Department for the past fifteen months, using the experience gained both from our own new prisons and those in the United States, but developing each aspect of the design in close consultation with prison governors and staff. The essential criterion has been to create an environment which is as close to normal life as possible given the constraints of imprisonment. We believe that the new design brief, which is to be published next month, will lead to the creation of establishments fit for the 21st century which will enable us to develop to the full all that is most constructive in a custodial setting. By the time we reach the 21st century we expect to have over 60,000 prison places, the great majority of which will have access to night sanitation.

Perhaps I could digress briefly here to respond to the often-made criticism that by building more places we are encouraging more prison sentences. The Home Secretary has given much emphasis to the energetic attempts which are being made to reduce the number of offenders sentenced to imprisonment. It is not my function to discuss these today. But it is relevant for me to stress that the prison building programme is being planned in such a way that if at any time it appears that new places are not required to relieve overcrowding or to meet increased demand, they can and will be used to enable us to close the least acceptable of our existing establishments. In some cases, it is unsuitable locations or disproportionately high running costs which would make closure desirable. In others it is the lack of necessary ancillary facilities to provide, for instance, sufficient work or education. In some, it is the lack of proper sanitary facilities. Whatever the reason may be, the drive for additional places will provide us with much greater flexibility to plan our estate to meet the needs of prisoners instead of the veering from crisis to crisis which has already been mentioned.

The second element I identified in my definition of 'regime' as a total experience was what I described as 'the more easily identifiable set pieces of our regimes' — 'those elements that provide occupation for inmates' — those activities in which prisoners are engaged during the working day. These have and will continue to mirror, as far as the essential constraints of imprisonment permit, life in the community from which prisoners come. Our difficulty over the past decade or so has not been the identification of what they could be, or installing the necessary plant, the workshops, classrooms, gymnasium or leisure equipment: it has been their delivery in the face of competing demands, and an absence of machinery to monitor objectively on a day to day — year to year basis how well they were being used. This difficulty has been addressed in recent years and before commenting in detail on the elements of regime I shall say a few words about regime monitoring, to which I briefly referred earlier, and to the system of management accountability which we have introduced. Our new system of management accountability requires each governing governor (i.e. those in charge of establishments) to enter into an anual contract with his/her Regional Director on the level of performance to be delivered over the ensuing financial year. He also agrees targets for improvements to be achieved over the same period. At the end of the year each governor accounts for his performance in a report to the Regional Director (and through him to me and to the Director General). The levels of performance to be achieved are planned and agreed on a realistic basis taking into account local circumstances and constraints. But the concept of 'targets' means that neither governor nor Regional Director rest complacently at an existing level of performance. As Browning wrote 'Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for'. Our governors and their staff are working to achieve on a regular basis agreed

levels of performance but they are reaching out too, through the targets that are planned. In relation to inmate activities, baseline figures are agreed for planned hours of occupation and planned numbers of inmates to be occupied across a whole range of activities. To support this system of management accountability we have devised and introduced a system of local weekly monitoring for use by the governor. This system enables him to see regularly whether or not the planned numbers of hours and numbers of inmates occupied are being achieved and, if not, to learn the reasons for any shortfalls. The weekly returns also tell him whether regular routines, such as visits, bathing, adjudications, kit exchange, use of library, have been carried out as planned. The monitoring system has been provided with computer support and this means that Regional Directors and I can access the monitoring data to assist our management oversight of establishments. Already it is clear that governors are using the system of local monitoring to enable them to manage their establishments and run their regimes, in particular, with a greater ability to detect and respond to factors which inhibit performance. The results are already very promising. This ties in with the most economical and effective use of staff which flows from Fresh Start — the most important structural change that has taken place in our prison service this century.

Concern for the proper use of staff and other resources was one of the factors lying behind Fresh Start. Until recently we all took for granted an indefensible paradox. The paradox was that, despite the fact that more and more resources were being poured into the service, less and less by way of improved standards of inmate care were being delivered.

Fresh Start constitutes a huge change to a Service which was beset by increasing workloads and cost. But it was not a one-off event and, now that it is in place in every establishment the Service is getting to grips with it and seizing the opportunities it offers. It offers the opportunity to improve the life of staff with the benefits of shorter working hours, better pay and conditions and the opportunity at all levels for greater responsibilty and a more satisfying job. It expects in return a commitment to work with inmates from all members of the unified grades (i.e. the merged governor and discipline grades). It provides governors with the opportunity of running their establishments more effectively within available resources. And finally, flowing from these, the opportunity to work towards better regimes for inmates.

One of the main purposes of Fresh Start is to provide a sound basis for the regime experienced by prisoners — the 'total experience'. The new Fresh Start working systems include the concept of group working which is the breaking up of work into manageable packets which are then shared by groups of 20 or so staff under a group manager whom you might recognise by the title of principal officer, now grade VI. The greater flexibility provided by group working, together with a clear definition and distribution of activities, offers more certainty. As Fresh Start systems work more effectively there should be far fewer occasions on which, for example, work or classes are disrupted by unforseen commitments. And, as I have explained, the system of weekly monitoring enables governors to respond more quickly and flexibly when disruptions do occur.

The transition to Fresh Start represented a fundamental change for all of us in the Service. It would be unrealistic to expect all these benefits to be achieved in the short term, particularly at a time when, as I have pointed out, we are continuing to deal with very high population levels and the need to sort out certain deep-seated problems in regard to industrial relations. But it does provide the organisational framework within which to improve regimes. It is against this background that I would like to tell you some of the things being achieved in our establishments.

Of all the types of prison the 'local' is the establishment against which our performance is judged. Which is not surprising since they are in every sense the most local and, in terms of the number of people for whom this is their only prison experience, they take by far the largest number each year. You will recognise instantly the picture conjured up by Armley, Strangeways and Walton — deliberately designed to be awe-inspiring and making no pretence as to their purpose. Whereas you could easily mistake a new prison for a better modern university campus, there is no doubt about the purpose of rows and tiers of small grilled windows of our Victorian estate. And it is in our Victorian local prisons that our worst overcrowding is principally to be found. Some of our locals are already showing some of the benefits expected from the introduction of Fresh Start. Let us take Manchester, known to millions through television as Strangeways. Workshop hours have improved by 131% and the use of the library has increased by 200%. Association has been introduced every evening Monday to Friday, on a rota basis. Category 'A' inmates (including those in the highest security classification) now have association at least every weekend. Work opportunities have also

improved at Liverpool and Durham and the period during which inmates have access to regime facilities has increased at Lancaster. Good performances in regard to achieving planned workshop hours are being achieved also at some of our smaller local prisons, e.g. Shrewsbury and Lincoln. Efforts are being made also to get Rule 43 prisoners (i.e. those who seek segregation from normal activities) out from their segregated state. Rule 43 prisoners are now employed in normal employment locations at Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester prisons. At Swansea therapy classes for sexual offenders have been introduced. Prior to this Rule 43 prisoners segregated for their own protection at Swansea had very limited regime opportunities. At Dorchester the withdrawal of discipline officers from supervising eduction classes has meant that up to 20 unconvicted men are now attending day-time education classes. The remainder of the unconvicted receive full association during each afternoon from 1330-1600 hours. Still in the SW region, at Exeter too there have been massive improvements in the provision of inmate work, PE and education since the introduction of Fresh Start. These few random example do, I believe, offer a more encouraging picture. They show the start of a gradual improvement in the hitherto almost exclusively bleak local prison scene. Now let me turn to training prisons.

Training prisons contain 49% of all adults in custody. Some of you may have read the paper by Ian Dunbar (the Regional Director in the SW) 'A Sense of Direction' in which he wrote that a busy prison is a safe prison. Well, training prisons are busy prisons with an immense range of activity.

The aim is for a balanced and integrated regime. Many men and women in training prisons will be engaged in work. Industries in training prisons include the manufacture of reflective road signs, hand trucks and trollies and security equipment including metal gates and cell doors. A good deal of prison clothing and shoes are made in prisons as is the cell furniture. We make good quality front doors and double glazing units. The prison service washes and dries its own bedding and clothing in our laundries. From the prison farms, we are self-sufficient in bacon, pork and eggs. The Service produces over three-quarters of our liquid milk requirements and nearly 70% of the vegetable requirement. Apart from work in prison industries and on farms, prisoners are engaged in building maintenance, cleaning, kitchen work and other duties servicing the establishment. Alternatively some will be taking part in full or part-time education or in vocational training courses. On any day over 80% of the population of our training establishments will be actually engaged in regular work or other day-time activities.

The PE facilities in many prisons are the envy of the neighbourhood and we encourage prison teams to take part in local sports leagues and competitions. A prisoner in a training prison might therefore look forward to a full day with an element of choice. In his cell he would be allowed a radio and record player and a range of games and cell hobbies. A number of prisons also allow some home furnishings in the form of curtains, floor mats and bedspreads. His earnings will allow some purchases of tobacco, food supplements and toiletries from the canteen and he can have books, cassette tapes and some hobby materials sent in or bought from private cash. He/she will not be expected to share a cell, although in some older open prisons accommodation is in dormitories.

Broadly speaking the regime of a training prison is aimed not only to keep a prisoner occupied. Its objective is to allow him or her some freedom of choice. It will encourage participation in activities many of which are comparable to those outside, activities which do not demean but encourage self-sufficiency and self-respect. While we are still some way from being able to plan the sentence and match the regime to each offender's needs, I am able to say that, in the majority of training prisons, we are able to offer prisoners a quality of life which, within the constraints implicit in the facts of imprisonment, certainly provides positive opportunities on which to build the basis of a law-abiding, useful life after release.

Release from custody will always present the individual with problems of adjustment. The prison service is very conscious of this, and attempts to minimise the culture shock through encouraging contacts with the local community.

Prison service establishments are often a significant element in their local communities both as a source of jobs and as part of the local economy. But there is also a considerable tradition of involvement in local life by way of sporting and social activities, fund-raising for charitable causes and voluntary community work. Governors are given every encouragement to use the resources at their disposal, such as sports facilities, for the benefit of the community and to involve inmates in activities to the extent appropriate to the nature of the establishment and the security classification of its inmates. Opportunities to work in and for the local community are invaluable for the personal and social development of inmates. They usually respond

well to the chance to help the elderly, the disabled and the disadvantaged. Some examples which come to mind are the weekly lunch provided for groups of local pensioners by the catering vocational training course at Lindholme; a project at Featherstone to refurbish a playbus for the local social services; and joint PE sessions held at Dartmoor with inmates and handicapped people living nearby. At Shrewsbury on Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons exercise sessions for mentally handicapped children and adults are held and in the summer, at the same establishment, prisoners regularly take wheelchair-bound old age pensioners out for walks in local parks. At Stafford severely physically handicapped residents from two local residential centres are brought into the prison for table games with the prisoners. Once a fortnight a social evening is held with them. At the same establishment 12 category D prisoners go out regularly to help organise sporting activities at a disabled sports centre and last winter over a period of 4 full working days twenty-two inmates were involved in cutting and delivering logs to old age pensioners. Other inmates at Stafford are working on the conversion of a disused railway line to a country walk. At Lewes too, handicapped people of all ages are enabled to take part in sports receiving training from PEI staff and inmates and a half-marathon was organised last summer to raise funds for a handicapped group. These examples are only some of the creative imaginitive schemes devised by governors and their staff to involve prisons and prisoners in their local community. I shall expect to see even more develop as governors are encouraged to examine ways of enhancing their regimes.

Many specialists contribute to prison regimes, and if time permitted I should make reference to them. As it is I shall limit myself to the psychologists, the one specialist group for whom I have managerial and policy responsibility. I believe their work developing social skills training for prisoners is likely to be one of the major elements in the development of help for prisoners. This covers a variety of techniques which attempt to change the behaviour of a person who wants help. In relation to aggression, for example, techniques have included role playing, aggression provoking cues, video-taping, playback, discussion and practice. Although we still know very little about some of the variables, such as the personality of the therapist concerned, some of the results of trying to change behaviour within an institution in this way have been encouraging.

Apart from affecting behaviour within the institution there is also some evidence that social skills training can have some more lasting effect on behaviour after release.

Within the Prison Department we look to the psychologist to give us a technical lead in the area of social skills training and at the present time they directly run, or support other prison staff in running, programmes of this kind in about a dozen establishments. This includes specific work on alcohol education, gambling, drugs, anger control and assertiveness. There are now over 50 institutions at which prison officer-led pre-release courses are regularly run for prisoners with a further 10 or so planned to start in the next six months. These courses help prisoners with issues like relationships as well as covering practical topics like budgeting and the search for a job and accommodation. The heart of a pre-release course is social skills training in the form of two packages called Communications and Relationships which prison officers are trained to use at the Prison Service College. It is worth mentioning that this training was so successful with prison officers that it led to the development of an interactive skills package which now forms the nucleus of all new entrant prison officer training. Moreover there is a subjective belief that at those establishments where officers are involved in running pre-release courses a noticeable improvement in relationships generally between inmates and staff has been detected. Prisoners see officers in a new role; staff see prisoners in a new light. The contribution of this element in planned regimes is very relevant to the third element in my concept of the 'total experience regime' — the way in which members of our prison communities behave towards each other. Which leads me to another aspect of planned regimes which I want to discuss briefly with you — prisoner throughcare.

In 1986 the Department reaffirmed in unequivocal terms its commitment to a policy of helping prisoners with their personal problems and helping them sustain links with their families and with the community and to prepare themselves for their return to that community. We call the concept 'prisoner throughcare'. The recommended approach to delivering the throughcare function is through what is called the 'shared working' approach. This implies a sharing of tasks in this area between prison officers and other staff and the body of seconded probation officers who work within our establishments. There is a whole corpus of developed schemes in the prison system and this year we shall be expecting governors to re-examine ways in which the throughcare function is being

developed at their establishments and, within the framework of management accountability I have described earlier, to deploy their resources so that a better delivery of this function is achieved. The group working arrangements introduced under Fresh Start make this a particularly good time to promote this function and practice. We recognise that not all establishments will produce satisfactory results at once but, in the required programme of regime enhancement to which I shall refer later, better prisoner throughcare will figure prominently. At the heart of good throughcare is the prisoner/staff relationship.

I have just acknowledged that assisting prisoners to prepare for their return to the community on discharge is a basic function of the prison service. I should like to mention three particular initiatives in which the Service is co-operating closely with outside agencies. Housing and employment are often major worries for prisoners on their release. In a new pilot scheme, to run initially in six establishments, prison service staff will be trained by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) Prisons Link Unit (PLU) on ways of helping inmates with these problems. NACRO, with whose work I am sure most of you are very familiar, set up the PLU in 1985 to develop its work in helping to resettle prisoners. The prison service is now funding the PLU for a 2-year pilot scheme. Key features of the projects are that PLU will provide a central source of advice and information and will produce other material for helping prisoners with their problems and the existing throughcare arrangements and the work of the Probation Service in establishments will be fully taken into account. These projects will be closely monitored to measure their effectiveness and how well they have fitted in with the Service's existing ways of dealing with prisoners' problems.

The second initiative I should like to mention is the Government initiative called 'Employment Training'. As (again) many of you will know, the Government's new Employment Training scheme started on 1 October 1988. The scheme is locally based, run by training agents and training managers. Training agents assess the training needs of the unemployed and refer them to the training manager who may well be firms or other employers who provide the training. The prison service is co-operating with NACRO in their capacity as 'training agents' in schemes involving inmates to be discharged to West Yorkshire, Merseyside and Kent/Essex/London. It is too early to assess the full effect of this initiative but I am grateful to the governors and their staff who have cooperated so quickly with NACRO to get this new initiative off the ground.

The third initiative I should like to mention is also within the field of Employment Training but the thrust has come from within the Service. In the North Region, arrangements have been made for inmates who have undertaken construction industry training courses in prison to go straight into Employment Training. The arrangements have been made with a training manager who is approved to run an Employment Training programme in the community by what we used to know as the Manpower Services Commission which is now called the Employment Department Training Agency. From November 1988 inmates completing prison courses at Haverigg, Hindley, Garth, Kirkham, Lancaster, Liverpool, Stoke Heath, Thorn Cross and Manchester have been able to go into Employment Training in the construction field immediately on their release. This is a pilot scheme which has considerable potential for expansion.

It would be appropriate for me at this stage to say something specifically about regimes for young offenders. You will be aware of the new legislation under the 1988 Criminal Justice Act which replaced youth custody and detention centre sentences for young offenders by a single new sentence of detention in a young offender institution. We have provided new guidance to governors of young offender institutions on the regimes to be developed and we are working on the development of a monitoring arrangement to assess the delivery of the regime guidance in young offender institutions. It may be helpful if I quote the introduction to the Circular Instruction sent to governors on the regimes to be developed in that it highlights the concern for the individual offender and his or her needs to be met — 'This CI deals with the quality of the regime which should be provided in young offender institutions. It emphasises the importance of throughcare in every aspect of the young offender's experience of custody. It underlines the value that has to be placed on staff/inmate relationships, and in particular describes the role which personal officer schemes can play in encouraging positive participation in activities and in bringing about the will to change behaviour. It stresses the importance which should be placed on developing a programme of activities which will help young offenders to review their past behaviour and encourage the development of more responsible lifestyles in preparation for their return to the community'. I have quoted these words in full because I think they convey precisely and

positively what we expect in relation to regimes at our young offender establishments.

So far I have made no special reference to regimes in relation to female prisoners. As some of you are no doubt aware the needs of female prisoners were the theme of the Cropwood Conference held a year ago. As with male prisoners, regimes for women are planned (and I quote from the statement of the tasks of the prison service) to provide 'as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody, in particular making available the physical necessities of life; care for physical and mental health; advice and help with personal problems; work, education, training, physical exercise and recreation, and opportunity to practice their religion'. The regimes in female establishments are planned within the common system of management accountability I described earlier and the regime activities on which inmates are engaged vary throughout the female system. However, all female establishments aim to ensure that women are out of their cells for most of the day and for part of the evening. Of course, because of the additional demands on staff at remand centres, including court escorting duties, it is not always possible to offer as full a regime to remand inmates as to sentenced inmates. The range of work opportunities offered to female prisoners is varied and by no means dominated by the gender stereotype image (which male prisoners carry in male establishments) work parties engage in a variety of tasks including plumbing, laundry, gardening, farming and textiles. A wide range of educational facilities is also offered and, although these encompass Open University studies and courses leading to qualifications, education in social and life skills are the most significant elements. Evening class courses include special themes such as addiction behaviour, health education, confidence building and personal relationships. There are also workshops on art, dance, drama and video production. Training courses contain not only home economics and soft furnishings, but also courses in painting and decorating, office technology and computer technology. Arrangements for physical education, recreation and association and for prisoner throughcare are similar to those provided for male prisoners although, because of the relatively few prisoners involved, the regime provision is overall somewhat better than the provision for men. The special needs of prisoners who are mothers with young babies is a matter of particular concern to us and we co-operate closely with the relevant outside agencies to try to ensure that the babies' future welfare is taken into account, particularly where the baby has to be separated from the mother because of the length of the latter's sentence. Our three mother and baby units — at Holloway, Styal and Askham Grange — do a very good job in the unnatural circumstances which a penal environment represents for early motherhood.

Reference to gender and gender stereotyping reminds me of an important development in our staffing arrangements. A recent agreement with the Prison Officers' Association acknowledges that the prison service has a duty to consider officers of both sexes for posts unless there is good reason not to. The effect of this is not to ensure that all establishments will immediately receive staff of the opposite sex to the inmate population but it does mean that in filling vacancies as they occur, consideration will be given to officers regardless of sex except where there is a specific occupational qualification requirement. A recent count of opposite sex postings showed that grades were distributed in the following numbers:

Grade	VIII	VII	VII
males in female establishments	13	4	1
females in male establishments	181	10	3

Opposite sex posting of governor grades has, of course a longer history and such postings have been very successful. Posting of male officers to female establishments is, as the figures demonstrate, on a small scale so far and it is still too early for a substantive evaluation. But the early impressions are favourable and I am hopeful for the longer term prospects and the impact that opposite sex postings will have on regimes.

Another aspect of personnel management which deserves mention is ethnic minority recruitment for the prison service and here the results are less than satisfactory. The Department is conscious that the ethnic minorities are under-represented in the prison service and considerable effort has been and continues to be made to attract ethnic minority recruits. It is our aim to ensure that the choice of prison officer is made from the best candidates overall and we apply the same standards to all applicants. We have, however, paid close attention to the need to ensure that the recruitment processes, such as the aptitude test, do not contain any element of inadvertent racial bias.

The Department is currently involved in various initiatives in an attempt to increase the number of prison officers from the ethnic minorities. Our current advertising campaign in the South East editions of national newspapers specifically highlights the particular need for applications from members of the ethnic minorities. Efforts have also been made in the past

to place advertisements in papers likely to have a high ethnic minority readership, but with rather limited success. Our recruitment literature and video emphasizes our commitment to racial equality and the recruitment booklet (which is currently being revised) will contain interviews with officers from the minorities. The current recruitment video is also under revision and will feature officers and recruits from the ethnic minorities. Thirdly, I should mention that two officers from the Prison Service College at Newbold Revel received awards from the Butler Trust earlier this year for their work in establishing contacts with ethnic minority groups in the West Midlands and explaining the work of the prison service. They will be using their bursary award to undertake a similar exercise in London and the South East based at Feltham. The aim is to test the idea that establishments themselves can stimulate interest by establishing contacts with local ethnic minority comunity groups.

Although the data is not sufficiently refined to show the position across England and Wales, the figures from the London recruitment campaign show that since the start of the campaign on 1 May 1986 550 men and women have passed the interview. Of these 36 men and 12 women were from the ethnic minorities. These figures are disappointing since I firmly believe that a higher proportion of staff than at present from the ethnic minorities would be more representative of our multiracial community and as such make more relevant the regimes within Prison Service establishments.

I have spoken of ethnic minorities in relation to staff recruitment. With regard to ethnic minorities among our inmate population I am aware that Trevor Hall gave a most comprehensive and informative lecture in this centre only three months ago on the topic of Race Relations and the Prison Service. For that reason, I do not propose to say much on this vitally important subject. In relation to regimes the most important point to bear in mind is one emphasised in the 1983 Prison Service policy statement which said: 'It is important at all times to keep in view the basic fact that our prison regime is inevitably designed with the majority principally in mind. A concession, therefore, to the minority will not represent discriminatory or preferential practice so long as its effect is to bring their experience into line with that of the majority'. Governors have been urged to ensure that 'as far as practicable and sensible' all work training courses and activities in general are 'distributed broadly in proportion to the ethnic mix of the inmate population'. The policy statement recognised, however, that certain forms of racial discrimination could be perpetuated by inmates of different races opting for different jobs and training courses. Self-segregation should be prevented where it leads to certain activities becoming regarded as the province of either black or white inmates. Governors are required to have regard to this policy in planning and managing their regimes.

I began by saying that I hoped to have demonstrated to you the practical basis for my belief that the cycle of crisis is not 'never-ending'; that positive progress has been, and is being, achieved both generally in the prison service and in relation to regimes; and that the signs are hopeful for even greater progress in the 1990s. I hope that my discursive picture of regimes in our prison service today and of the factors and systems impinging on them encourages you to recognise the basis for my optimism. In my concluding remarks I should like to tell you something specifically about how we envisage the service moving forward in regard to regimes.

Earlier, I made reference to Ian Dunbar's seminal paper 'A Sense of Direction'. We have used that paper as the basis for encouraging governors to think of ways of enhancing their regimes about which more in a moment. But one of the pleas in the paper was for the Service to have a mission statement and for the purposes of imprisonment to be defined. What the Prisons Board has done, following intense collective consideration, is to produce what it hopes will be regarded as a simple and motivating statement of purpose for the prison service. It is: 'Her Majesty's Prison Sevice serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release'. This statement has been widely circulated within the Service and is intended to be the cornerstone of everything we do and how we act. We hope the statement speaks for itself but I should like to make one or two points.

As Crown Servants we serve our fellow citizens to whom we are therefore accountable for the way we treat prisoners and how we use the resources which Parliament provides. The Service exists to keep people in lawful custody and it beholds us to ensure that they are not subject to arbitrary force or discriminated against on racial or any other grounds, are treated with respect, are properly fed, and have their physical and other requirements properly met. We must ensure that we do all we can to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives both while, and after, they are in prison. The duty of care is discharged and custody secured most surely

when the life of a prison is regular — when prisoners are fully, actively and contructively occupied. The implications for prison regimes are obvious.

The newly defined statement of purpose implies a statement of intent. The prison service has reached a stage of development where it is ripe for improvement. Our management systems and new working practices are broadly in place; the huge building and refurbishment programme to which I have referred is moving forward at times with dramatic speed; our policies are clearly stated and promulgated in key areas such as race relations and prisoner throughcare. Now is the time for greater emphasis on regimes. During the coming year I intend to work with governors to achieve improvements in those establishments which, for whatever reasons, have the most impoverished regimes within their group, whilst at the same time ensuring that standards in the best are maintained. I am confident that we can make significant progress in both the short and medium term. ■

How Should Regimes and Prisoners' Needs Converge?

This article provides a timely analysis of two elements of prison life, Sentence Planning and Regime Management which, despite the terminolgy, are subjects familiar to the Prison Service. The author goes on to identify practical developments in both areas which need to be brought together for best effect.

Rick Evans
Head of Research and Development Unit at Midland Regional Office

Sentence Planning

The idea of sentence planning is not new. Staff rightly hark back to the Borstal system when trainees were assessed, training plans drawn up and regularly reviewed by boards or case conferences. Most of them will add that there had grown a sense of ritual about their industry by the time Borstal training (and the indeterminate nature of the sentence) was supplanted by 'youth custody'. This is a useful reminder that the means must serve a clear end; that procedures must remain as simple and economical as possible.

That other indeterminate sentence, life imprisonment, has also attracted a set of formal procedures which could be described as assessment, sentence planning, and review. In the near future, we are expecting similar processes to be extended to all prisoners serving determinate but very long sentences.

Older practices have already coloured current developments. Much of the best of the Borstal system has been captured in an official instruction[1] which ushered in the new legislation for Young Offender Institutions (YOIs). This stipulates that the whole of a young offender's sentence should be used to prepare him or her for resettlement in the community. It insists on purposeful activity being the hallmark of the regime and that a sentence plan for every inmate should be formulated, enacted and reviewed.

Young Offender Institutions are developing methods for meeting the requirements but there are also many locally designed initiatives in remand centres and adult establishments which parallel these good practices.

The roots of this movement take us back to the broad concept of rehabilitation (and the avoidance of what I recently saw referred to as the 'behavioural deep-freeze' of imprisonment); the concept which has been freshly enshrined in the Prison Service's statement of purpose. Alongside its function of keeping prisoners in custody, the Service is to 'look after them with humanity and to help them lead law abiding and useful lives in custody and after release'.

Many staff (certainly, most specialist grades) will point to this too as the continuation of an aim which could always be found in establishments. Though the flames have spluttered at times, the torch of training and rehabilitation has been kept alive in educational classes, in groupwork sessions, in work experience, in vocational and industrial training courses, in casework and counselling, in prerelease courses, in physical education, in chaplaincy and other specialist services.

Sometimes these have been recognised as large scale, formal programmes within the regime and have been bound together by an over-arching concept and commitment such as throughcare. Too often they have been glimmers in the dark as individual staff responded to inmates' needs, committing themselves to some form of informal or small-scale

intervention, therapy, or support and care.

It is undeniable too that rehabilitative efforts can sometimes ride on the back of operational concerns. In establishments running welfare and social work schemes, prison staff will justify their services to inmates in terms of building relationships of greater trust (so that security of information is sometimes shared); getting to know their charges better and developing a healthier atmosphere (so that breakdown of control is less likely)[2].

Ian Dunbar's paper[3] captured many of the Service's contemporary preoccupations about clear objectives, concrete tasks, management information systems, relationships and design of prisons, even if it did not dwell on the aims of imprisonment. The three principles he focused on should be woven into the idea of sentence planning.

First, inmates should be occupied and 'dynamic security' aided through programmes of planned activity. Secondly, control and growth will be enhanced through positive relationships between staff and inmates and between them and the outside world. Thirdly, each member of staff and each inmate must be engaged as an individual and involved in concerted planning. Long term prisoners, in particular, must be drawn into this 'individualism' through planning for their time in custody.

Against this background, today's version of sentence planning could be described as making beneficial use of prisoners' time while they are in custody, engaging them in positive activities (with the aims of throughcare and their preparation for release), and also to make best use of the regime elements that exist in our establishments.

These elements are already numerous. Diagram 1 attempts

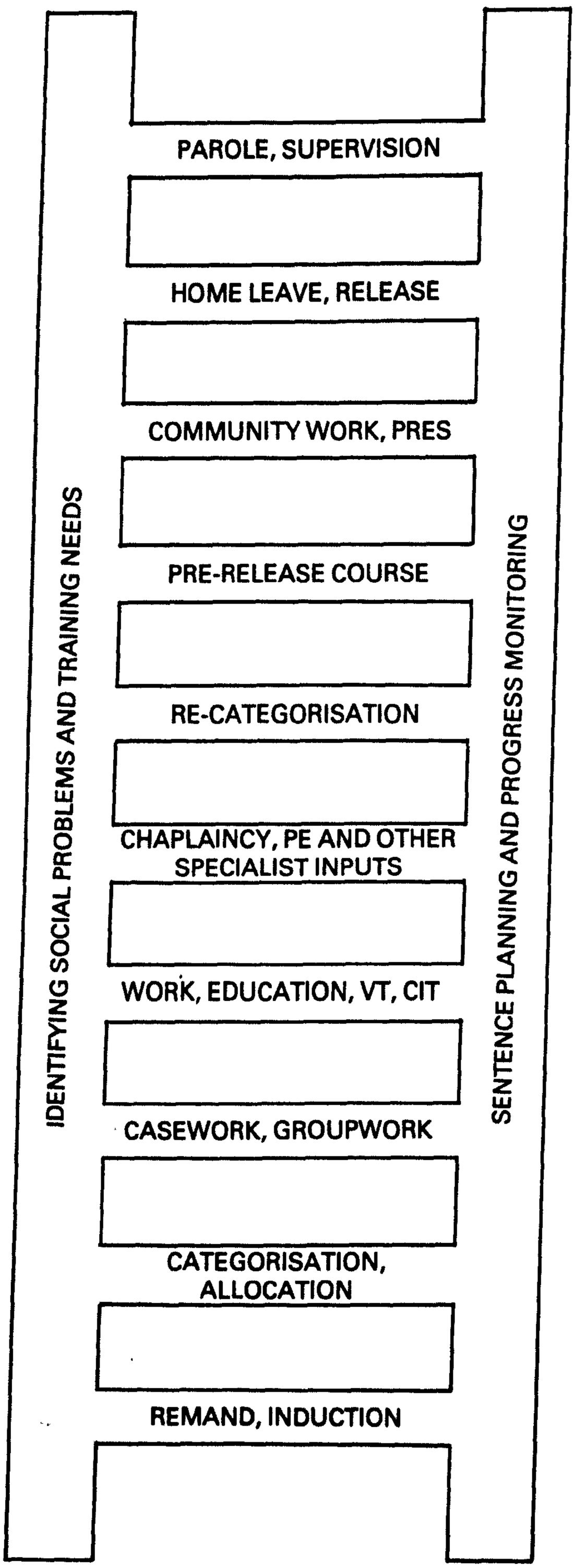


Diagram 1. Some steps in Preparation for Release (showing parallel support activities resting firmly on staff involvement).

to show some of the major components in the form of steps which, put in their most positive light, can contribute to prisoners' preparation for release. These include allocation to a training establishment and forms of induction which must include systematic assessment processes. Later stages of sentence may include statutory reviews and reports.

Alongside casework and groupwork programmes could be added the involvement of voluntary groups, prison visitors, and the contribution of other agencies. A part is played, too, by domestic visits, correspondence with families and friends, and the recent installation of payphones in selected establishments.

The importance of work, education and training courses should be extended to the use of library facilities. These and other elements will increasingly be drawn together over the next few years by the development of skills appraisal and NVQ certification under the National Council for Vocational Qualifications. They will link, too, to Employment Training schemes outside establishments.

To physical education and other specialist inputs may be added the provision for recreation, hobbies and interests.

In these ways, Diagram 1 can be fleshed out to show the commonest elements of prison regimes and, in the case of a particular establishment, the provision of locally agreed initiatives. The significance of the diagram lies less in drawing these together as a means towards the end of preparation for release, but in showing them rooted in staff involvement with prisoners — preferably in a Personal Officer scheme or what may be called Group Officer arrangements for a 'shared working' approach to prisoner throughcare[4].

It also shows them supported by parallel activities of assessment (identifying social problems and training needs) and sentence planning with procedures for regularly reviewing progress.

The basic elements of effective sentence planning can most easily be described by reference to the documentation which will be needed to support the processes of recording and reviewing[5].

The first component is a systematic assessment in which prisoners' needs can be identified and recorded. The most practical format is a checklist, based on research surveys of the most common items[6]. These will almost certainly include the following aspects (though perhaps using different terminology):-

- ☐ Adjustment, coping
- ☐ Relationships
- ☐ Social and life skills
- ☐ Family matters
- ☐ Handling money
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Drinking
- ☐ Drug involvement
- ☐ Gambling
- ☐ Offending behaviour
- ☐ Rights, social provision
- ☐ Probation contacts
- ☐ Contact with other agencies
- ☐ Employment

A range of staff as well as the home Probation Officer and the inmate himself should contribute to the assessment. As well as problems, it should include an appraisal of his achievements, experience, strengths, aptitudes and interests.

The second component of sentence planning is the record of agreed intervention which should follow this full assessment. This might constitute action by staff in the establishment, referral to visiting specialists or volunteers, or steps to involve other agencies during the prisoner's sentence or on his release. While it is currently a managerial fad to articulate everything in the form of an 'action plan' or a 'target', here is an application where a simple statement of planned intervention is crucial. Once recorded as a formal plan, reviews will reveal whether action actually ensued and success can be evaluated in terms of its outcomes. When staff maintain rigorous documentation of this sort, the effectiveness of the agreed function or managerial responsibility can be measured.

This identifies the third component of effective sentence planning which is regular review. Whether or not linked to a statutory process or formal board (such as re-categorisation, home leave, parole or lifer reviews), staff involved with the prisoner must appraise progress and, if need be, set new targets in the form of a subsequent action plan.

These components are set out in the left-hand side of Diagram 2 as a cycle of induction, sentence planning, allocation to regime activities, progress review, and revision of plan.

Although these components are common sense, the reaction by managers and staff (when faced with the requirement to set up sentence planning for all inmates) is to overlook the positive elements and procedures which already exist in the regime. A common tendency is to over-complicate what must be simple procedures and to assume that specialists are needed to conduct what should be 'line management' work in the residential unit.

Even for remand prisoners in a busy local prison some of these steps are possible and already exist. Others we should be trying out, however modestly. There is a case for formal reviews for remand prisoners in the first fortnight (certainly during the first month) of custody when support and practical help

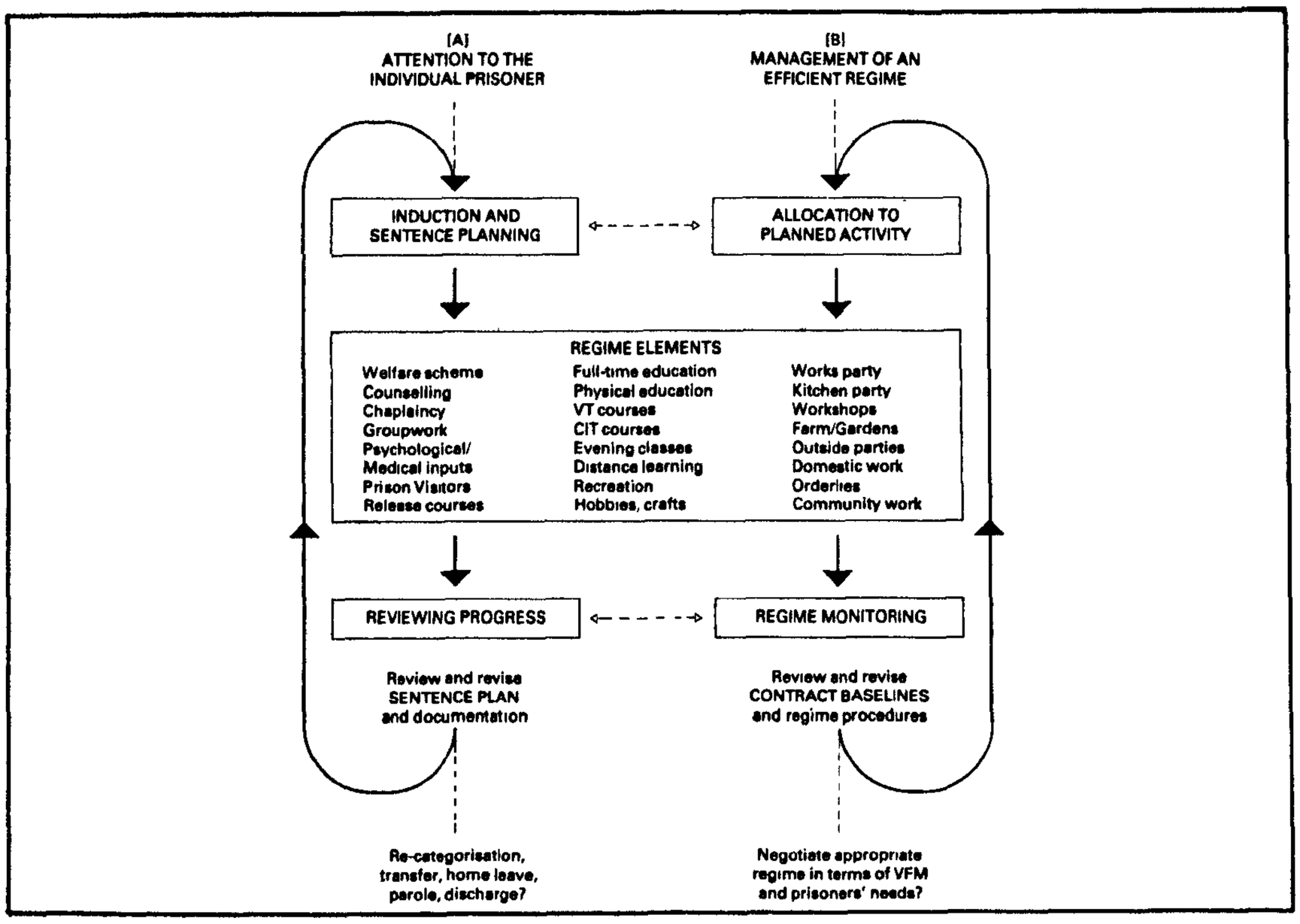


Diagram 2.
Cycles of sentence planning and regime management.

are most likely to be needed[7]. Though full sentence planning may not be possible or desirable in a local prison, there are already the related procedures of classification and allocation which could act as a bedrock for development.

Some specialist staff are exploring the practicality of a more focused information and counselling service about the facilities which exist for prisoners in training establishments after allocation and transfer[8].

In summary, sentence planning is a useful medium of practical procedures through which attention to the individual prisoner can be channelled, coordinated and monitored.

Regime Management

While staff in the Residential teams of our establishments are installing or refining sentence planning techniques, their colleagues in the Inmate Activities group are being bombarded with requirements for the efficient management of the regime.

The increased managerial attention on regimes over the past three years has focused on planned levels of activity which have been built into a contract for the Governor and which allowed the introduction of a weekly monitoring system[9]. The Head of Inmate Activities, in particular, has had to contend with such demands while still organising a newly formed group of uniformed and specialist staff into a coherent team.

Since the Fresh Start re-organisation, enough progress has been made for the Prisons Board to stress as national priorities (a) the achievement of planned hours and manning in prison workshops; and (b) the maintenance of (or improvement upon) average levels of performance across selected inmate activities. This is against the background of critical interest by the National Audit Office in the operation and profitability of prison workshops and of evidence that regimes have generally declined over the last couple of decades[10]. It is also a strategy set in the context of progressively shorter working weeks for prison officers and the need for increased staff productivity under the terms of the 'framework agreement' which underpinned the financing of the Fresh Start re-organisation.

The pressures bearing down on the Governor and Head of Inmate Activities, therefore, are meant to reinforce procedures for a more efficiently run regime. The second (right-hand) cycle of Diagram 2 is an attempt to describe this in managerial terms for an establishment.

The regime management cycle in Diagram 2 starts with good practices in the allocation of inmates to planned activities. The traditional 'labour allocation' boards need to work with clearer criteria about which categories of inmates should be directed to which regime activities. Realistic minimum and maximum times for each job, party or course have to be agreed. These need to be set against effective sentence lengths — and the likelihood of

the prisoner's re-categorisation and transfer to another establishment during sentence.

At the same time, the prisoner's previous experiences, his training and other needs have to be taken into account. This is the first convergence of the sentence planning and regime management cycles. It implies not only close cooperation between the regime providers and the Residential staff operating the welfare and sentence planning schemes, but the identification of clear routes which can realistically be plotted through the various regime elements; the most likely and beneficial routes which reflect the logic of training stages, prisoners' needs, and available time.

Staff in Inmate Activities have to monitor the effectiveness of the regime — on a scale broader than the statistical returns of the Governor's Weekly Monitoring. Issues include the uptake of services, the times actually spent following each activity, and the sequence of prisoners' transitions through the regime. They also include the fairness of allocation and the resulting distribution of each ethnic grouping across the regime activities.

Some of these checks and balances may be regarded as over-complex but they are desirable and necessary aspects of proper regime management. They are the second point of convergence between developments in meeting prisoners' needs and in running the regime.

Such monitoring feeds directly into the account which the governor must give of his establishment, its regime and performance. It establishes whether planned levels for activities are being met or need adjusting in the next version of the governor's annual contract for the establishment.

Convergence

The cycles of sentence planning and regime management, as Diagram 2 implies, cannot be pursued independently. They must converge; but they need not conflict. Although it is a common first reaction to regard the two developments as potentially incompatible, it is a requirement of management that conflict should be minimised through concerted planning and fullest communication.

We are coming to understand better how interdependent are all processes and functions of the institution. (That is one of the drives behind the national priority of agreeing corporate objectives for establishments; not only to follow the relevant responsibilities clearly through the hierarchy but to communicate them across the various teams and staff groupings.) Managers and regime providers need to understand the linkage of their parts of the process with the contributions of other staff. Members of the Residential units cannot plan and manage their actions without reference to the Inmate Activities and other teams. In turn, the Head of Inmate Activities cannot provide effective and efficient regime programmes without reference to the Residential and other staff groups.

This necessary interaction between the work of all groups of staff within the establishment is often put under external pressures. Regional Offices, for example, constantly press establishments for the transfer of prisoners to less secure conditions, thereby reducing the lengths of time served in the establishment and disrupting any sentence plans which have been assumed to run there. The motive is unashamedly the efficient use of the prison estate or the reduction of over-crowding (underlined by the national priority of using establishment places to the fullest extent): but it sometimes provides another source of conflict, difficult to reconcile with the thoughtful use of the training facilities within the one institution.

The need for widest communication, clarity of purposes, interchange of plans, and shared documentation has never been greater. It requires commitment, reinforcement and translation into practical procedures — usually, the simplest being the best. For example, an elegant procedure for linking sentence planning to service provision may just be a tear-off slip on an assessment form which can be sent by induction staff to their colleagues running pre-release training courses.

The procedures can be more sophisticated. They have evolved in some establishments to the point that the regime providers are represented at the planning and review boards which set, monitor and revise prisoners' sentence plans. In others, shared documentaion is accessed and completed by all staff involved with the prisoner, including seconded Probation Service staff.

There is one further consideration born out of attempting to co-ordinate the regime elements (as in Diagram 1) and set them in the context of managing inmate activities (as in Diagram 2). To what extent does the regime in a given establishment meet the actual needs of its inmates?

On one level this can be a philosophical question about the aims of imprisonment. On another, it is a scientific question to be evaluated by research. The interlocking cycles of Diagram 2 may also suggest a practical approach for prison managers. One component of this stems from the regular and formal review of individual prisoners and their progress (a process which has been laboured earlier

in this article): as cases are checked and discussed, sentence planners and regime providers deduce which services and activities are not available but are needed as elements in the regime.

There is another plane on which information pooled by these groups of staff can help shape an appropriate regime. Where the development of sentence planning has allowed the needs of prisoners to be categorised and documented, a review of these areas for a group of recently received inmates (or a whole population) can act as an inventory of problems which the establishment might wish to address or refer more adequately.

In other words, the areas offered in the form of a checklist earlier in this article not only prompt assessment and action in the case of an individual prisoner but, taken collectively, allow managers to check the needs of their prisoners in general. Even a busy local prison can pinpoint the trend in apparent needs and gear its facilities to cater better for them. One local prison, for example, has planned to introduce AA groups in the evenings to cater for the rising number of prisoners with drink-related offences. Palpable indications derived from this type of routine survey can also help a training establishment steer its regime towards the sort of interventions which are actually needed by prisoners.

In the longer term, through the development of systematic sentence planning, all establishments should aim gradually to create regimes which meet real needs while still operating in an efficient and managerially sound way. ■

Footnotes

1. Home Office Prison Department *'Regimes in Young Offender Institutions'* (Circular Instruction 40/1988), published in September 1988.
2. See, for example, *'Prisoners' Welfare and Social Work Procedures: An evaluation of the Shared Working Scheme at Stocken'* by Rick Evans, Linda Wilson and Mike Creamer which was published by the Home Office (DPS Report series I, number 30) in October 1988.
3. Ian Dunbar's paper *'A Sense of Direction'*, dated October 1985, was distributed to all governors after the Prisons Board for July 1986.
4. Home Office Prison Department *'Prisoner Throughcare — Shared Working'* (Circular Instruction 25/1986 and Home Office Circular 64/1986). See also Norman Jepson and Kenneth Elliot's *'A Study of Shared Working between Prison and Probation Officers'* in Prison Service Journal (number 63, pages 5-8) for July 1986.
5. These are currently being piloted in several Midland Region establishments with locally developed forms or a prototype Inmate Progress Document designed by a Regional/ACOP working group whose report *'Performance Indicators for Probation Staff Seconded to Prison Department Establishments'* was completed in January 1989.
6. Research into these areas includes Mark Williams, Kay Nooney and Ian Ray's *'Social Work Needs of Prisoners: A Survey'* (DPS Report series II, number 133) published in 1984. See also David Boag's *'Self-Reported Problems of Prisoners at HMP Lindholme'* (DPS Report series II, number 153) from 1987; and CJ Cotgreave's *'Specialist Social Work: What Do Prisoners Need?'* in Prison Service Journal (number 74, pages 4-5 & 43) for April 1989.
7. This is one conclusion from Debbie Hammond's *'The Effects of Remand'* in Prison Service Journal (number 69, pages 19 & 27) for January 1988 which was taken up by Zoe Ashmore, Mike Creamer, Rick Evans, Morag Maclean and Michelle Readman in a study of *'Functional Information about Unconvicted Prisoners'* (DPS Report series II, number 163) in October 1988.
8. At Birmingham prison, for example, the education staff are to maintain a database of educational opportunities in other Midland Region establishments as part of a service for prisoners being allocated. Their paper — *'A Proposed Model for Education Provision in Local Prisons'* — was discussed at a Midland Regional meeting of Education Officers in May 1989.
9. The background and rationale for the newly introduced Governors' Weekly Monitoring (or regime monitoring system) was described in *'Management, Performance and Information'* by Rick Evans in Prison Service Journal (number 66, pages 9-12) for April 1987.
10. A talk on *'British Prisons 1970-1987: The Ever-Deepening Crisis'* was given by Professor Roy King and Kathleen MacDermott at a NACRO meeting in September 1988 and published in British Journal of Criminology (volume 29, number 2) in Spring 1989.

The Management of Regimes

To the consideration of Regimes in this issue this article contributes a description of the approach to the management of Regimes being developed in Prison Service North Region. It describes briefly the background to the revised North Regional Office which now contains a Regimes Division and identifies responsibilities and staffing. It examines the main features of the work done since the Division was established and concludes by offering some thoughts on current Regime issues.

Robin Halward
Assistant Director
— Regimes

Introduction

By the time the article is published the initiative in the management of Regimes which it describes may well have become a footnote of history as a result of the recommendations of the Organisation Review. It is to be hoped that nevertheless the North-Region experience will be able to contribute positively to the development of a system for the management of Regimes under a

revised organisation structure for the Service.

The Management Structure of the North Regional Office

North Regional Office was re-organised along functional lines in April 1988. The aim of the re-organisation was an improved way of handling the increasing amount of work being undertaken by the office. The system previously in existence had Assistant Regional Directors (ARD) looking after establishments grouped essentially according to function. Each ARD needed to be familiar with almost every aspect of the work of establishments for which he was accountable. This was a tall order. Alongside this generalist management, there was, as there always has been, some functional management. For example, the ARD (Administration) and the Regional Principal Medical Officer managed certain functions in respect of all North Region establishments.

A detailed analysis of the reasons behind the re-organisation and of the elements in it is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that the objectives were broadly the same as those of Fresh Start in respect of the organisational structure of establishments, namely to produce an organisation which matched more closely the work requirements placed upon it, which was more responsive to changing pressures and demands, which enabled managers to manage more effectively, which improved efficiency, effectiveness and economy, and which provided clearer lines of operational accountability and a clearer definition of roles and responsibilities.

The re-organisation established six Divisions at ARD level. Operations 1 Division deals with Security and Control, the management of incidents and the Tactical Management of the inmate population. Operations 2 deals with most aspects of Manpower, Industrial Relations and Public Relations. Management Services 1 deals with Personnel, Finance and Works. Management Services 2 manages North Regional Office itself and provides a Secretariat for dealing with cross-functional issues. Regimes Division 1, which I head, deals with most aspects of the way in which the Service deals with prisoners, and is described in more detail below. Regimes Division 2 comprises the Regional Principal Medical Officer and handles Medical and Para-Medical matters. Each Divisional head is responsible for Regional Office's interest in his devolved areas in all North Region establishments.

In addition to their functional responsibilities, the ARDs of Operations 1, Operations 2 and Regimes 1, all Governor grades, are responsible for writing Annual Staff Reports on Governors. The Deputy Regional Director and the Regional Director also perform this function, for more senior Governors. Further, the Deputy Regional Director is responsible for any major project which substantially crosses functional boundaries in an establishment, for example a re-building programme.

The co-ordination of the work of the Divisions is primarily done by weekly meetings chaired by the Regional Director. One of these meetings each month does not deal with routine management matters but performs the function of a Senior Management Group for the Region.

Regimes Division 1: Task and Staffing

The first and most important point to make is that the North Region Regimes Division 1 covers a very broad area of the work which goes on within Prison Service establishments. It covers the Regional interest in everything the Service does to or with inmates other than Security and Control. Arguably even that is too narrow a focus for a Regimes Division if, as I would argue, concern under the heading of Regimes should focus on the experience of the inmate: this necessitates some consideration of Security and Control because they affect life as experienced by the prisoner. I shall return to this issue later.

Regimes 1 embraces those areas which generally come under Inmate Activities departments in establishments. Thus it covers: Education, including Vocational Training and Libraries; Industries; Farms and Gardens; Physical Education; the Chaplaincy; Pre-Release Courses; Work Allocation; and Community Work.

Those areas which come under an Inmate Services department: Catering; Exercise; Bathing; Canteening; Visits; Kit; Privileges; and Entertainment are covered by the Division, as are many of those areas of work which come under Residential; Throughcare including Shared Working; Personal Officer Schemes; Parole; Inmate Casework; the Pre-Release Employment Scheme; Sentencing Planning and Review, including Lifer procedures; Induction; Temporary Release; Cell Hobbies; Association; and Mail.

Finally, it sweeps up a number of areas for which there is no other accountability within establishments: the Regime content of the Governor's Annual Contract with the Regional Director; Construction Industry Training, run by Works Departments; Regime Monitoring; Race Relations; and it deals with the Regime implications of new accommodation.

There is considerable varia-

tion between establishments as to the department within which the areas of work listed are located. That does not matter as far as their management is concerned, because they all come under Regimes 1. One of the more challenging aspects of Fresh Start is the cross-over management of individual departments with a duty to provide part of the Regime. This issue is directly addressed by the new Regional structure.

In looking at the staffing of Regimes 1 it is necessary to adopt both a narrow and a wide definition. The narrow definition encompasses those staff for whom the ARD Regimes is the direct line Manager. Under this definition Regimes 1 comprises a small group of nine Executive and Clerical staff and a part-time Governor V. A wider definition of the staffing includes some Headquarters staff with responsibilities in the North comprising the Regional Industries Planning Liason Officer, the Assistant Chaplain General and the Principal and Senior Education Officers, all based at this Office. In addition there are two Physical Education Governors V, who are based at establishments in the North; the Regional Catering Manager, who is based in Corby; the RC Chaplain (North and Midlands), based at Onley; the Superintendent Methodist Minister, based in Bedford; the Regional Farms and Gardens Manager based in Croydon and the Regional Directorate of Works Technical Training Officer who covers Construction Industries Training and is based in Birmingham. The common feature shared by all these staff is their interest in various elements of the Regime in North Region establishments.

The Work of the First Year

A major feature of the work of Regimes 1 in its first year has been the setting up of a structure and of systems for carrying out the task of managing the Regime in North Region establishments. This is essentially co-ordination and communication, basic functions but essential if diverse tasks are effectively to be brought together.

There is little doubt that the most important piece of machinery is the Regimes Management Meeting, established in July 1988. Its purpose is to co-ordinate the work of those involved in the management of Regimes and to formulate and implement plans for their improvement. It meets monthly under the chairmanship of the ARD Regimes 1. Membership comprises those listed under both the narrow and wider definitions of staff used above, with the exception of the clerical staff. Additionally it has as an occasional member, a nominee of the Association of Chief Officers of Probation.

The meeting has provided a focal point for the implementation of the Prison Services Regimes policy. It has been much valued by members for the way in which it has been able to supply a rounded picture of what is going on in the Region, providing the context within which each Specialist interest has to operate. It has provided a forum for the discussion of the short and long term plans of each specialism and for the resolution of those conflicts of priorities which could not be resolved at establishment level.

In one way or another this meeting has played a part in most of the other features of the work in Regimes 1 during the year and is currently involved in developing a system for providing Regional Specialists with detailed Regional Monitoring information on their own areas. Specialisms can then be brought together in a monthly discussion of the performance of each establishment as a whole.

The meeting has tackled the subject of Regional Regime Targets and proposed some to most establishments for 1989/90.

Each establishment is discussed before the ARD visits to undertake an Operational Assessment, an in-house inspection. Operational Assessments take many forms, but an essential element in the North is the routine Operational Assessment conducted by each ARD for his own functional area once a year in each establishment. The prior discussion at the Regimes Management Meeting means that when the ARD Regimes undertakes an operational Assessment he is well-briefed on the establishment as seen from a number of Regime perspectives, and has some understanding of the issues which ought to be addressed during the visit.

On occasion, discussion of an establishment at the Regimes Management Meeting has resulted in a decision to review the Regime of an establishment as a whole. This would be because the Regime appeared to be out of balance, providing too little or too much overall, or a disproportionate amount of one Regime activity. Such a review involves members of the Regimes Management Meeting visiting the establishment together. The ensuing examination of the Regime, by the establishment and by the Regional and Headquarters Regime providers together, not only results in a common analysis but can often result in immediate decisions about adjustments to the Regime, made with the knowledge and consent of those whose co-operation is essential if they are to be put into effect.

Another important element of the Regimes Management Meeting is the routine opportunity provided to discuss problems and developments in Regime areas. The resulting understanding by Specialists of

the extent to which their success or lack of it in an establishment is unique to them or common to other Specialists is very helpful in tackling outstanding issues.

Regime Delivery Conference

An important feature of the year was the Regime Delivery Conference, held in April 1989. This brought together Heads of Inmate Activities and Heads of Residence, reinforcing the extent to which these two managers and the relationship between them are critical to Regime delivery in establishments. The purpose of the conference was to encourage the enhancement of the Regime in the North by considering current issues, potential developments and practical solutions to problems. There was a formal examination of issues surrounding the delivery of a balanced Regime, of the challenge of providing satisfactory Throughcare arrangements and of the role of Head of Inmate Activities, this latter seen from the perspective of the Head of Residence as well as the Head of Inmate Activities. Opportunities were provided for the structured sharing of experience of the development of roles which are new, or at least substantially changed, under Fresh Start and which offer tremendous opportunities for developing Regimes.

Lastly, the existence of a Regimes division has ensured that the Regime interest is taken into account when decisions are made where the Regime is not the prime consideration. It has provided an input on Regimes matters in connection with Ministerial visits and Inspections. It provides the Regional Director with a quarterly report which is discussed at the North Region Senior Management Group.

Current Regime Issues

The purpose of this concluding section is to offer some thoughts on what seems to me to be important current Regime issues. Such issues can perhaps never be finally resolved, but the process of re-examination is in itself positive and can lead to important shifts in the way in which we do things.

The first issue is why we want a Regime at all. This is very much a preliminary and the answer, I suggest, lies in the Prison Service Purpose Statement.

Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the Courts.
Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.

This leads directly to the second issue, which is the definition of Regimes. I suggest that the Regime should be seen from the perspective of the inmate, and therefore amounts to his total experience in custody. That adequately expresses the scope but it is necessary to break the totality down into elements and the reasons why those elements exist: Security; Control; Inmate Entitlements, deriving from law and from privilege; and the development of the inmate and preparation for release. As many activities fall within more than one of those categories it follows that if one is affected, then almost certainly others are also affected. I believe the relationship between these elements needs frequently to be reviewed. It will vary between establishments, between different parts of an establishment and within any single establishment over time.

Except where there is a conscious decision following a review to change the balance of the regime, individual elements need to be protected. Security and Control in a narrow sense usually is but this needs to be a considered response rather than an automatic one, and it needs to be remembered that the more positive Regime elements also contribute to Security and Control.

The third issue is the level of supervision, assessment and monitoring of the work going on in establishments. In recent years the Service, rightly in my view, has been concerned with the measurement of its performance. This has led to increasing demands on establishments for information. It also produces a great deal of extra work for those at Region and Headquarters whose task it is to assess the information produced. I believe that what is needed is less but better-refined information, accurate key indicators. Good key indicators identify the need to ask questions about what is going on and reduce the temptation that the possession of detailed information poses to people outside the establishment to take over its management.

The fourth issue, Regime quality, is very closely linked. Monitoring can provide good information about the quantity of what goes on in Regime terms, but says very little about the quality. Inmate Association, for example, can range from the uninspiring spectacle of inmates slumped in front of the television engaged in what is essentially an individual activity, to a dynamic and positive experience with inmates involved in games, hobbies, sport and conversation amongst themselves and with staff. Quality is at least as important as quantity and can best be judged by personal observation and assessment.

The final issue is central to my present job, namely the co-

ordination of the work of all those involved in the provision of Regime elements. I feel that it is in this area that Regimes has made its greatest contribution in that it has brought together most of those involved in the provision of Regime policy and resources in the North. Clearly this model is not the only way of achieving this, but I hope that it will influence thinking on the design of co-ordinating machinery under the Organisation Review. Without effective co-ordinating machinery Regimes will not, in my view, achieve their full potential. ■

Perrie Lectures 1989

As Full a Life

Roy D King

In his closing remarks Roy King, co-presenter of one of this year's Perrie Lectures, suggested that delegates should take action by writing three letters. One each to the Director General and Prison Officers' Association enquiring why the Prisons Board and more Prison Officers were not represented at the lectures and a third to the Home Secretary underlining the point that many staff who play a key role in the management and delivery of prison regimes were excluded from the Fresh Start negotiations

Kathleen McDermott

In 1984 the prison service set out a statement of its tasks: the third of these was ***'to provide for prisoners as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody . . .'***. It immediately begs two questions: Full of what? and What limits are actually set by the facts of custody?

The statement goes on to answer the first question as follows: by 'making available the physical necessities of life; care for physical and mental health; advice and help with personal problems; work, education, training, physical exercise and recreation; and opportunity to practice their religion'. And these are elaborated further in an accompanying statement of the functions of prison department establishments. But then each of these statements begs further questions, for example: How much work? or How good an education? and so on.

Nothing more is said about the necessary constraints imposed by custody — which are assumed to be self-evident. In fact very different amounts and quality of provision may be consistent with any given type of custody depending on how much one wants to spend; alternatively one may wish to impose different types of custody on different types of prisoner and these may have particular implications for what can be provided.

In reality, of course, the statement 'as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody' rests on a host of taken for granted values as to what ought to be: thus we might all agree that holidays abroad would be both ***too full*** a life and ***inconsistent*** with custody — but almost everything else is likely to be controversial.

The Prisons Board Statement of Tasks and Functions, then, fell short of specifying detailed standards of provision or performance which must be achieved. The Government had committed itself to publishing a draft code of minimum standards for prisons in 1982 but withdrew from that commitment a year later. Even had standards been agreed, that would have given no guarantee of their being achieved. The European Standard Rules often contain such qualifications as to their application that they can be differentially interpreted or just side-

stepped (Casale, 1985); and the more precise codes to be found in the United States have often remained unimplemented for want of cash, and sometimes the political will, to comply with court orders (Morgan and Bronstein, 1985) — even when the law and order climate was more favourable than it is today.

For standards to be effectively achieved it requires at least three things: that they be set in the first place; that machinery be established for implementing them and monitoring their implementation; and that procedures exist for external review including, where necessary, sanctions against non-compliance. In the complicated task of trying to raise standards the first and third elements have been sidelined in this country and the prison service has started in the middle. Using the statement of functions for establishments as a starting point, prison governors and their regional directors agree budgets and targets of performance for the coming year; that performance is evaluated through regime monitoring and other systems of internal audit and new targets are then agreed. This approach of pulling the system up by its own bootstraps may well have been the only politically feasible strategy in 1984: the price tag for sensibly defined standards would have seemed too high; and why make the proverbial rod for one's own back when the standards could not easily be achieved? In any case whether standards were declared or not, mechanisms for bringing about change and monitoring and evaluating performance would be necessary and were long overdue. Nevertheless five years on it may be timely to take stock of where the service has got to, and to reconsider where it is going.

Over the last three-and-three-quarter years we have been engaged in independent research, funded by ESRC, that has tried to assess the extent to which the system delivers humane care in the context of today's concerns about security and control. We looked at five representative prisons for adult men in Midland Region — Gartree (dispersal), Nottingham (Category B), Featherstone (Category C), and Ashwell (Open) training prisons, and the local prison at Birmingham. In the absence of officially agreed standards we have looked to the unofficial ones suggested by NACRO (Casale, 1984). But we have also looked to other comparisons, historical and international, to set some measure of how well or badly we are doing. Just twenty one years ago one of us (RDK) negotiated with the Home Office for a somewhat similar study which looked at prison regimes in the heady days of treatment and training: then as now five representative prisons for adult men were studied: Albany (dispersal), Coldingley (Category B), Camp Hill (Category C), and Ford (open) training prisons and the local at Winchester. Looking back, comparing the two studies, it is a rather depressing coming of age. More recently, another ESRC research grant made it possible to study Oak Park Heights, a 'new generation' maximum security prison in Minnesota which in certain respects can be directly compared with Gartree. Looking sideways, across the Atlantic, there are clearly lessons to be learned and perhaps some we can usefully teach.

Looking Back

Function 13 for prison department establishments requires them to provide (in accordance with the statutory provisions and departmental instructions which themselves define few, if any, real standards of quality) accommodation, meals, facilities for personal hygiene and sanitation, clothing, opportunities for exercise, and access to privileges. We cannot do justice to all these, and here we confine ourselves to looking at accommodation and sanitation.

Only 38·1% of the prisoners in our current study were accommodated according to the NACRO space standard of 60 square feet per prisoner, providing they were not locked up for more than 13 hours a day. (This standard is widely used in other countries and is exceeded in Prison Department's Current Recommended Standards for the Design of New Prison Establishments.) In the earlier study, however, the figure was even lower, with only 21·9% in accommodation which met the standard. This should not be taken as indicating an improvement because these differences clearly reflect the architectural characteristics of the establishments concerned and the period in which they were built. In fact it was impossible to generalise on accommodation standards because each prison had such a variety, and space varied according to whether prisoners were accommodated one, two or three to a cell or in multiple occupation dormitories. Nor was it the case that single celling guaranteed adequate space and multiple occupation inadequate space. Ironically some of the worst accommodation — as far as space was concerned — was in single celled new prisons and some of the best in single celled Victorian prisons. Nevertheless it was true in 1970, and remained true in 1987, that crowding was worst for prisoners in local prisons.

The impact of crowding, however, depends very much on the length of time prisoners spend in their cells and on the provisions of, and most crucially the access they are allowed to, other services and facilities. In terms of facilities for personal

hygiene and sanitation — the actual provision of wcs, washbasins, baths or showers — there appeared to have been a genuine improvement resulting from the refurbishment programme in recent years — thus Birmingham, even allowing for its prodigious overcrowding, met proposed standards in these areas whereas Winchester fifteen years earlier had failed them. The real problems arose because, for one reason or another prisoners did not actually have sufficient access to them while they were in a usable state.

Function 17 is the one which most closely addresses the question of regimes. It requires establishments to provide a balanced and integrated regime, which may include work, education, physical education, access to libraries and individual and collective leisure activities. Note that no standards are set against which performance is to be judged apart from the carefully worded statement that it is 'with a view to occupying prisoners as fully as possible throughout the whole week . . .' and note too the permissive 'may include' rather than the prescriptive 'must'. At the end of the day what constitutes 'a balanced and integrated regime' is a matter of judgement. Once again we cannot do justice to all of those areas here (for a fuller account see King and McDermott, 1989), but when we compared our two sets of prisons the results were dramatic and consistent. Let us look at work. In considering whether the prisons met a standard we assumed a normal working day of 7½ hours for all prisons in the earlier study, but took the current targets of 6 hours for training prisons and 4 hours in locals (Home Office, 1987) in the later study, even though we believe those to be unduly low.

We show our results in Table 1.

In every comparison much less time was spent in work today than had been the case fifteen or more years earlier. All of the training prisons then met the more stringent standards: now only Featherstone and Ashwell could remotely claim to provide a full working day. Prisoners in the best of the training prisons today spend less time in work than those in the worst of the training prisons in the earlier study. Even more strikingly long term prisoners in the higher security prisons today spend less time in work than did convicted prisoners in the local at Winchester. Winchester in fact would easily have met today's targets for local prisons and would only just miss those for training prisons.

It is important to point out that, as part of the search for more balanced regimes, some of the reduction in work has been taken up by an increase in the provision of daytime educational and vocational and other training courses. And that should be properly welcomed — not least because prison work is often mindless activity of little benefit to anybody else whereas education and training courses are greatly appreciated by prisoners who have experienced them. But it also seems to be the case that daytime education has grown (there was none at the time of the earlier study) at the expense of evening education (of which there used to be a lot) so that education now reaches fewer prisoners than formerly.

In part the decline of evening education reflects probably the most important change between the two studies; the astonishing shrinkage of the unlocked day. The amount of time prisoners spend out of cells conditions both the adequacy of the space they have whilst locked up and their access to regime activities.

Our data are given in Table 2.

The NACRO standards provide for 11 hours out of cells which provide a minimum of 60 square feet, and longer where this space standard is not met. When one looks at the comparisons in this Table there are simply no improvements to be seen:

Table one

Maximum Daily Hours in Work or Similar Activities

Prison	Hours in work	Suggested standard
Dispersal		
Albany	8.0	Pass
Gartree	5.0	Fail
B Training		
Coldingley	8.0	Pass
Nottingham	4.5	Fail
C Training		
Camp Hill	7.5	Pass
Featherstone	6.0	Pass
D Training		
Ford	7.5	Pass
Ashwell	6.5	Pass
Local (convicted)		
Winchester	5.5	Fail
Birmingham	2.5	Fail

Table two

Hours Locked and Unlocked

Prison	Hours in	Hours out	NACRO standard
Dispersal			
Albany	9.75	14.25	Pass
Gartree	15.00	9.00	Fail
B Training			
Coldingley	10.00	14.00	Pass
Nottingham	14.50	9.50	Fail
C Training			
Camp Hill	11.00	13.00	Pass
Featherstone	13.00	11.00	Pass
D Training			
Ford	9.00	15.00	Pass
Ashwell	10.00	14.00	Pass
Local (convicted)			
Winchester	15.00	9.00	Fail
Birmingham	18.50	5.50	Fail
Local (remand)			
Winchester	22.00	2.00	Fail
Birmingham	22.00	2.00	Fail

the best that can be said is that at least the time out of cells for remand prisoners in Birmingham is no worse than it was in Winchester — but when prisoners already spend 22 hours locked up there is not much scope for further deterioration. Only Featherstone and Ashwell now meet the NACRO standards for time out of cell, but in both cases prisoners spend more time locked up than was the case in Camp Hill and Ford. Convicted prisoners in Birmingham were much worse off than their counterparts in Winchester. But the biggest changes were in the high security prisons: prisoners in Gartree and Nottingham now spend more of their time locked up (over 60%) than their predecessors in Albany and Coldingley used to spend Unlocked (58%). Indeed on this, as on several other matters, the regime in Gartree and Nottingham most closely resembled what used to prevail for convicted prisoners in Winchester local prison.

It needs to be said that the comparisons we have been making are not of the same prisons over a period of time, but of two groups of similar prisons studied at different times. Nevertheless we believe the message to be inescapable: that life for prisoners is not as full as it used to be. There has been a major deterioration in regimes, and what used to be regarded as unacceptable in local prisons has become the norm in higher security prisons.

Moreover these changes have occurred not as a result of starvation of resources: rather they have been accompanied by a massive increase in staffing. Over the prison system as a whole during this period the prison population has grown by less than a fifth, while staff have increased by almost two thirds — and that takes no account of the huge increase in overtime. No doubt there are many factors which may account for part of this increase, including improved conditions of service for staff. But what is clear is that the increase of staffing has far outstripped the increase in prison population while regimes have worsened across the board.

At the risk of descending into caricature, it is as if every two additional prisoners have been accompanied by a new three-man team, freshly trained in C and R — for the increases have been most marked in the dispersal prisons. Thus Gartree had almost twice as many uniformed staff per prisoner in post (1 : 1·3) as Albany (1 : 2·5) but a far worse regime. Much the same was also true for the comparison of the local prisons — Birmingham (1 : 2·9) and Winchester (1 : 4·9). We concluded that increased staffing has been absorbed virtually entirely by an obsession with security and control and by the massive proportionate increase in remand prisoners. The regime and staffing changes are summarised in Table 3.

Looking Inwards

Looking backwards and comparing performance in terms of space, sanitation and levels of activity, as we have just done, sketches out a rather depressing picture. But it is only an outline and the picture needs filling in

Table three

Differences in Regimes and Staff Ratios for Selected Prisons, 1986-1987 over 1970-1972 (%)

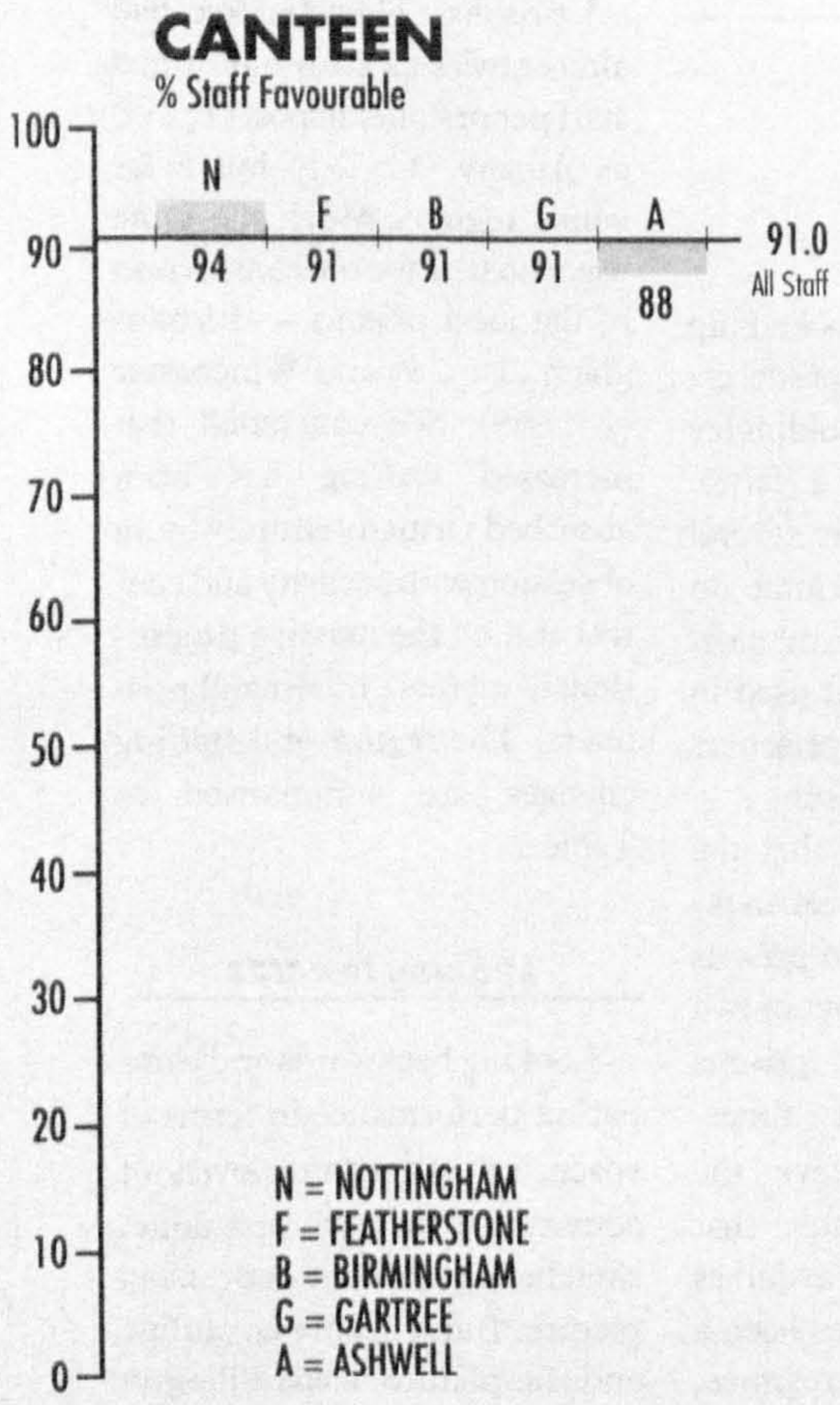
Category	Locked up		Work		Association		Staff ratio	
	More	Less	More	Less	More	Less	Better	Worse
Dispersal	53.8			37.5		36.0	93.8	
B Training	45.0			43.8		16.7	2.5	
C Training	18.2			20.0		9.1		2.6
D Training	11.1			13.3	Same		75.7	
Local convicted	23.3			54.5		14.3	68.8	
Local remand	Same		Same		Same		68.8	

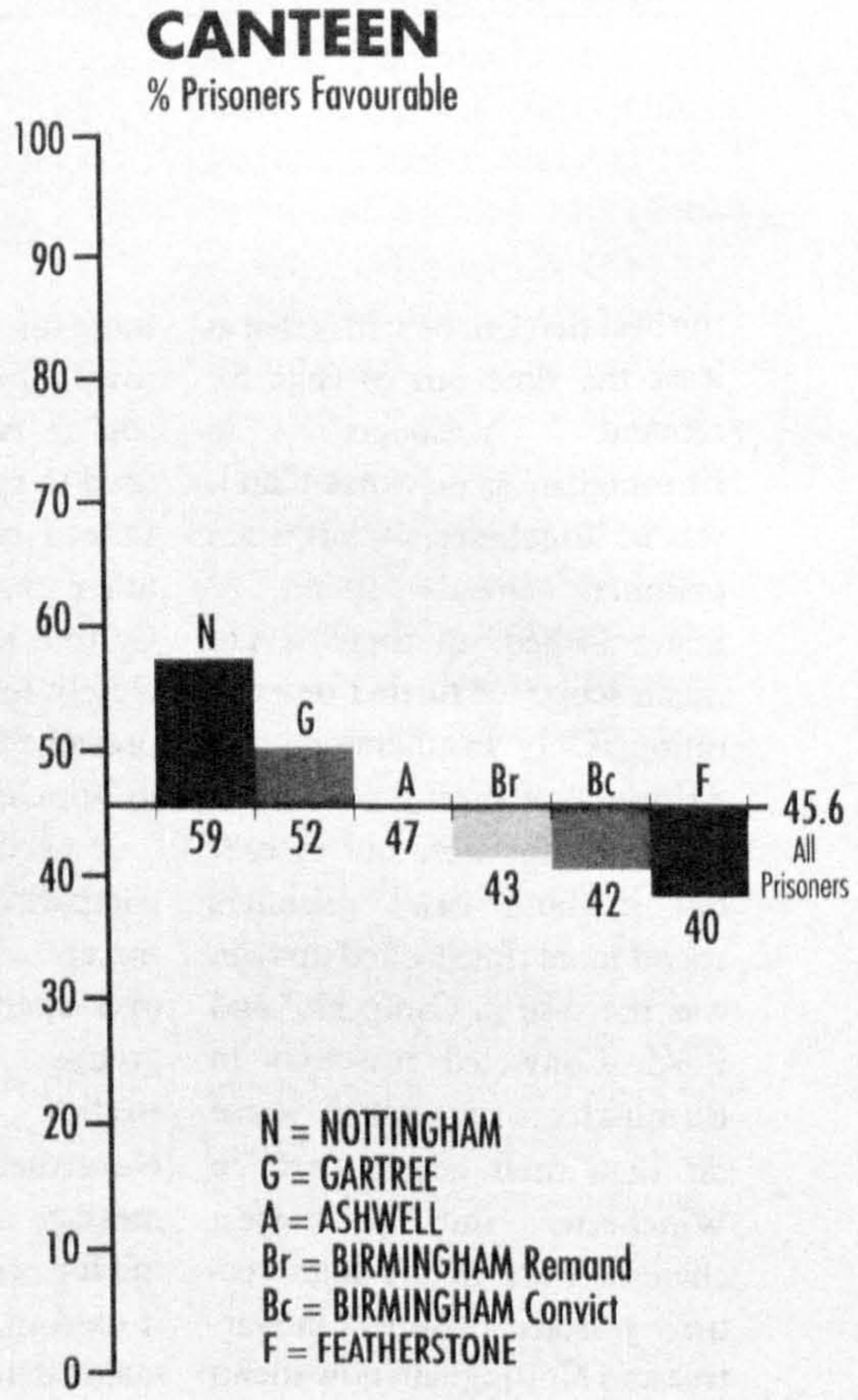
before it comes to life. The kinds of standards we have considered so far are the ones that are easiest to measure — and such measures are now routinely collected as part of the regime monitoring process — but they say little about the quality of what is provided. There is not much point in having sufficient showers — as was the case in Birmingham — if there is insufficient time to use them, and when you do the showers are broken or the water is cold. And it is not self-evident, for example, that time spent in the cable-stripping workshop is better spent than reading in one's cell.

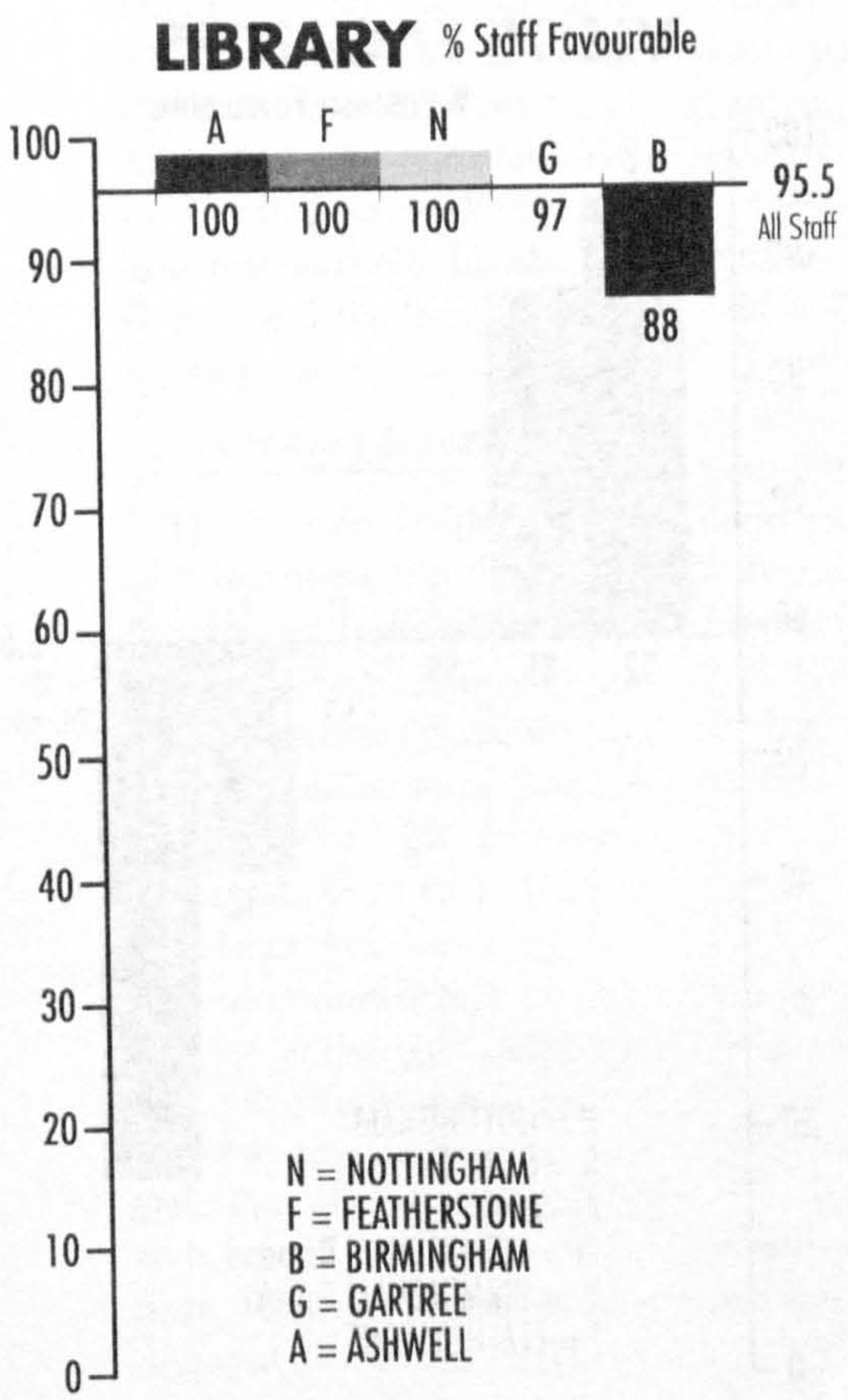
We had no special litmus paper that was capable of testing the quality of provision. Instead we fell back on asking both staff and prisoners to evaluate the services and facilities provided in the institution on a four point scale: Very Good, Quite Good, Rather Poor and Very Poor. There were some intriguing and characteristic patterns to the results.

With some notable exceptions uniformed staff rated the services and facilities significantly more highly than did prisoners: and although there were some significant differences in staff responses between the prisons these were smaller, and less frequent, than was the case for prisoners. Not surprisingly, prisoners made fine discriminations in their assessments of the quality of goods and services on

Table four







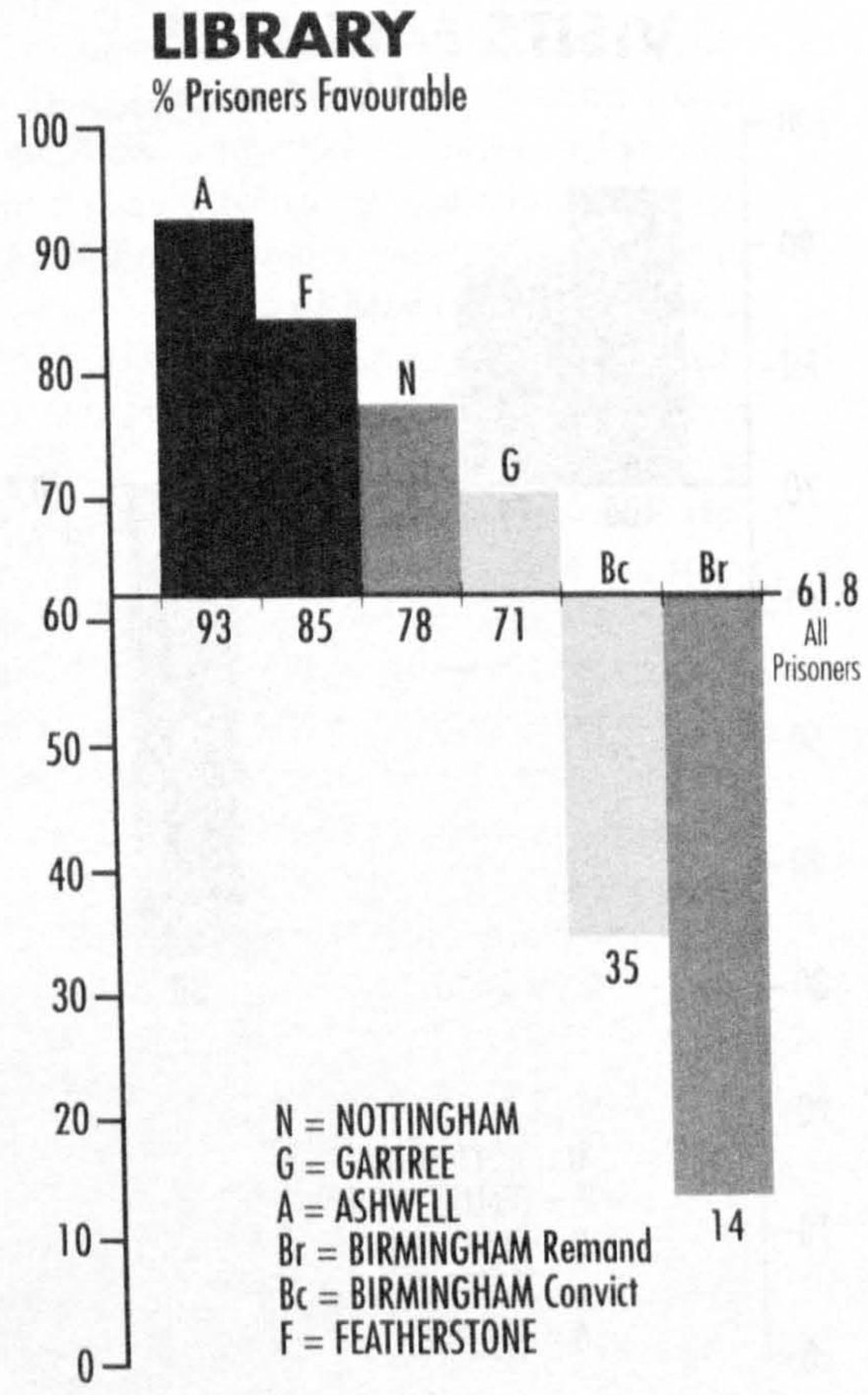


Table five

offer, using the whole range of responses.

There seemed to be several factors underlying the staff response:

a) first, staff acted in role, as representatives of the prison service: in spite of their disaffection over the negotiations for Fresh Start prison officers still displayed an unwillingness to be critical on paper because of a professional *esprit de corps*.

b) secondly, staff seemed unable, or unwilling, to question the quality of a programme once it was provided, for that was not part of their role: if it existed, however nominally, then they assumed that it worked and worked well enough.

c) thirdly, at a more personal level, officers operated within a 'less eligibility' philosophy and compared things in prison with the worst possible case outside: consequently they regarded most prison provision as 'good' if they knew, or could imagine, someone worse off outside.

Prisoners on the other hand seemed to make their judgements not by comparisons with the outside world, but on a realistic appraisal 'that this is prison and what could you expect'. In this they certainly bore in mind their experiences in other prisons and on previous sentences. But when faced with the major deterioration of regimes we have already reported they tended to lower their expectations as to how 'full a life' was 'consistent with the facts of custody'.

We cannot hope to review all our findings here, but let us take a couple of examples to illustrate what we mean: all of our prisons provide a canteen facility (Function 13) and a library facility (Function 17). How did staff and prisoners evaluate them?

Canteen. About 90% of staff in each of our prisons rated the canteen provision for prisoners favourably, and there were no statistically significant differences between prisons. On average only half as many prisoners rated their canteen favourably. There were statistically significant differences between prisons with 60% favourable in Nottingham but only 40% favourable in Featherstone, reflecting real differences in stock, opening times, access and so on.

Library. Staff were even more favourable in their ratings of their prison library facility (100% in Ashwell, Featherstone, and Nottingham with Gartree and Birmingham not far behind). While a majority of prisoners gave a favourable rating in the four training prisons, there were very real differences between the prisons which were reflected in these responses. And the majority of convicted prisoners and over four out of five remand prisoners in Birmingham gave negative ratings.

In considering this pattern of responses how should one react?

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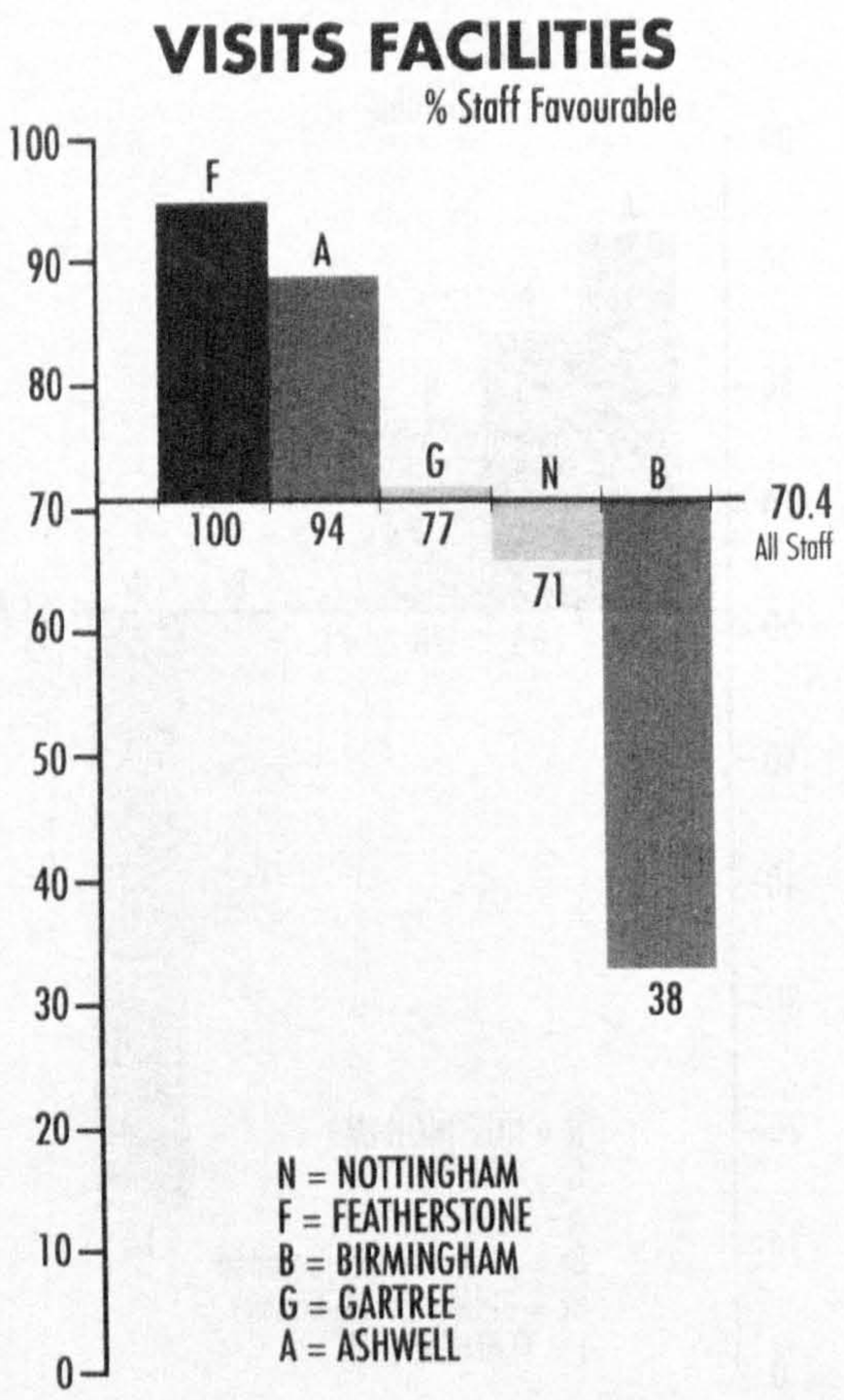
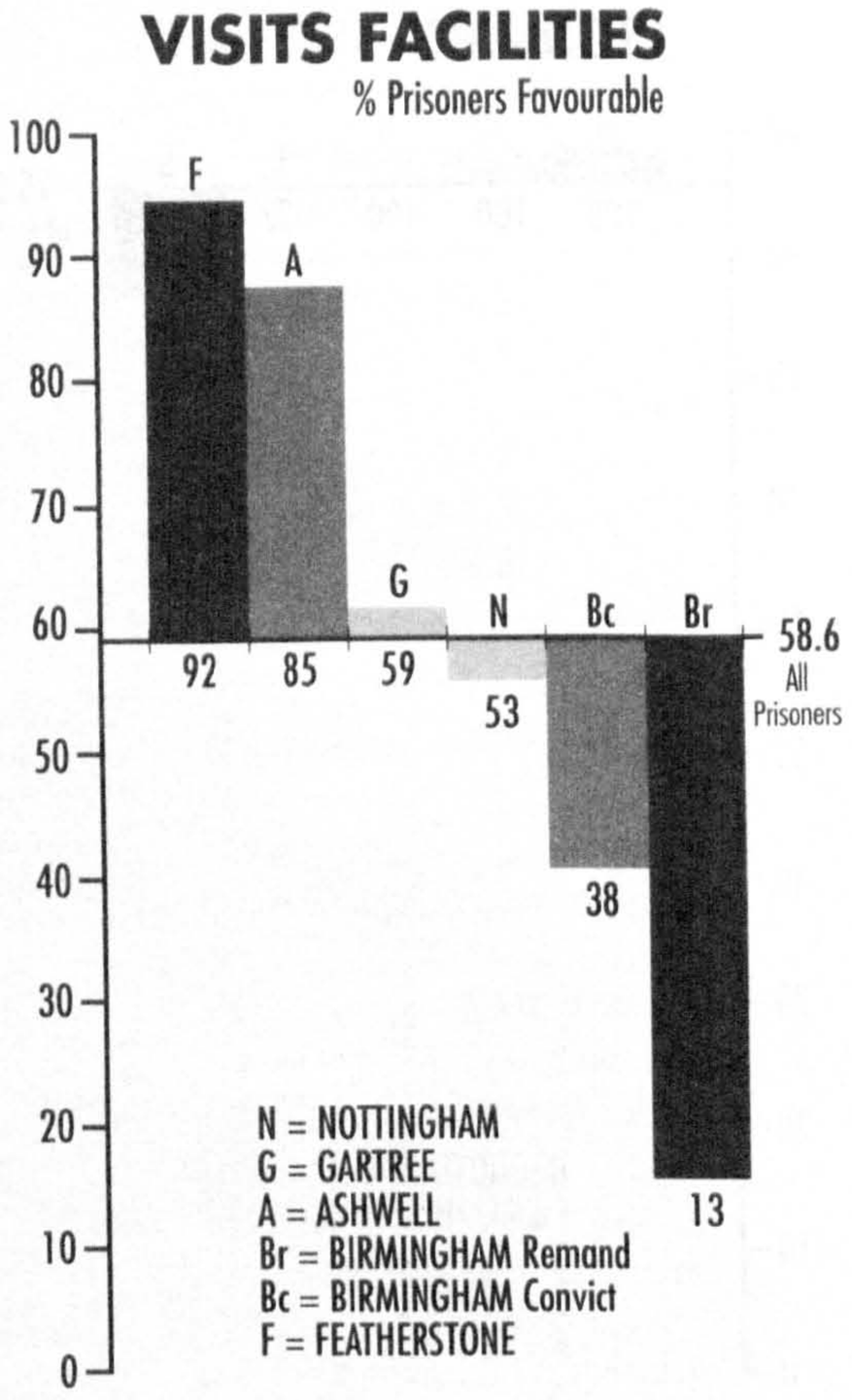
Table six





Well if you wanted to know how good the teaching programmes are at our university you would be wise to ask our students as well as our colleagues. This does not mean that we belittle the staff evaluations: on the contrary, bearing in mind what we said above, the message we take is this — that when staff are prepared to give negative ratings 'you'd better believe it'. By the same token we'd have to say the same when prisoners give very favourable ratings. But in looking at our data we would also have to say that prisoners were more generous than might have been expected. And there was certainly no evidence of their resorting to negative ratings on a routine basis. We conclude that when prisoners do use negative ratings those views cannot lightly be discounted in the way that Mandy Rice Davies once discounted John Profumo's denials — 'Well they would say that, wouldn't they'.

As we have said there were notable exceptions to the pattern, particularly when staff and prisoners were evaluating physical plant: visiting facilities provides a good example.

Staff and prisoners in each prison evaluated the visiting facilities in much the same way — on the whole there were bigger differences between the prisons than between the role groups. On this, as on several other matters, the conditions in Birmingham broke through the 'less eligibility' barrier and were condemned almost as much by staff as by prisoners.

We can do no more than quickly list a few other findings from this part of our work.

Four out of five officers rated the medical services (Function 14) favourably, typically arguing that prisoners did not have to contend with NHS waiting lists but got immediate attention even for the most trivial ailments. Fewer than two in five prisoners, however, had a good word to say for their medical treatment (though Gartree rated more highly on this) even though a majority were in some degree concerned about their physical fitness and were either depressed or fearful of becoming depressed. Help with personal problems (Function 15) from probation and welfare officers was rated highly across the board, with nearly three-quarters of the staff and over two-thirds of prisoners making favourable responses. Nine out ten staff and three out of four prisoners rated the opportunities to practise religion (Function 16) favourably, and this was one of the few areas where Birmingham came out best — but there were clearly major problems experienced in this area by minorities in all prisons.

Except in regard to privileges, where the rules often favour longer-term prisoners, there was a tendency for staff and prisoner ratings to follow the pattern that has already

emerged in our historical comparisons — with better ratings for the lower security prisons at Ashwell and Featherstone, and worse ratings for the higher security prisons at Nottingham and Gartree and the local prison at Birmingham.

Looking Sideways

The concern with security and control does not have to be bought at the expense of impoverished regimes. Nor does it necessarily require the levels of staffing to be found at Gartree. The new generation prison at Oak Park Heights (OPH) in Minnesota serves a somewhat similar high security function to Gartree in this country. Indeed now that Gartree is to leave the dispersal system Oak Park Heights might yet serve as a model for its replacement. Such a possibility was presaged by the Control Review Committee (Home Office, 1984). Once again it is possible to give only a taste of the findings from across the Atlantic.

At the outset it should be noted that there was a number of statistically significant differences in the characteristics of the population in Gartree and Oak Park Heights, though it would be hard to argue that one was a self evidently more difficult population to control than the other. Thus sentence lengths at Oak Park Heights (Operating within a system of sentencing guidelines) were somewhat shorter than those at Gartree but then OPH prisoners were younger, less likely to be married or cohabiting, and more likely to have a history of drug abuse than Gartree prisoners. There were differences, too, in the types of offence, but with 8 out of 10 Gartree prisoners and 7 out of 10 OPH prisoners having committed murder, manslaughter, kidnap, rape or robbery the differences probably did not amount to much on the ground. It is certainly arguable that there are worse populations of prisoners to be found than that at Oak Park Heights — in New York, for example, or at Marion — but by British standards it could not be regarded as lightweight.

There is little doubt that both in terms of its design and its operational policies OPH is a more secure and carefully controlled prison than is Gartree. And yet the majority of Oak Park Heights prisoners saw the level of security as about right, whereas the majority of Gartree prisoners saw the security they experienced as excessive. Only 3.3% of the prisoners in Gartree thought the prison was very safe for prisoners whereas almost ten times as many prisoners thought OPH was very safe. At the other extreme only 17% of OPH prisoners thought it at all dangerous for them, whereas the majority in Gartree, 55%, thought it dangerous. Oak Park Heights was also seen as safer for staff than was Gartree, even though there were many fewer staff on the ground. At the time of the respective studies Gartree had 10 uniformed officers in post for every 13 prisoners whereas OPH had 10 correctional counsellors for every 19 prisoners (this takes no account of the much higher overtime element in Gartree).

Is there a price to paid for safety? Well, not very much as far as regimes and services go. OPH has bigger (70 square feet) and better cells (apart from the poured concrete beds), better sanitation, open dining in the living units, and better provision of day-time facilities. Oak Park Heights prisoners could be out of their cells for 15½ hours a day (better than any of the British prisons of whatever security category in either of our studies) and could spend seven hours a day in better paid work or educational activity. The main problems seemed to occur in the generally more difficult access to some facilities which are outside the living units, particularly the gymnasium. Taken together the work, education, recreation and treatment programmes were more extensive, and with the exception of education, more highly rated by prisoners, in Oak Park Heights than in Gartree. And again taken in the round, the opportunities for keeping contact with the community were much better in OPH — where the provision of telephones for prisoner use (two in each living unit) far outweighed a marginal deficit in visits. It would be hard to deny that OPH prisoners enjoyed the fuller life in spite of the very high level of custody.

Surprisingly the area where Gartree came out best in the comparison with Oak Park Heights was in the area of staffing. Surprising because in what has passed for public debate so far about the 'new generation' prison concept the success of Oak Park Heights has been widely attributed to the sheer professionalism of the Warden and his staff. Thus Northam (1985) quotes Warden Frank Wood: 'If you gave me the choice between this place with dishonest, incompetent staff and a tent with honest, competent staff, I'd take the tent.' Not much of a choice — for is it really too much to ask that there should be both good design and professional staff — given the money we spend on prisons? And Ward (1987) reminds us that Warden Wood, who had brought order and control to Stillwater in spite of its antiquated physical plant, demands that 'staff should treat inmates as we would want our sons, brothers or fathers treated'. There is little doubt that the Oak Park Heights staff presented a very professional image (one-third had 4-year degrees and the vast majority had received some form of higher education); and in the

four months of the study they always addressed prisoners as "Mr" — at least in the presence of the researcher. Nevertheless, Gartree staff were rated as 'professional', 'helpful', 'fair', and 'consistent' by significantly more of their charges than were staff in Oak Park Heights. No doubt these ratings have as much to do with the expectations of prisoners as they do with the behaviours of staff. But we have reported elsewhere (McDermott & King, 1988) on the variety of social skills that are sometimes displayed in difficult situations by prison officers, and it would seem that these are not unappreciated by prisoners. There are at least some grounds for thinking that many existing staff have qualities on which to build and which should not lightly be discounted. But it is tempting to wonder what Oak Park Heights would be like with Gartree staff. Or what Gartree would be like with better design, better programmes and better operational policies.

Looking Forward

Of course, even if one wanted to, one could not easily replace exisitng British prisons by a series of OPH clones. There has been some flirtation with 'new generation' architecture — but much the most important development intended to bring about improvements in the Prison Service has been the implementation of Fresh Start.

For years the Department has been embarrassed by the worsening trade gap between the ever-increasing investment in staff and the ever-decreasing productivity as measured by delivery of regimes and services which we have documented. When we are asked to explain the extraordinary deterioration in regimes over the last two decades we attribute it to three things: two we have already mentioned — the obsession with security and control; and the growth in the remand population. The third is poor management — operating without clear objectives and with short-sighted, contradictory and self-defeating policies. Every closure of a workshop, every reduction in the working day, every additional restriction of activity has been authorised by prison governors, approved by regional directors and agreed by Prisons Board. No doubt governors, regional directors and members of the Prisons Board have felt themselves to be making decisions in circumstances which were not of their choosing — and of course that is true. But the official discourse which has increasingly blamed the squandering of resources on the power of the POA is surely too narrow.

In any event when Fresh Start was ushered in it was depicted by some as the mechanism which would break the power of the POA and reclaim for governors their right to manage. In fact Fresh Start is much more than that and we certainly do not have time here to do it justice. But somewhere in there was the hope of making savings of the order of 15–20%, some of which would be fed back into the system in the form of enhanced regimes for prisoners.

Fresh Start was introduced shortly after our main fieldwork was completed — and so it had no influence on our findings. But the negotiations formed a constant backdrop to our study and we were aware both of its importance for the prison system and the anxieties which it caused to prison officers. We managed to re-negotiate access to each of our five prisons for a period of about a week to have a preliminary look at the impact of Fresh Start. We re-visited our prisons about three months after they had been Fresh Started: that was still early days but there had been some chance for systems to bed down and teething problems to be sorted out. We distributed a brief questionnaire to staff, interviewed governors and heads of departments, and examined regime monitoring documentation.

While we would not claim that our data represent a major before and after evaluation of Fresh Start (the full results are given in McDermott & King, 1989, and King & McDermott, 1990) they are both worth looking at if only because there is so little else. There has been no independent research commissioned of this momentous change: and accounts of the official monitoring have been, to say the least, scanty. Optimistic reports of developments here and there have been offset by pessimistic comments from the Inspectorate. But it is all very patchy.

Only 10 of the 397 staff who responded to our Fresh Start questionnaire believed there to have been any improvement in the regime. About a third felt it had made no difference to regimes while the great majority, two-thirds, told us that the regime had worsened. This perception of further deterioration was most marked in Birmingham (which already had the worst regime) and least marked in Nottingham (which in spite of real problems began from a position of high morale). What basis did staff have for these perceptions?

We were able to compare the prisons before and after Fresh Start on seven variables: hours unlocked, hours in work, proportions employed, and provisions for training courses, daytime and evening education, and physical education. In Table 7 we summarise the changes. A plus sign indicates an enhancement in the regime; a minus sign a deterioration; an equals sign no change; and an asterisk a fluid

Table seven

Summary of Regime Changes

	Hours Unlocked	Hours in work	Employ-ment	Training Courses	Day Educ	Evening Educ	Phys Educ
Gartree	=	=	−	+	−	−	−
Nottingham	−	−	−	−	−	+	−
Featherstone	=	+	+	−	+	+	+
Ashwell	=	=	−	−	−	=	+
Birmingham	=	=	−	=	★	−	★

Key: + indicates regime enhancement
− indicates regime deterioration
= indicates no change
★ indicates a mixed pattern

situation which was sometimes better and sometimes worse. This is a summary table only: and it begs a number of questions. Nevertheless, three points are worth drawing out:

1. We found twice as many examples of the regime getting worse on these variables as we did of it getting better.

2. Scanning the columns there are some welcome changes in some areas — physical education and evening education for example — and these have had some publicity from Ministers. But these have been offset by unwelcome problems in employment and training courses.

3. Scanning the rows some prisons did better than others: Featherstone which already had the best regime — at least of the closed prisons — had further improvements on five of the seven variables. But Birmingham registered no improvement at all, and the others managed only one change for the better apiece. St. Matthew's dictum: 'For unto him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance . . .' applies, it seems, even in prisons.

Fresh Start was not only about enhanced regimes, and perhaps not even mainly about enhanced regimes. But ultimately the sweeping staffing and management changes need to be assessed against the ***quality*** of the output and not just the economy or efficiency with which it can be delivered. And in this connection it is worth making just two points about Fresh Start, bearing in mind what emerged from the comparison between Gartree and Oak Park Heights.

The first is a matter of relationship between the top and bottom of the pyramid. The process of negotiating and implementing Fresh Start was alienating for prison officers, who found themselves cast in the role of enemies of the people and not as worthwhile members of a criminal justice team. It may be that industrial strife has been bought out: but there is a difference between value and price. If the hundreds of staff to whom we spoke are at all typical there is a deep seated legacy of distrust which now has to be overcome.

The second is a matter of role. Fresh Start never addressed the questions of what prison officers should do, or how and why they are supposed to be doing it. Instead the emphasis was on the economical allocation of staff to groups, with pious hopes that group membership would engender professional job satisfaction. But few of our respondents found that to to be the case. While most welcomed the improvements in hours, and/or pay, most also found their jobs even less satisfying: 'Fresh Start is great' they would say, 'but the job is rubbish.'

It seems to us Fresh Start has supplied little of what constitutes the strength of Oak Park Heights — clear statements of objectives and coordinated operational policies to achieve them. And seems likely to undermine what was Gartree's strongest suit — the perceived helpfulness, professionalism, fairness and consistency of its staff.

We should make it clear that we think that Fresh Start — or something like it — was necessary. But in the manner of its introduction the opportunity for a credible partnership between management and the uniformed staff seems to have been missed. ***Looking forward*** we find it hard to be optimistic. Fresh Start and the Statement of Tasks and Functions may, just may, hold the line against further deterioration: but we

fear that the pressures to increase the thresholds of security and control in our category C and D prisons, which at the moment have at least tolerable regimes, may in the end prove stronger. Certainly clawing the way back to where we were twenty years ago looks like a very tough struggle indeed.

Conclusion

How can we sum up?

We think that our data show that there is a very long way to go before the limits of the statement ***'as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody'*** even begin to be tested.

There has, we believe, been extremely valuable work done in terms of setting up internal procedures for monitoring what is delivered and making establishments managerially account able for it. That is all very welcome but it seems to us unlikely that much further progress will be made without a clear commitment to the first and third of the conditions for the effective achievement of standards: namely a public specification of and commitment to what ***should*** be delivered; and sanctions against non-compliance.

But there is a final point we would like to make. Earlier this year, Brian Emes, the Deputy Director General, addressed a meeting of the Prison Reform Trust on regimes. Regimes he argued were a product of three things: the physical environment, programmes, and staff-prisoner relationships. Not surprisingly, given the poverty of the environment and the scarcity of programmes, it was relationships that the DDG identified as the greatest of this trinity. He went on to give a remarkably up-beat vision for the future of regimes following Fresh Start. By contrast, the Chief Inspector of Prisons in his annual report (Home Office, 1989), gave a rather different picture. He too identified the best examples of what the prison service has to offer as coming from the commitment of the staff. But he noted that when there are good procedures for induction, airing of grievances, suicide prevention or pre-release, and so on they are likely to occur in spite of, rather than because of, the system itself. They are the product of enthusiastic, energetic and motivated individuals. The general picture painted by the Chief Inspector is one of inconsistency, where even the adequacy of clothing, leave alone the programmes we have just mentioned, is dependent on accidents of geography and allocation.

The most important task for the Prison Service is to make up its mind whether its staff should be regarded as the problem or the solution to the problem. For too long the service has paid lip service to the virtues of its staff as the basis for providing sensible and rewarding regimes, whilst acting as though they cannot be trusted and need to be taught a lesson. This ambivalence must be resolved if the best practices of innovative governors and their staffs are to be turned into the routine practices of all institutions. It will not be achieved by improved pay and conditions. Nor can it be just left to happen on its own through good will, loyalty and so on. What is required is a more realistic partnership between managers and staff, in which the roles of prison officers are properly and directly addressed, and their daily activities are shown to be systematically linked to the achievement of publicly stated goals. ■

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Conciliation Arbitration Negotiation Teamwork?

At a Young Offenders Institution not so far from London a change of management style has brought a new tactic into play. Following a tirade of not abnormal length or intensity from the staff side, the leading spokesman for management is alleged to have all but gone across the desk shouting that nailing to the floor might be too good a treatment for some. This is not a tactic advocated by the College but received a warm response from the staff hearing a language they understood perhaps. But not surely for the first time. Didn't an off the record comment like 'we stuffed them' slip out at Cleland at the end of the Wandsworth dispute?

Recall

Reflections on Regimes

There have been three recent sorts of regime in English prisons — taking 'regime' in its sense of describing how institutions are governed and organised. These are the command or regimental system; the industrial model of management; and the administrative. It is too early to judge the merits of each type of regime (and, for this writer, the danger of being judged out of touch with today's Prison Service) but this article sets them in the context of societal contradictions about imprisonment; pressure groups inside and outside establishments; and the rise and application of security technology. It pays particular attention to the need for clear objectives and the capacity of a healthy service to encourage and stimulate growth and creativity.

W Perrie

At the outset it may be as well to outline the pitfalls and dangers of inviting a veteran to ruminate on past experiences. Firstly, eleven years separation from the Prison Service is hardly likely to qualify the writer, in terms of outlook, temperament and experience, as a contemporary of the potential reader. The penological generation gap may be too wide to bridge. Secondly, time distorts recollection. Events looked at in retrospect tend to be seen as the individual observer wants them to be seen.

Retrospection requires rose-tinted spectacles to make the past bearable, let alone acceptable. Reflecting on the past is the equivalent of looking at life through the wrong end of a rose-tinted telescope. The view is complete but it looks very far away and the detail is indistinct. What follows, then, is an untidy, rather incoherent collection of thoughts thrown up in a random fashion under the stimulus of an invitation to remember. It is no more, no less.

Contradictions

A prison provides the setting within which regimes are set up. It also provides the boundary between a captive (and therefore a basically uncooperative) society and a normal society which is basically free and accepts the need to co-operate. One reluctantly conforms; the other freely conforms. Yet as Cressey states in his book, The Prison: 'a prison is a microcosm of the society which created it'. So any structure which seeks to marry one aspect of human society with the other is fated to contain almost irreconcilable contradictions. These contradictions are seen in the diverse and strongly held opinions of all sections of society, and between individuals, when the subject of penal practice is raised.

The resulting conflict and confusion may be comparatively harmless when it occurs in the abstract, impersonal discussions of a political, academic or social forum. But when the subsequent fall-out of such battles settles over the entire prison community considerable damage can ensue. For those involved in the penal system, there is no shortage of examples lying around. Perhaps the classic example of this occurred in the mid-1960s following the Blake escape from Wormwood Scrubs prison. The aberrations which stemmed from that event still pervaded the system to 1978 and probably longer. A lack of intimate knowledge of current penal affairs inhibits drawing any parallel with the past, or reaching any conclusions applicable to today. That is a task for others.

Regimes reflect the morality, attitudes and fashions of the times in which they occur. For example, it is highly unlikely for permissive regimes to proliferate in an authoritarian society and vice versa. But by virtue of the fact that interests, dialogue and discussion of penal matters is unremitting, a dichotomy constantly faces the prison administrator. It is here that the principle of inadmissibility of incorrect choice operates. Regimes may reflect the times and the climate of opinion existing, but they are also the product of human ingenuity which tailors them to meet a given need at a given time. A philosophy and a legal requirement may be handed down to the prison administrator, but it is he and his staff who must weld it into a coherent strategy and then give it form and substance.

To validate a regime, a regime staff must give formal acceptance to the aims and objectives of the structure. The degree of lip service or level of commitment to a project will vary among groups and individuals depending on the virtues they see in it. Formal acceptance of a concept may be one thing, but the personal prejudices born of experience induce some strange interpretations (and contradictions) of an official policy. Thus, any regime operates at two levels: the formal and the informal; or the official and the unofficial; or the altruistic and the egocentric. Groups of all sorts operating within a regime tend to bend the system to suit THEIR needs. The regime then becomes institutionalised and is subject to the customs, practices and ambitions of various pressure groups. The maintenance and well-being of this hybrid takes precedence over the needs of those it was set up to serve.

Objectives

Simply stated, the objectives of a prison are: security, control and treatment. That is, to contain the population, to exercise a degree of control over the inmates, and to treat or deal with them in

fear that the pressures to increase the thresholds of security and control in our category C and D prisons, which at the moment have at least tolerable regimes, may in the end prove stronger. Certainly clawing the way back to where we were twenty years ago looks like a very tough struggle indeed.

Conclusion

How can we sum up?

We think that our data show that there is a very long way to go before the limits of the statement ***'as full a life as is consistent with the facts of custody'*** even begin to be tested.

There has, we believe, been extremely valuable work done in terms of setting up internal procedures for monitoring what is delivered and making establishments managerially account able for it. That is all very welcome but it seems to us unlikely that much further progress will be made without a clear commitment to the first and third of the conditions for the effective achievement of standards: namely a public specification of and commitment to what ***should*** be delivered; and sanctions against non-compliance.

But there is a final point we would like to make. Earlier this year, Brian Emes, the Deputy Director General, addressed a meeting of the Prison Reform Trust on regimes. Regimes he argued were a product of three things: the physical environment, programmes, and staff-prisoner relationships. Not surprisingly, given the poverty of the environment and the scarcity of programmes, it was relationships that the DDG identified as the greatest of this trinity. He went on to give a remarkably up-beat vision for the future of regimes following Fresh Start. By contrast, the Chief Inspector of Prisons in his annual report (Home Office, 1989), gave a rather different picture. He too identified the best examples of what the prison service has to offer as coming from the commitment of the staff. But he noted that when there are good procedures for induction, airing of grievances, suicide prevention or pre-release, and so on they are likely to occur in spite of, rather than because of, the system itself. They are the product of enthusiastic, energetic and motivated individuals. The general picture painted by the Chief Inspector is one of inconsistency, where even the adequacy of clothing, leave alone the programmes we have just mentioned, is dependent on accidents of geography and allocation.

The most important task for the Prison Service is to make up its mind whether its staff should be regarded as the problem or the solution to the problem. For too long the service has paid lip service to the virtues of its staff as the basis for providing sensible and rewarding regimes, whilst acting as though they cannot be trusted and need to be taught a lesson. This ambivalence must be resolved if the best practices of innovative governors and their staffs are to be turned into the routine practices of all institutions. It will not be achieved by improved pay and conditions. Nor can it be just left to happen on its own through good will, loyalty and so on. What is required is a more realistic partnership between managers and staff, in which the roles of prison officers are properly and directly addressed, and their daily activities are shown to be systematically linked to the achievement of publicly stated goals. ■

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Conciliation Arbitration Negotiation Teamwork?

At a Young Offenders Institution not so far from London a change of management style has brought a new tactic into play. Following a tirade of not abnormal length or intensity from the staff side, the leading spokesman for management is alleged to have all but gone across the desk shouting that nailing to the floor might be too good a treatment for some. This is not a tactic advocated by the College but received a warm response from the staff hearing a language they understood perhaps. But not surely for the first time. Didn't an off the record comment like 'we stuffed them' slip out at Cleland at the end of the Wandsworth dispute?

a way which is legally and socially acceptable. There is also the arcane implication that the person 'treated' will somehow emerge from prison a 'better' person. The fact that there is no tested from of treatment for a social ailment (such as medicine provides for a physical ailment) in no way deters, or has deterred over the years, the unbounded enthusiasm of the afficionado for the treatment cause. This is indeed a triumph of hope over experience.

The aim of security or the containment of the individual is pursued in a variety of ways with a variety of aids. Security is clearly and overpoweringly intrusive in a maximum security prison. It is unobtrusive, but present nevertheless in an open prison. Between these extremes a range of security options is available and in use. There is a common factor running through, and applicable at, both ends of the spectrum. That is security intelligence. At one time, in a less sophisticated world, intelligence depended on the informant, the grapevine, good observation and sensitive instinct or feel. By the 1970s, attempts were being made by the more far-sighted to create a systematised form of security intelligence. The early results of this were promising.

The security requirement grows out of the fact that the average prisoner is unlikely to co-operate freely in his own captivity. Security categorisation, one of the recommendations of the Mountbatten Committee, was the best known attempt to reduce the security dilemma to one of manageable proportions. It sought to formalise aspects of the problem in a way which would make them more amenable to a solution. The fact that security categorisation was seen by many as a solution in itself is more a comment on the state of morale in the Prison Service at that time, than on any fundamental flaw in the Mountbatten findings. In a civilised society, there are no final solutions to prison security. Only a careful, questioning, empirical approach, based on acceptable formulae offers any (perhaps the only) hope of success. If this is so, then the Mounbatten security criteria are as helpful as anything else.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a plethora of security aids and systems showered upon a mystified, confused, sometimes hypnotised Prison Service. These include additional fences and barriers; barbed wire; manganese-steel bars; electronic locking systems; geophones; closed circuit T.V.; dog patrols; security officers; security offices; police liaison officers, etc., etc. And that was only the beginning. This embarrassment of security riches was reinforced by courses, conferences, overseas visits, teach-ins, circulars and memos. Things began to look promising on the security front. The atmosphere and the tempo was up-beat. And as the record shows this optimism was not altogether misplaced.

One major headache, however, was the difficulty in convincing staff that all the new security tools were in fact only tools. That they were only as effective as the person handling them. More than ever there was a need to combat complacency, to halt a propensity to drift into predictable routines, and to guard against over-dependency on the new security toys. Where there was failure to get the obvious message over to staff, the odd headline-catching escape from supposedly secure conditions resulted. The message only began to get home when attempts to scapegoat security equipment and aids was shown to be a blatant subversion of the facts. It was only later that a professional pride in good observation, careful listening and interpretation, thoughtful responses and reasoned action began to redress the balance in the security sphere.

It was the comparative successes of the new security system which led to a different problem; one just as great and even more intransigent. It resulted in riot and disorder on a scale hitherto unknown in the service (Dartmoor 1936 excepted). How far recent disorders stem from this is a matter of some conjecture. Only someone presently involved could possibly judge. What can be said is that the pattern of recent events is remarkably similar; the damage profile identical. The pre-Mountbatten situation in prisons presented few control problems. These, where they existed, involved individuals or at most small groups. Seldom, if at all did large numbers of prisoners combine to create mass disturbance and disruption on a scale seen in recent years. Where people are subject to a coersive system, even a benign one, there is potential for explosive situations, great or small. But in the past, explosions were the rare exception rather than the rule. In most instances, control problems were easily resolved and there were no lasting effects.

Staff have seen increased security and its accompanying aids as a solution (rather than the means to a solution) to security problems. Gradually, insidiously, staff began to see it, and to use it, as a solution to each and every control problem. The applied principle was: when disgruntled inmates threatened, or looked threatening, lock them away. Thus, the theory ran, the threat would be banished — out of sight, out of mind. Peace of mind would prevail. This may have worked for a very short time, but it could not and did not last. Soon, prisoners outraged by the curtailment of such few freedoms as they had, made their opposition clear. As prisoners aired their pent-up feelings a certain amount of dislocation ensued; particularly in some of the newer dispersal prisons. Authority's reaction was as misguided as it was predictable.

The fallback on security solutions increased as control problems mounted. More people were locked up for longer periods of time in a forlorn attempt to control them. This had the opposite effect as incensed prisoners vented their resentments against what they saw as unjust and vindictive treatment. Bi-lateral escalation flourished and coloured every activity and contact. Somehow, it did not degenerate into its worst form — then. This was largely because more enlightened staff saw no prospect of the resurrection of the 'fortress prison' concept rejected by the Radzinowicz committee. These staff members set about trying to deal with the situation as it was, not as they would have liked it to be. One priority was to identify situations accurately and problems for what they were. The first essential was to isolate the constituent parts of any presenting problem. What was the nature of the elements involved? Were these 'security' or 'control'?

A prison administration which has the acumen to identify the nature of its problems is well on the way to finding solutions. Identification is a prerequisite of amelioration. Only when problems remain unidentified and fester beneath the surface do they fail to respond to corrective action. Difficulties recognised at an early stage and dealt with then are likely to remain manageable. A failure to recognise and to deal with incipient difficulties is to invite the manageable to become un-manageable.

This is at the core of prison treatment, management and control. Sensible control is a delicate balance between clearly defined freedoms and imposed, fair, but credible restraints. Control should be such as is necessary only for the maintenance of good order and the well-being of all. Control imposed purely for its own sake results always in the need for more control.

It is never easy to maintain the control balance. Staff always demonstrate the need for more control; inmates forever exploit and push at the boundaries of restraints. Pressure and self-interested groups always seek to influence the decisions on control. The need for a well-balanced, well-reasoned, clear and publicised exposition of control objectives is central to a successful regime. The implications of that contribution should be apparent to everyone. 'Treatment' is a much used, much abused word in prisons. The humanitarian penal reformer sees it as something akin to the process occurring in a hospital. Crucial acts are carried out and somehow the subject's condition improves. Some academics, particularly in the social science field see treatment as a confidence trick perpetrated on society by the very representatives of the same society. It is a self-induced delusion. There is, therefore some need (in common with security and control) to define the parameters of treatment. The best chance, perhaps the only chance, of getting it right is to define everything staff do to, with, or for a prisoner as 'treatment'.

Security, control and treatment are then considered in a global context. Handled in this way, a more balanced regime is possible, even probable. Competing and conflicting demands facing a regime are more likely to receive their due weight and priority. Decisions taken have a cogent, unassailable reasoning behind them.

Types of Regime

Examination of the prison system over the past 60 years will show three main types of regime. These do not stand in isolation from each other. Continuity of staff, of usage, of custom and habit ensured that any new system contained many elements of its predecessor. As changes occurred, resistance to the new ensured as much of the old was salvaged as was possible. An example of this was the greeting by staff to a superior visiting officer. A salute accompanied by the information that all was correct, elicited a complementary salute and acknowledgement by the superior. The origins of this may be lost in the mists of time, but in 1978, long after a command system had been replaced by a management system, all was still being reported as correct even when a cursory glance around the wreckage indicated very much the contrary. The command system operated on a simple premise; the prison was the regiment. The Governor was the Commanding Officer, the Deputy Governor his Second-in-Command. There were few, if any, other army officer equivalents, excluding of course specialists such as doctors and chaplains. Thus the next senior rank in a prison was the Chief Officer who was perhaps a Warrant Officer grading in the army. Principal Officers and officers were the Sergeants and Corporals. This completed the staff hierarchy. Where the prisoners fitted into this scheme of things was anybody's guess. The inclination was to cast the prisoners in the role of the enemy, but this stood logic on its head. You cannot be both the enemy and a member of the regiment. That apart, public opinion was unlikely to stand for it. In the end, they occupied a role which went out of military fashion after the Napoleonic wars, that of camp followers. And like everyone else in prison, they tailored their part to suit their needs. The rules of the regime were simple. Strict military protocol obtained between and among staff. Orders were given by superior grades and put into operation by the juniors. A silence rule was imposed on the prisoners. No conversation was permitted between staff and inmates, or between inmates. If a prisoner wished to ask a question of a staff

member, he first had to seek 'Permission to speak'. There is no record of permission ever having been refused but the ritual went on years after the rule of silence was removed from the rule book.

Apart from the obvious shortcomings of such a structure, one glaring weakness was the lack of intermediate grades between the Governor and the Chief Officer. There was a gap in the chain of command which was rarely, if ever, bridged. The result was that orders were given but often never carried out. There was no responsible senior grade to inspect, to support and to encourage. After the Governor's morning round, staff were left pretty much to themselves. What is surprising is that the system on the whole worked, let alone worked as well as it did. Justice was rough, but there was enough of a sense of fair play around to make it bearable for all. This was as much due to a code of discipline (instilled by military training) as much as to any other factor. The prisoner's placid co-operation was rooted in a passive acceptance of hard times, both in and out of prison. The years following the Second World War saw a gradual move away from what were increasingly becoming unacceptable practices. Normal society was changing and the effects of this change were reflected in prison society.

By the 1960s the service was casting around for something to replace the command structure which was being eroded in a haphazard way. New approaches to penal practice were being tried in the United States and in some European countries such as Sweden. It was no coincidence that changes in industrial practices were also taking place in the normal working environment. The Prison Service was no exception. The idea that a socio-industrial model of management might be appropriate emerged. Tentative experiments took place and the movement gathered momentum.

The new idea envisaged a linear management system. Concepts were unashamedly pirated from the Tavistock Institute, the Institute of Criminology, the Industrial Society and anywhere else which was thought to have something to offer. A system of aims and objectives for institutions, of matching objectives with resources, of having a hierarchy of priorities gained ground. New role models were installed and a new jargon created. Attempts were made to allocate responsibility and to build in accountability. Groups became the 'in thing'. There were work groups, study groups, support groups, consultative groups, managerial groups, all competing for the time and attention of the Service.

Where this all led and what it achieved provoked, and no doubt still provokes, a variety of opinions. One thing it did achieve was a sense of dynamic excitement and debate within the Service. Much was happening, perhaps too much for the Service to digest. The system was an improvement in many ways but, in retrospect, too much was expected of it, too quickly. Basics were neglected with unfavourable results. Mountbatten fell upon a healthy but naive Prison Service. It was shaken to its foundations. By the 1970s, it was 'back to the drawing-board'.

There is a system of government now in the Service which is administratively orientated, or so it seems to the bystander. If so, and if events run true to form, this will be an amalgam of previous attempts to get to grips with the enigmas of a total institution. Comments from the ill-informed writer of this paper would both be out of place and valueless. It would, however, be interesting to read the reflections of a present-day Governor in, say, 10 to 15 years' time.

Conclusion

In rapidly changing times, it is unrealistic to expect lessons of a detailed kind from the recent past. If there are lessons, these can only be of a general nature and to a large extent guesswork. What then were (or should have been) the guidelines, the reference points which sustained the Service over the period in question? In a healthy Service, staff should continually be asking themselves: what is the task of the prison? what are the resources available to carry out that task? and what is the proper use of those resources? There are many physical and material aids to the management of a prison. Properly used these go some way towards achieving the goals set by society. However, the real resource, the facilitating resource, the one capable of responding to new challenges, to changing demands, is people — that is, staff.

The question then becomes: how do you organise to meet constantly changing priorities? Textbook theories, even standing orders when followed, rarely provide satisfactory answers. So often, in solving one problem, they merely create others. The prison administrator can become as much an intellectual captive as his charges are physical ones. The resourceful administrator seeks flexibility in his responses. In a constricted environment, he can make room to experiment. In an authoritarian world, he can find time to consult with and to encourage others. He can remember that without contradictory, conflicting demands there is no incentive to be creative. It is not unknown for conflict to generate and stimulate growth. ■

Man and the Regime: A 'Means Model' Approach to Functional Integration*

This article considers ways of conceptualising the work of prisons such that staff can better understand how they can contribute to the stated aims of the Prison Service and how their contribution relates to that of other staff.

JM Fisher
Psychology Unit,
HM Prison
Highpoint

GJ Towle
Psychology Unit,
HM Prison
Highpoint

Recently all prison staff have been issued with a statement of the aims of the Prison Service. This statement reads: *'Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release'.*

Although the statement, at one level, has a certain appeal, it is unlikely by itself to lead to a common sense of purpose which all staff can relate to in a practical way. We believe that what is required is some sort of bridge between these, on the one hand, aspirational aims, and on the other, operational needs or tasks. In short then, what is required is a model of means whereby the ends of the Prison Service may be met.

A useful starting point is Ian Dunbar's 'A Sense of Direction' (1985), which has been the inspiration for a number of regime developments and promoted the idea of 'mission statement' mentioned above. His conception of the regime involves individualism, relationships and activities. He argues, we think rather convincingly, that care and control are not mutually exclusive or intrinsically incompatible — positive involvement leads to 'dynamic security'.

A Model of Man

We are now suggesting a more fundamental model of man from which it is possible to derive a model of the regime that is complementary to that of Dunbar but somewhat differently elaborated.

We take a holistic view of man as an active agent who makes choices based on values and beliefs that derive largely from relationships and other cultural contexts. Crucial to our conception, the individual has the capacity for self-reflection, self-expression and self-change.

Although this model has much in common with various humanistic concepts of man and with the legal and man-in-the-street viewpoint, we make no assumptions regarding free-will or the ultimate determinism of behaviour. We merely wish to stress the importance of respect and concern for the individual and of the role of cognition.

Context and Humanity

Our model of man leads us to believe that for regimes to be effective, we need to consider the individual as a whole person. A man in prison is not just a 'prisoner' but a person with a past, a background — his cultural context. Similarly, to treat him merely as a 'student' or 'client' is equally narrow — and is equally unlikely to lead to an understanding of his offending behaviour.

This is very much a humane viewpoint. To see someone as a whole person is to imply respect for another human being.

Cooperation and Role-Blurring

Each discipline or group of staff has a part to play within a shared focus on the whole individual. Thus we should encourage cross-disciplinary cooperation — mutual discussion, case conferences, shared working projects and so on. In our experience, the functional structures provided by 'Fresh Start' are not very helpful in this respect.

Looking at the whole individual, there may be ways staff can contribute outside their roles as usually defined — after all, staff too are whole people. Individual members of staff have their areas of expertise, but they do not have to operate exclusively within those areas. There needs, perhaps, to be some blurring of traditional role

distinctions.

Together, cooperation and a breakdown of role distinctions should lead to a reduction in the polarities between staff that are unfortunately common at present.

Staff Prisoner Relationships

Relationships with prisoners can be seen to play a vital role in both rehabilitation and control. Staff should be encouraged to develop informal two-way relationships with prisoners, with an emphasis on a mutual perception of the other as a whole person.

From such relationships and a general 'adult' atmosphere of mutual respect, comes much crucial learning about values and beliefs. By viewing staff as whole people, prisoners can better understand where staff are 'coming from'. They begin to learn something of the different cultural backgrounds that people bring to every interaction. Hopefully, this will engender tolerance and a review of their own perspectives.

Relationships also give staff a chance to engage in counselling-type activities which help prisoners work through their problems.

As Dunbar has stressed, in terms of security and control, relationships reduce the polarity between staff and prisoners and provide knowledge that can forewarn of impending difficulties.

Relationships also enhance staff job satisfaction.

Prisoners' relationships with each other and with the outside community are also important and should be encouraged.

Individual Relevance

Activities should be made relevant to the whole person — to a prisoner's cultural context, to their knowledge and skill needs and to their particular life problems — both generally, through individualised sentence planning, and on any specific occasion.

Activities should be explicitly set in the context of personal motivations and future action. Activities should be about the development of potential not the programming of compliance. We should avoid colluding with the pervasive passivity of institutionalisation and encourage a sense of responsibility and effective self-direction. Prison activities should emphasise a proactive outlook.

Large scale prison unemployment and 'bang-ups' are totally alien to this concept as well as being a potential threat to security and control.

Knowledge and Awareness

We should help individuals to formulate and expand a 'theory of life' — their values and beliefs about the world — as a means to better meet their needs.

Prisoners ought to be given opportunities for reflection to develop self-awareness, not only of areas requiring change but of more positive elements. They need a more realistic assessment of self-esteem and achievement.

Related to this are opportunities for self-expression and creativity that help people get in touch with themselves and enhance feelings of positive control.

Skills

In getting prisoners to consider values and beliefs about the world and themselves, individuals should be given the chance to sharpen their skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making and planning — so that their choices are rational and effective.

A related area is the development of skills of self-management and self-control to cope with the emotional and motivational factors that often interfere with rational decision-making and throw individuals off course from long-term goals.

Lastly, individuals need training in the practical life and social skills necessary to effect their decisions and to enhance their range of options.

Wider Implications

The model of man, and the 'means model' of the regime it implies, clearly return the emphasis to the individual after many years in the wilderness of structural wrangling and suggest a more formal recognition of the often excellent work that currently falls within the 'hidden curriculum' of regimes.

Although it has been our intention to focus on the individual prisoner, the model of man proposed applies equally to staff as individuals and their management.

Much of what has been discussed requires a change in attitude rather than additional resources, although it would be naive to believe that the two were unrelated. Nonetheless, like Dunbar, we think there is room for optimism — that the 'moral vacuum' can be filled. ■

Footnote

*This article is based on a talk given at a Suffolk Penal Education training day in March 1989.

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Reviews

Governing Prisons
by John J Dilulio Jr: Free Press, Division of MacMillan Incorporated in America, and Collier MacMillan London.

Quite definitely not a book to take with one on Summer Leave. 'Governing Prisons, A Comparative Study of Correctional Management' (to give it its full title) is an extensively referenced academic tour across three American States' penal systems.

It is considerably well written, the author treats the subject with considerable respect, and seeks to understand rather than judge. I find it difficult to make up my mind what particular audience he was writing for. Not an easy read, once into the book one quickly appreciates this is something of a *tour de force*. Essentially Dilulio asks the question, 'Given these three quite different approaches to running prisons, what is one to make of them?'.

By hopping around the book one learns that in Texas they have a well disciplined system in which prisoners and staff 'know where they stand', a system in which the staff are in full control and given that prisoners co-operate, they receive fair treatment.

In Massachusets the system seems to indicate the Sociologists' 'pain of imprisonment' theories with some exactitude. Here prisoners are allowed to develop in prisoner, psychological and social terms to the point at which they naturally cooperate. This is referred to in the literature as the 'responsibility model'.

By way of further contrast the Californian State System tried to contrive the middle line and adopt what is described as a 'consensual model'. Here prisoners and staff are required to inter-relate in such a way as to make living within a total institution bearable.

Having identified the route the author has taken, I then began to ask the professional's perennial question of academic studies 'What help will this book be to colleagues in the English and Welsh Prison System?'. If one is looking for a blueprint, or even a plain man's guide to governing prisons, it is not here. What emerges most strongly for me from the book is that as old Khayan postulated, 'About it, and about, but evermore came out by the same door as in I went'.

Something of the author's dilemma is reflected in the first few pages when he writes, 'The more I searched the less I found' (Page 3). Nevertheless, Dilulio persisted and the result is a clever philosophical discussion about the nature of imprisonment, using a management window as the means of observation. The book therefore is of use to all who claim a responsibility for being ***concerned*** with the management of prisoners. Young or old, experienced or just starting out, because the book seeks to uncover basic truths, it must have a personal value for prison managers.

Professionally it would be easy to reject the work on the basis that it is too American, that it is not possible to systematise into management practice a given penal philosophy. One of the things I admire most about the American Penal System (both State and Federal) is their willingness to do just that. Furthermore, to enter their philosophical beliefs into binding legislation which forces all concerned to apply philosophical baselines, which can be tried, observed and challenged. Without 400 odd years of Parliamentary government, the Americans are not obsessed with permanence, tradition, and the caseworking administration which can stifle experiment and initiative. And if they fail publicly (and they frequently do) they pull up the adolescent fruits of their legislation and revert, or try something else!

For me there was little in the way of discovery in the book. It is depressing to find the common problems of underfunding, overcrowding and recuperate Criminal Justice policies are so commonplace. I recognise in different English prisons elements of the three systems subject to scrutiny. Certainly, I believe that all who trouble to read 'Governing Prisons' will discover that underground conflict which pervades our system.

Because we do not attempt to formalise our fundamental beliefs about the way prisons should be managed, we condemn the debate to prisoner attitudes or passing fashions. We act out industrial relations difficulties with prison officers, at a variety of levels, when the agenda is really how prisons shall be managed, and how prisoners shall be treated. Pressure groups adopt a high moral rhetoric to castigate us, and we have no convincing reply, because we do not have an expressed philosophical belief upon which to stand our new management edifice. And I doubt anyone would suggest that our political system is entrepreneurial in style, despite attempts over the past ten years to rejuvenate its infra-structure.

My guess is that 'Governing Prisons' would best be read as part of a selected reading assignment overseen by a skilled tutor. That view places the book squarely on the college/ training organisation track. Even so, there is value here for the seriously committed prison manager. An opportunity to test one's personal beliefs about how prisons should be run, in the relative safety of one's own secret morality.

AW Driscoll, OGM
North Region

Coping: Maladaptation in Prisons
by Toch and Adams with Grant.
Transaction Publishers 1989, £22.95.

'The Origin of Species' should be required reading for those that want to write learned works in the life sciences. The lucid simple manner in which Darwin gets across his important and sophisticated message might save modern practitioners from fashionable turgidity. Long unusual words do not really enhance the essential value of an academic study. Even in their title the authors use a word that does not appear in several respected dictionaries. Having pierced the stylistic veil, what do we find?

The book is a study of failure to cope with the prison system, as evidenced by the small part of the prison population that repeatedly offends against the disciplinary system by combinations of disruptive and disturbed behaviour. It is essentially in two parts, the first a broad statistical study of the phenomenon,

the second a series of case studies. The authors have access to data on disciplinary proceedings and to case files of mentally disturbed prisoners, amassed in the New York Prison System. As they describe their methods of data collection and analysis, on a sample of about 9,000 prisoners, envy at the resources available in New York is inevitable.

Study of discipline data, when boiled down, reveals the chronic disruptives tend to be young, not well versed in prison, with a record of violence and a strong chance of previous mental hospitalisation. This, of course, confirms what we already knew by observation. Parallel studies of maladaptation produced by emotional disorder indicate that long sentence prisoners get worse as their prison career develops, whereas shorter sentence prisoners tend to improve. Again, nothing very surprising in that, but the work includes a tabulation of types of emotional problems which will be of great interest and value to those who work in prison hospitals. The relationship between disruptive and disturbed behaviour is explored by statistical studies of episodes of such behaviour, with the result that maladaptive behaviour is found to be often a complex mixture, in any individual, of disruption and disturbance. Perhaps we knew that, but the authors very usefully emphasise the corollary that, such being the facts, stereotyping of persistent offenders (as 'bad' by uniformed staff or mad' by medical treatment agencies) helps no-one: neither the non-copers nor those that have to cope with them.

After these first four group-data based chapters, the authors decide, quite rightly, that it's time for a bit of fun and in the next eight chapters, they examine individual patterns. First of all they set up a codification of the goals of maladaptive behaviour in five types (gratifying impulses, enhancing esteem, pursuing autonomy, seeking refuge and maintaining sanity) and 30 sub-types. Then they exemplify these by a series of case studies and this, of course, is where the fun comes in; all those who work in prisons will have dined out on anecdotes such as these

At points, the case studies come near to illustrating that such behaviour amounts, in fact, to a clever ability to cope, rather than a failure to do so. But the authors neatly side-step criticism in this area when, on p.109, they say 'adaptive and maladaptive behaviour frequently have the same basic goal.' In any case, they amply justify the value of their codification of behaviour, while freely admitting that it is largely a subjective enterprise. They are able finally, in fact, to develop a prisoner profile for each of the five main types of behaviour listed above. There follows a similar series of case studies which the authors call 'success stories', in which, by one of 11 means (from involvement in useful aspects of prison regimes to the straightforward effect of maturation), quite chronic prison offenders have finally demonstrated a measure of coping.

The final part of the book is a summary of the authors conclusions and a proposal for a system of building up confidence to cope. This amounts to the setting up of Self-Management Study Centres for the so-called maladaptive, which offer a programme of systematic self-study in the special setting of an offending peer group who share perceptions of each others behaviour. Well, we know examples of these regimes and we know they work. But we also know that they consume resources not likely to be often available. It is the authors' conclusions, however, that make the book such a valuable contribution to the debate on the use of prisons, in an era when rehabilitation aims are out of fashion. They are simple enough conclusions and they are optimistic ones: maladaption — disruptive behaviour — is predominantly in younger, less-experienced prisoners; younger men grow older; maturity normally comes with age and disruptive behaviour normally diminishes with maturity. And there is another message for prison staff and prison administrators: temper essential punishment for misbehaviour by insightful enquiry into its cause, and appropriate treatment for the individual concerned. In other words, try and help them to mature a bit quicker. If the accumulated cynicism and weariness in the system, towards the persistent offender against discipline, is at all moderated, by the optimism and the positive approach of this book, then its authors are to be congratulated.

J Reynolds
HM Prison Brixton

Imprisonment: the legal status and rights of prisoners
by G D Treverton-Jones. London, Sweet & Maxwell; 1989.

The publishing house's claim that 'this is the first book to deal specifically with the law applicable to prisoners' is something of an optimistic overstatement. The writer follows much of the same path as Blom-Cooper, Zellick and Burton (1982)[1] Marin (1983)[2], Walker (1985)[3], and Harding and Koffman (1988)[4]. He does present, however, a clear and not too technical account of the subject area that will assist the undergraduate and the practitioner new to the field in understanding the vital legal implications of the treatment of those in prison custody. No longer can there be any excuse to concur with a leading article in *The Times* which as recently as 1983 stated: 'Let it roundly be said, there is no such thing as prisoners' rights'.

The text is at its best in its review of the developing case law in prison-related litigation and of the way in which the courts' previously generally applied 'hands-off' principle has been modified. This is most dramatically seen in cases relating to internal discipline. There is a particularly useful consideration of those criteria to be met if natural justice is not to be offended. An interesting chapter addresses the effects, at law, of a prison sentence upon life outside — the prisoner's job or business, his or her involvement in political activity and rehabilitation. I feel that this section could have been developed further, perhaps by taking Walker, *supra*, as a model.

One fault for which the writer cannot be blamed is that at some point between type-setting and publication Prison Rules 47-56 were amended and the sentences of detention and youth custody were replaced. He has been able to acknowledge the latter but not the former. It is to be regretted that in such fundamental areas the text has become outdated so soon.

Peter M Quinn
HM Prison Askham Grange

Footnotes

1. Blom-Cooper, L., Zellick, G.J., Burton, H., eds (1982) *'Prisons: being a reprint from Halsbury's Laws of England'*, London, Butterworth.
2. Marin, B. (1983) *'Inside justice'*, London and Toronto, Associated University Presses.
3. Walker, N.D. (1985) *'Sentencing: theory, law and practice'*, London, Butterworth, pp.170-215.
4. Harding, C., Koffman, L. (1988) *'Sentencing and the penal system'*, London, Sweet and Maxwell.

Bricks of Shame

by Vivien Stern.
New Edition Pelican Books.

When Vivien Stern's 'Bricks of Shame' was originally published in 1987, it was received as a well-researched, carefully argued work which would, to quote *'The Times'*, '. . . broaden the debate . . .' concerning the penal system in this country. It did not provide the lay person with an impartial guide to the mysterious workings of the Prison Department, but that was never its intention. Miss Stern's argument was that since the last war, our society's response to criminality had been wasteful, unimaginative, counter-productive and occasionally brutal and even illegal. On the way she expressed clearly, and with some force, many of the concerns which had long been exercising the minds of those who had been endeavouring to keep a fairly creaky ship afloat.

So far, so good. The problem is that any book on a live topic such as this can only comment upon the way things are at the time of writing. The obvious (and, I guess, the cheapest) solution to such a problem is to produce a 'New Edition' some time after the book was originally published. The historical matter remains broadly the same and bits can be inserted, or altered, to take account of recent events. But there are pitfalls, and this book graphically illustrates some of them.

In general terms the new edition does refer to most of the changes which are currently taking place within the penal system. It is difficult, however, to comment positively about any new initiatives within a work which is fundamentally an indictment of the system. An indication of this is the author's most simple, and some would say simplistic, response to 'the fundamental question' — DOES PRISON WORK? Her response is as follows:– 'This usually means, does it stop those who are sent there committing crimes again? Facts and figures in answer to this are straightforward. No, it is not very successful.' (Page 51). Is that the 'acid test' of success? Not necessarily. On Page 37 the author discusses Community Service Orders. She says the following . . . 'they are quite successful, by simple and obvious measures. In 1987 three-quarters of all community service orders were satisfactorily completed.' Surely, most prison sentences are 'satisfactorily completed'! In such an unfavourable climate, how can the events and initiatives of the last two years be objectively assessed.

My second quibble with the 'new edition' format is that the editing must be thorough and consistent. Any sloppiness will produce glaring incongruities, of which I choose but two from this work by way of illustration. On Page 187 the author, when discussing remission has inserted the following:– 'However, the one-third (remission) is not immutable. It can be changed quite easily by a simple Parliamentary procedure, a device resorted to during the population crisis of July 1987, when Douglas Hurd brought in, to the great displeasure of some Conservative backbenchers and some Conservative leader writers, half remission for prisoners serving a year or less.' Yet on Page 99 we had already been informed that 'Providing more than five days have been served, every prisoner is entitled to one-third remission, that is a prisoner can expect to serve two-thirds of the actual sentence imposed" — OOPS!! On Page 186 the author illustrates a point by referring to '. . . a pint of milk worth 17 pence . . .' Doubtful even in 1987. Nonsense today.

I believe that the original publication (reviewed by Peter Berryman in the April 1987 edition) said much that needed to be said. If you haven't read it, I would recommend it. I also believe that, in time, there will be a place for a second work by the same author in which the events of the late eighties and early nineties can be analysed and assessed. This 'New Edition' provides little new information and does nothing to further the author's already considerable reputation. I am by no means the first person in the last 12 months to have commented critically upon an aspect of the publishing policy of Penguin books, but I feel that there is little 'added value' to show for the expense and effort involved in producing the 1989 edition of this work.

The 1987 edition retailed at £3.95. The 1989 edition has a recommended price of £4.99. This represents an increase of 26.5% in two years (12.3% compound). How does this square with inflation rates over the last two years?

Charles Bushell
HM Prison, Gartree

Uplifting Talk

Overheard in the lift at Queen Anne's Gate on the announcement that David Mellor MP had moved from Health to join John Patten MP in the Home Office. 'With those around will any doorway be wide enough for their heads should they both want to go through at the same time?'

1992 — Nothing to Fear

Rah! Rah! Rah! for our gallant rugby players who socked it to the French in Paris on the last weekend in September. The match was 7-6 in our favour but that's not all. Our true Brits showed the French a thing or two! Know what I mean! Up on the tables amongst the escargots and beurre those Brit feet danced the night away to songs of fallen women from icy shores. But did the Frenchies like it? No. The dull lot slunk in a corner with their wives talking, drinking wine and eating, missing all the fun!

Training

...Notes on topical issues in Training and Staff Development

John Staples
Head of Prison Service College

My guess is that the job that you, the reader of this article, is doing is not the one you were doing 12 months ago and I would go further and suggest that in another 12 months time the work will have changed again. Such a pace of change has become widespread and is not peculiar to the Prison Service. As Head of the College I receive programmes and reports of training from one company after another. In a report commissioned by the Training Agency to take an overview of training in the United Kingdom, the authors Deloitte Haskins and Sells commented 'You face an increasing pace of change in your markets and products. You face demographic changes, 1992 is approaching and major change is proposed by the government in the training infra-structure. Education, training and development are bubbling ...'

Well what is bubbling at the College? We are very excited by the interest shown in the Advanced Diploma in Criminology which we and the Open University have negotiated. Within 10 days of the course being advertised the College received over 100 phone calls from interested staff. The course is of third year university standard and demands much in rigorous analysis and imagination. Anyone may apply and those accepted will have material support from the Service so I hope line managers will be looking to encourage staff to consider this new opportunity. Professional advice is available on what preparation may be needed for individuals to reach the standards required for entry and the College can explain how to get that professional advice. The first course in the Advanced Diploma does not begin until 1991 but you are advised to seek advice now because the work needed to prepare you may take some time.

In this venture and in other things I see a return of interest by academics in the work of prisons. Sad if that marks a loss of hope in the alternatives to custody but refreshing and challenging for the Service. An example of that renewed interest was evident at the annual conference for criminologists organised by the Home Office with the call for a research project taking a broad historic and sociological view and examining the effect on staff/prisoner relationships of the resources made available to the Service in the last decade or so.

With the Diploma we now have in place a piece of training which can be the top tier of a cake which has at its base the new entrant course for prison officers. That course is a mix of training in particular skills especially those needed for working with people and an introduction to the Service.

Thought is being given as to how we might extend that introduction to include all those who join the Service. At the moment the College produces through the Leicester Centre a booklet of guidance for all new entrants to the Service. Ideally the College would like to introduce a scheme whereby all staff had a common introduction emphasising the aims of the Service and how each person plays a part in achieving those aims. Work on this is being taken forward by the Planning Unit.

After initial training other layers of the cake need to be provided and the training review led by P6 is examining how this is to be done and what should go into those layers. Love Lane and Leicester provide on-site and at regional venues a menu of training activities which offer both training in particular skills and in developing management abilities. Those programmes are reviewed in the light of new demands made by Headquarters and the College view of what is needed. The element which needs enhancing in programming is how other managers in the Service tap into that process. The issue of the booklet on what we call 'The Systematic Approach to Training' provides a way in which the need for training can be identified by line managers. So often what at first glance may be identified as a training need can be when looked at more closely better dealt with by clearer management directives or other action. The 'Systematic Approach' gives the Service a common language and approach in which to address training and that is a major first step in drawing together the considerable but widely spread and managed resources devoted to training into a more cohesive frame-

work. Once the outcome of the Organisation Review and the consultation process is known, more can be done to set out a coherent and comprehensive training strategy for the Service. The development of such a strategy is the work of the Review of Training which is being taken forward by a team from Headquarters and the College.

Another review which is welcomed by the College is the staff inspection of the New Entrant Prison Officer course. A team of staff from Prison Service Headquarters and the Home Office Staff Inspectorate led by a governor with experience of staff inspections is to report by the end of 1989 on the work of the NEPO centres. Although record numbers of NEPOs passed through our doors in 1988-89 we face even greater demands in the next few years so a review of our resources and the way we use them is timely.

The volume of work in training recruits is the reason for Newbold Revel our recently acquired training College, not yet being fully used for its central purpose that of taking on the work now done at Love Lane and Leicester and bringing in training activities which are now arranged elsewhere by Headquarters Divisions and Branches. The bringing in of such training to the College is important for us because we need the exchange of ideas and knowledge which is encouraged by being under one roof. Even before 1993 when we hope the College will take on its fuller role we shall be drawing in, where we can, alongside NEPO training, more of those activities.

The experience of the trainers in the training of large numbers of new entrants underlines the problems for all training staff in the setting and maintaining of standards. At the best of times training can be diminished by poor accommodation or other environmental factors and trainers, too, can become out of touch with their material, diffident in presentation and distant from the central message they are aiming to present.

Currently in order to maintain standards in training we set objectives for each training session; check out whether those objectives have been met; adopt a team approach so that trainers can bolster and complement each others' work; hold a common philosophy of training. More might be achieved if we moved towards some form of external accreditation in our work. To this end the College is discussing ways forward with the City & Guilds and National Council for Vocational Qualifications. That Council is reviewing the plethora of qualifications now available nationally and through lead bodies of employers and trades unions rationalising training so that in 1992 the training scene throughout the country is much less uncoordinated.

In the training of managers the Management Charter Initiative is setting out to establish standards in management training and developing a network of meetings for managers to share ideas and best practice. The aims of the M.C.I. are very much our own and the College is very closely shadowing developments.

One positive example of that is in a new course which has been developed at the College in management training. Under the title 'The Leading Edge' Prison Service managers alongside those from outside the Service work together on a management problem. I attended the first course of these and was joined by a senior police officer, a colliery manager and a senior manager from A.C.A.S., the arbitration service. All of us taking part were impressed with the high standard of the work of the trainers and those from outside the Service suggested that we should charge for such courses!

Charging for training is another way we might test whether what the College is offering is in line with what the customer wants and therefore whether we are setting the right priorities. Delegated budgets to governors could mean that choices might be made whether to use the College for training or go elsewhere if to do so would give better value for money. This notion brings with it many interesting questions. What do we take account of in estimating our costs and what is a fair amount to charge? When Headquarters wants a particular message put across and training is mandatory does that imply that there should be no charge? Should the College invite people outside the Service to use the facilities if they can pay more than colleagues from within the Service?

Charging might be one way in which the doors of the College would be opened to a wider range of people. That would have the advantage I found in the course I decribed earlier in bringing together people who might not normally meet but have issues in common alongside those who do meet but in the formal work setting where experiment and risk tend to be inhibited. Some of the most rewarding work done by tutors from Love Lane both there and in establishments and regional venues has been when those training activities have brought together people who work in the same establishment or region but who tend to operate in close-knit departments and do not have as clear an understanding of the skills and expertise both that they can offer to the wider needs of the establishment and what others there can offer to their departments.

The College has an important role to play in helping along teamworking, sharing of ideas and improved understanding of the Service and its place in society. To that end three seminars have been held at Newbold Revel drawing people from within and outside the Service on such diverse subjects as 'The Carlisle Report on Parole', and 'Occupational Health'. Regular seminars are held too at Abell House for staff working at Headquarters to engender a better appreciation of Service-wide concerns. Those seminars have included discussion on 'Remands and the Private Sector', 'Role of Management Services in Establishments', 'Treatment of Vulnerable Prisoners'. With a similar aim in mind of achieving a broader view and encouraging unity of purpose the programme of Senior Command Studies has for the first time included medical officers alongside governors. Through those studies governors have begun to move out into other organisations for short periods to learn and, indeed, to offer insight into ways of addressing issues in management. Those organisations which have been tapped so far include NACRO, the Army, National Coal Board and currently we are negotiating arrangements with some commercial firms.

What these studies underline and the College reflects in all its training is that we are moving away from claiming to be teaching in a formal sense of passing on what we know to those who come to us to learn towards a more participative style in which we recognise that those who come to the College have a responsibility for their own professional development and it is for us to enable that responsibility to be discharged in the most effective way. ■

Lookout

In June of this year Newbold Revel played host to the first ever conference of Race Relations Officers. The opening address — by the Rt Hon Douglas Hogg MP — rightly made much of the progress of the Prison Service in this area, and, rather more questioningly, re-emphasised the Government's general commitment to the issue of racial equality.

A brave, and thereafter lonely delegate from Wandsworth asked Mr Hogg why we should take his remarks seriously, especially given in that very week the Government had made it clear that, despite over a century of colonial domination, there would be no room for the people of Hong Kong in this country. Wasn't this racism on a grand scale, and thus hardly likely to inspire any RRLO with the confidence that they would be supported when attempting to stamp out racist behaviour on the landings, or in the Mess? 'Of course not', came a rather shocked reply!

Are we more aware of racism in others than ourselves? Are senior staff free from racism? Their racism can be masked by a greasy charm and social convention, a by-product, perhaps, of a colonial or military background, or a reflection of their generation which was largely untouched by the true integration of a multi-racial society. For them black people are still 'coloured' (or even worse, 'darkies'), who work on the busses, are good at cricket, have wonderful teeth, and a nice sense of rhythm. As far as prisons are concerned, well blacks do seem to commit a lot of crime, make too much noise when they play dominoes, stick together on the wing, and cause problems for the kitchen during Ramadan.

These views are largely expressed in private, and most senior staff would be shocked to think of themselves as 'racist', not because of the injustice of the label, but merely from the implication that they could stoop that low. 'Racism' is, after all, something which affects only officers, or senior officers, who haven't quite learned to keep their mouths shut!

The new Staff Handbook is in the process of being compiled, and the writer has had the opportunity of reading this in draft form. On the question of racial prejudice (and indeed sex discrimination) it outlines, whilst being 'absolutely committed to a policy of racial equality', a seemingly simple procedure for dealing with complaints of prejudice. In the first instance this should be a matter raised with the line manager.

But that is precisely the problem. What if it is the line manager, or that line manager's superior who is the racist (or sexist)? What hope does the RRLO actually have of achieving anything when it is likely to be the person at the top who does the West Indian impersonations at senior management meetings, or asks if you've 'heard the one about'? And let's not forget it is the same line managers who write ASRs, and recommend promotions. Not surprisingly, as far as I'm aware, the most senior RRLO is a Governor IV, and despite the efforts of all and sundry there is still only one black governor grade in the whole Prison Service. Even worse, if it's hard for the RRLO, just think how hard it is for the prisoner. ■

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