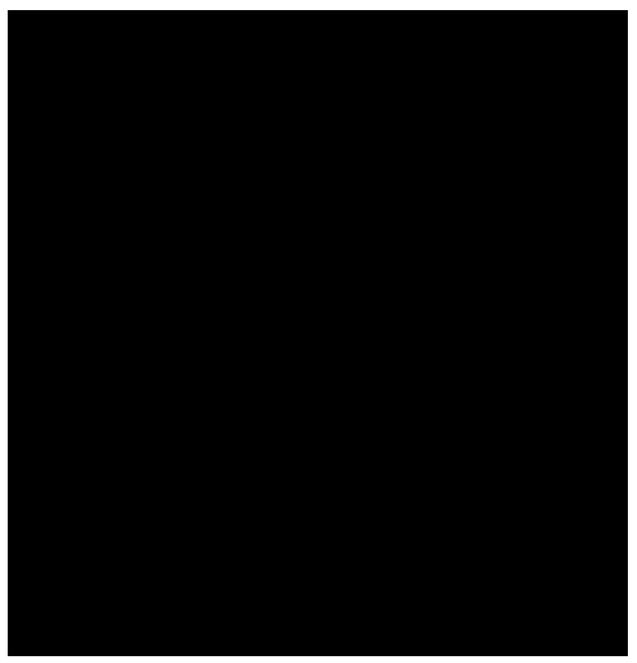
PRISON SERVICE
JOURNAL

ISSUE NO. 86



MANAGEMENT

GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

Phil Wheatley

John Fisher

Cynthia McDougall

Graham Smith

John Powls

Alan Rayfield

PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

Contents

Subscriptions
HMP Leyhill,
Wotton-under-Edge,
Gloucestershire, GL2 8HL

Reviews
Trevor Williams,
David Wilson
Kate Cawley

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

Printed at HMP Leyhill

Comment

Back to Basics

In conversation with Headquarters or more accurately, when listening to people at HQ, a current pre-occupation emerges which could be refreshing if translated into action. It is a concern for the Service to attend better to its basic tasks.

What may have brought this about are three particularly worrying trends. Once again there is a rise in the number of those held in police cells, mostly in appalling conditions. Secondly, the number of deaths of prisoners in our care seems impervious to exhortation to reduce them. Thirdly the number of escapes of those posing the greatest danger to the public is approaching numbers higher than in any year since Mountbatten.

Lifting the lid on the events behind these figures suggests written instructions from HQ remain unread, established routines for searching and checking the well-being of prisoners are done casually and ineffectively and allocation and transfer procedures are cumbersome and easily baulked. The basics are not being done well. Inquest upon inquest, inquiry upon inquiry show gaps in the performance of our 'bread and butter' tasks.

Is the recognition at HQ of these worrying trends more than words?

Resources at HQ which could be addressing these issues are being consumed in devising complex systems of assessing prisoners' behaviour and measuring activities so that managers become merely data collecting agents chained to their desks. There are manuals for this and contracts for that and yet more changes to adjudications and fanciful notions of addressing offending behaviour. But time for simply supervising staff in doing what they are supposed to and ensuring that standards are maintained is becoming harder and harder to find. An indication that HQ intend more than words is that governors are not required to compile an annual report for their establishment this year: not that it will save time at HQ since such reports were never read anyway. And the emphasis on face to face communication is a move forward also. However radical measures need to be taken to give the Service the opportunity to manage and supervise alongside those who do the work. The theme of this edition of the Journal is management and in the articles under that banner is spelled out the need for managers to become actors in the drama playing leading roles with conviction not off stage scene changers and producers poring over the written word and offering inconsistent interpretations.

That message is addressed to all managers at all levels including officers in the management of their work and their dealings with prisoners, not just to those at Millbank. We need to manage in a style which shows commitment and conviction. That means delegating, taking risks and working shoulder to shoulder with those whose work we manage. You can't do that in a hierarchial and bureaucratic set up concerned with number crunching and defensive procedures. We need to change and change radically in order to get back to basics.

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT 1991

Phillipa Drew, the author heads the Directorate of Custody at Prison Service Headquarters having come to us from leading the Home Office division concerned with the Probation Service. The two Services need to work closely together to ensure the effective implementation of the Act.

In this article I shall discuss the Act principally from the point of view of its implications for the probation service. I shall begin though with a brief discussion of the philosophy behind the Act.

The Philosophy of the Act

The Criminal Justice Act 1991 introduces a new sentencing framework underpinned by the two principles of consistency and proportionality. Consistency relates to the way in which sentencers are to approach the business of sentencing and proportionality relates to the type of sentence to be given. The Act gives effect to the principle of proportionality by requiring that the sentence should be related to the seriousness of the offence. This means that previous convictions (except for certain sexual and violent offenders) are to be less influential in determining sentence than they are at present. Deterrence is no longer seen as one of the purposes of the particular sentence. The purpose of the sentence is to punish, to protect the public and to reform and resettle the offender where possible. In line with the principle of proportionality the concept of the alternative to custody disappears, for custody must always be justified in its own right, as must each community penalty. Parliament has also given a clear signal in the Act in relation to the question of proportionality by reducing the maximum penalties for non-domestic burglary and theft. This is in line with the Government's policy that prison should be reserved for the most serious and violent or sexual offenders with all others being punished in the community. The maximum penalty for domestic burglary remains at fourteen years to reflect the particularly distressing nature of this crime.

Main Areas of Interest to the Probation Service

The main areas of interest to the probation service are: the restrictions on custodial sentences and the role of the pre-sentence report in the sentencing process; the new structure of community sentences; the provisions for conditional early release of prisoners; the creation of the youth court; the creation of a statutory Inspectorate of Probation; the cash limiting of the probation service specific grant and section 95 and the duty not to discriminate. I will concentrate on the first three of these.

Restrictions on Custodial Sentences

The sections of the Act whlch deal with custodial and community sentences give effect not only to the principle of proportionality

but also to that of consistency, for they set out for the first time a structured approach to the business of sentencing. The aim is to ensure that the sentencer has fully considered a number of factors before reaching the point of sentence. The provisions relating to custodial sentences have their origin in those provisions of the 1982 and 1988 Criminal Justice Acts which relate to the sentencing of young offenders. The 1991 Act has, however, developed them further and placed them within a coherent framework. First the offence must be so serious that only a custodial sentence can be justified. Second, the 1991 Act has dispensed with the provision contained in the earlier Acts which enabled the court to take into account how the offender had responded to earlier community based sentences. The removal of that provision and indeed the diminished place of previous convictions makes it clear that the courts should consider sentencing an offender to repeated community punishments rather than operating a sort of totting up process. Third, in passing a custodial sentence the court is required in all cases to justify its decision i.e. to say why a custodial sentence is justified. Fourth, the court is also required to consider a pre-sentence report in all cases where it is contemplating custody except where the offence is indictable only, where the court still has discretion not to call for a report.

The Pre-Sentence Report

I think it is worth discussing for a moment why pre-sentence reports have been made compulsory in so many more cases. An essential element in the new Act's approach to sentencing is the emphasis on consistency, and a structured and ordered process which should contribute to that consistency. At present reports are required in certain situations, but often whether a report is called for in a particular case may depend on whether the defendant has pleaded guilty, or not guilty. If he or she has pleaded guilty there may have been time to prepare a report, but if the defendant pleaded not guilty, but has been found guilty, the court may often proceed to sentence without a report in order not to delay matters. This inconsistency of approach is difficult to justify. In the Government's view it is vital to the quality of justice that the court should have available to it a thorough professional assessment of the offender and how he or she could be effectively dealt with in the community. The aim is to ensure that the court fully considers the option of a community penalty before taking a final decision. This greater consistency of approach to the question of reports should go some way towards tackling one of the anomalies which research has highlighted in the current procedures. Home Office research on sentencing in the Crown Court has shown that black defendants plead not guilty disproportionately more than white defendants and, as a result, if they are found guilty and sentenced to custody disproportionately fewer of them have the benefit of having a report considered by the court before sentence.

So we see the purpose of the pre-sentence report as providing an impartial assessment of the offender and his or her attitude towards the offence and an opportunity for the court to consider

passing a community sentence. We do not see the report as making a *recommendation about sentence.* This is an area where we think there has been some confusion in the past. Sentencing is for magistrates and judges. The role of the probation service is to help the sentencer in arriving at a decision by providing him or her with information which would not otherwise be available, in particular information about how the offender might be punished in the community.

It is clear that if pre-sentence reports are to be impartial, of high quality and timely the probation service needs the active cooperation of the Crown Prosecution Service, the police, defendants' solicitors, the Prison Service, Court Clerks and Crown Court administrators. The probation service cannot implement this part of the Act on its own. That is absolutely clear. This is why we set up five pilot trials in the Crown Courts at Southwark, Bristol, Birmingham, Lincoln and Newcastle to identify the operational problems and to find solutions for them. The pilots are going forward with the full cooperatlon of the CPS, the police, the Lord Chancellor's Department, the Prison Service, the Bar and the Law Society and they are already leading to quite significant changes in practice for those agencies as well as for the probation service.

Community Sentences

A community sentence as defined by the Act is a sentence which, "consists of or includes one or more community orders". Community orders are listed in the Act and they include all the existing orders plus the new combination order and the curfew order. The important point to bring out, however, is that fines and discharges are not community sentences. That does not mean that they are to be forgotten. As to community sentences, the same structured approach to sentencing as the Act introduces for custodial sentences is to apply to sentencing in relation to these community orders. So again, the sentence has to be justified by the seriousness of the offence. In this case it is the seriousness of the offence which determines the degree of the restriction on liberty which is to be imposed. But the Act provides a variety of community orders so as to enable the sentencer, within what I might call the umbrella of the restrictions on liberty, to choose a sentence which is most suitable for the offender. Clearly, the pre-sentence report will have an important part to p1ay in providing an assessment for the court of which particular community order or orders would be most suitable for the offender.

To that end the Act provides for a number of possible additional requirements to be added to a probation order and these are now all helpfully set out in Part 11 of schedule I to the Act. They include clarifications to the requirements to treatment for a mental condition and a separate new requirement relating to treatment for drug or alcohol dependency. The Act also enables probation and community service to be combined in a combination order and finally, the Act introduces a curfew order and provides for it to be supported by electronic monitoring.

Most of the community sentences, though not all, will fall to the probation service to implement. Much will simply continue and develop existing work. There will always be a place for innovative work with offenders provided that it is properly planned, staff are properly trained, it is properly monitored and finally thoroughly evaluated and results of that evaluation disseminated. But innovation has always been a strength of the probation service and I hope it will always continue to be.

The area where the service needs to work hard is in that of consistency and accessibility. It is hard to see the justification for the wide variety of ways in which offenders are supervised by the service. In particular in relation to the requirements placed upon them and the criteria used to determine whether to prosecute for breach. This is why the Government promoted national standards for community service orders over two years ago and why we are, with the service organisations, working up proposals for national standards for other aspects of probation service work. Inconsistency, unless it can be justified, is unfair and can be discriminatory.

This brings me to a second point of relevance to the probation service. Such statistics as we have show unexplainable differences in the extent to which minority ethnic groups and women receive probation or community service orders. Some of these differences may be accounted for by the offences of which they have been convicted or by the attitudes of sentencers. But is the probation service confident that its reports to courts are not colluding with these differences and that its programmes are genuinely accessible and such that offenders from minority groups feel able to consent to participate in them? And this brings me to a third aspect which has significant implications for the probation service. This is the need for the service to be well linked in with local community groups, with facilities offered by voluntary organisations and able to make effective use of local volunteers.

Conditional Early Release

The 1991 Act introduces wholly new arrangements for the early release of those given custodial sentences. These flow from Lord Carlisle's report on parole and remission in England and Wales. Under the Act the sentence will be served partly in custody and partly in the community with the offender being liable to recall to custody right up to the end of the sentence. The key concept and break from present arrangements is that the whole sentence will have meaning. So those sentenced up to but not including 12 months will be released at the halfway point through their sentence but liable to recall right up to the end of the sentence. Offenders sentenced to between 12 months and up to 4 years will be automatically released halfway through their sentence and then supervised up to the three quarter point and liable for recall up to the end of the sentence. Those sentenced to four years and over will be subject to a discretionary release system operating from the halfway point of the sentence up to the two thirds. For this group of prisoners the system will be more akin to what we now know as parole, although all of them will be subject to supervision by

the probation service up to the three quarter point of the sentence and, as with others, will be liable to recall right up to the end of the sentence.

Clearly the concept of a sentence served partly in custody and partly in the community under the supervision of the probation service cannot be made a reality without the closest cooperation between the prison and probation services. The Government has committed itself to such cooperation in the recent White Paper *'Custody, Care and Justice'*. In chapter 9 the Government has said that it will enshrine the need for cooperation between the two services in national standards for the supervision of offenders after release from custody; issue new guidance on throughcare and the role of probation officers in prisons; introduce management contracts between the Governor of each establishment and the relevant chief probation officer to determine the work of the probation service in that establishment; encourage probation officers working in prisons to be involved in the preparation of sentence plans for prisoners and introduce as resources allow opportunities for joint training involving prison staff and the probation service. All these points are important but I would place particular emphasis on the role of the probation service in sentence planning. This involvement may take different forms depending on the type of establishment: the position of seconded probation officers is different in YOIs from other establishments. But in all cases we would expect the home probation officer to be consulted about the plan and kept in touch wlth the prisoner's progress. If the probation service is to supervise an offender on release from custody it is essential that it is involved in decisions about what happens to that offender during the custodial part of the sentence. Equally the home probation officer must have full information about how the offender has responded to the custodial part of the sentence. We have already published draft national standards for the supervision of offenders on release from custody and we are currently revising the draft in the light of further comments that have been made about it.

Conclusion

I believe the Criminal Justice Act will be seen as a watershed for a number of reasons. I have identified two of the main ones - the creation for the first time of a comprehensive statutory framework for sentencing and the radical reform of parole and early release arrangements. The probation service will have an important role to play under the Act but the effectiveness of its provisions will not be fully realised unless all the agencies involved cooperate in its implementation.

GUNS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

A Californian sun tan fades with remarkable rapidity in an English Spring, but, like the ubiquitous lager, a Harkness Fellowship refreshes the parts in some interesting ways.

John May, Area Manager, formally Governor of HMP Dartmoor visited the United States as part of a Harkness Fellowship Award.

During eight months of enforced exile in the New World I managed to complete a moderately serious piece of writing about the management and treatment of sex offenders in prisons (an expurgated version of which may yet make it to the pages of the PSJ). However, my purpose here is to reflect on some of the other curiosities I encountered in the course of spending time in 20 or more prisons in 5 different jurisdictions.

I must begin by recording a debt of gratitude to Professor John Di Iulio, my mentor at Princeton University. Not only did he enable access to valuable contacts across the country, but he introduced me to what proved to be the perfect method for studying prisons. Frustrated by fruitless hours of trying to prepare questionnaires and structured interviews, I sought his help. He described his own method - which had resulted, inter alia, in "Governing Prisons",(The Free Press, Macmillan NY) a book which shows remarkable insight into the people who run prisons - as "soaking and poking".

On the basis of such distinguished authority, I spent much of the next several months guilt-free as I immersed myself in a variety of prisons, following up on whatever appeared interesting. Having re-surfaced (and discovered how quickly one dries off in Cleland House), it is, hopefully, interesting to look at some of the artefacts I dredged up and try to see what they reveal of the culture that produced them.

"ENOUGH FIREPOWER TO START A SMALL WAR"

My first souvenir is a 12 bore shotgun. The watch towers with their armed guards are but the most visible bit of an enormous arsenal of lethal and non-lethal weaponry with which one is occasionally invited to play. With due ceremony on each occasion, I was allowed to establish warm, friendly relationships with shotguns, pistols, multiple shot rifles, devices for firing gas and rubber bullets, stun batons, and an instrument which fires two electrodes that lodge in the recipient's skin and can immobilise him for several minutes. I did rather badly with that, missing my cardboard box target totally but a childhood glued to "Wells Fargo" paid off at last when I hit the target three times with the revolver.

Any consideration of guns in American prisons must begin from a recognition that there are still lots of people who are convinced that

they are conquering the wilderness. The huge wheeled 4x4 truck with a swivelling firing platform in the back has, apparently, a magical power to replace sagging Budweiser bellies with taut muscles, and smoker's wheezing with the lungs of an athlete.

The power of the mythology is considerable - I still have the application form to join "The Bowhunters Of New Jersey" (the car-sticker is reputedly a great bird puller). But one of the values of myths is that they help to cover the gap between what we say we do and what we actually do.

Some of the things people said to me about guns in prisons:

"I can't imagine running a prison with no guns"

"Our prisoners expect to be fired on if they are out of line"

"It is made clear to all our inmates that our policy is not to fire a warning shot, the first one counts".

What my "soaking and poking" suggested was that, despite the rhetoric, American prisons aren't actually about "shoot first, ask questions after". The weapons do get used, but rarely, and, when invited to talk about incidents, it is not unusual to find staff describing things that happened 5 or 10 years ago.

Some American prisons have a history of extreme violence by our standards. The very bloody riots in New Mexico, New York State and elsewhere are well documented ("States Of Siege" Bert Useem, Oxford University Press, 1989). Less well known to an English audience is the high level of prisoner/prisoner and prisoner/staff assaults which has been a feature of several systems. Thus, within the recent past, there has been more frequent recourse to using lethal and non-lethal force.

My admittedly narrowly focused snap-shot suggests that, now, the weapons perform something of the same role as the dummy for a four year old friend of mine - he insists on having it beside the bed at night, but never actually puts it in his mouth.

Without examining things too closely (nor wanting to), the staff I met appeared to derive a confidence from the belief that, if the worst happens, they will come out on top. What they do, on the basis of that confidence, is work to establish very positive, effective relationships with some very difficult, dangerous people.

I admit to having toyed with the possible benefits in our system of some of the non-lethal hardware (I hope that doesn't make me a bad person). More interestingly, guns in prisons provide a powerful testimonial to the vital value of some myths. The myth is that the guns make it all possible. The truth is that, except in some super-maximum

GUNS

DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

GUNS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

control facilities, guns have no significance in the day to day management of prisons. But, because everybody believes the myth, staff relate with prisoners just as if they had all been trained at the Prison Service College, preside over communal dining rooms that seat 500, and wander confidently around make-shift dormitories with over 100 men in.

Having established that it isn't the guns that make it all possible, I was left with trying to explain how prisons holding 5 and 6000 men, prisons with huge dormitories, prisons with dining halls, and prisons where, because of overcrowding, some people live in tents, could survive.

So far as I could tell, predatory behaviour and serious disorder are not greatly more prevalent than at home. More "poking and soaking" was called for. So, with barely a pause, I plunged in. What I came up with was an intriguing miscellany.

"THE MAINTENANCE OF GOOD ORDER"

"The Ultimate Deterrent"

The death penalty is now available in a number of states. It is difficult to detach myself entirely from the profound sense of depression I felt during a handful of guided tours of "Death Rows", but, from talking with several people working in systems with the death penalty, my sense was that they did not see it as having any special role in moderating the behaviour of people in custody.

"The Stick"

Most systems have their prison of last resort for the extreme non-conformist. California's Pelican Bay doesn't yet have quite the cachet of Alcatraz, but I suspect that, among Los Angeles' tearaways, it is beginning to acquire a certain notoriety.

What I saw at first hand of these prisons showed them to be well ordered, controlled, clean places with an understandable emphasis on physical safety - hardly the horrendous dungeons one might have expected. Yet the prisoners and staff I talked with insisted that these prisons were a major deterrent to bad behaviour. It occurred to me that maybe I was encountering another myth which both inmates and staff needed to believe?

"The Carrot"

Within the miscellany of strategies to persuade prisoners to behave, the variety of incentives is a miscellany in itself. Differential pay rates is a familiar one to us. Among the more exotic of my curiosities was "good time", whereby each inmate job carried a time value as well as a pay rate. Thus five days work in an industrial workshop might qualify you for one day off your total sentence, whereas in a high responsibility job (such as operating the inmates' shop) you might get one day off for every two worked.

On the evidence, the various packages of incentives which included some subtle stuff, like having to achieve High School - graduation equivalent before going to work in the lucrative jobs - not

only helped in sustaining good order, but made it possible for prisoners to undertake very high-skill, high-responsibility jobs.

"Sheep and Goats"

Classification systems abound. I was introduced to some very impressive, sophisticated examples whereby every relevant aspect of a prisoner's personal characteristics, previous behaviour, offence, etc. is given a numerical score, and a mathematical calculation determines where he will serve his sentence. I also encountered the more rule of thumb approach which separated people into three groups - based on interview and previous record - the likely predators, the probable victims, and the rest. Apparently, provided the predators and victims were kept apart, peace reigned.

What intrigued me was that all the classification systems worked.The predators were deterred from wickedness because they were convinced that the people in their housing unit would bite back. The potential victims walked the tiers confidently because they knew that those who might prey on them were elsewhere.

Clearly this is to over-simplify, and I would not want to appear to criticise some very effective work which has been done on classification. However, my strong impression was that here were definite echoes of what the guns were about - provided we all believe, it works.

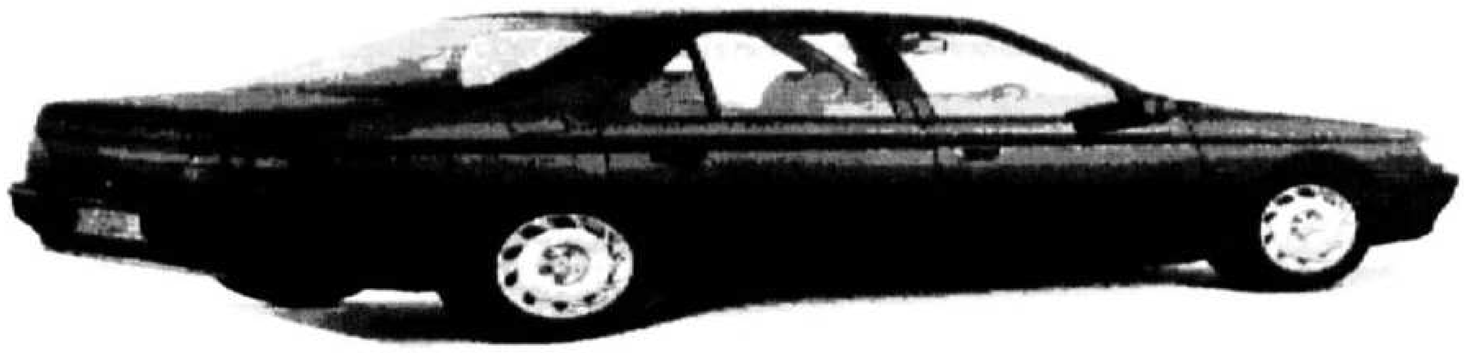
"THE DIFFERENCE"

When I spread out my bagful of American curiosities, they do seem to me to point up differences between us, differences from which we might all learn. American prison systems have experienced levels of disorder which - even after April 1990 - it is difficult for us to appreciate. What could be described as the cultural response to that (not deliberate or planned) has been a powerful emphasis on order and conformity. The guns are a highly visible symbol of that emphasis.

From their very unprepossessing history the Americans have created systems in which people feel safe. On that platform they have developed regimes and relationships which are genuinely dynamic. The puzzle is that, with a similar concern for order,in prisons which are objectively much safer, and from a less troubled history, we find it so difficult to break out of the endlessly circulating debate (often in archaic terms) about order and safety.

"POST-SCRIPT"

My bag of souvenirs was really rather small and selective. I am working on setting up a staff exchange scheme which will enable colleagues to experience not only the prisons, but the tremendous hospitality and the sheer delight of living in the country where Elvis lives and where they breed Harley Davidsons. Perhaps we can then compare our curiosity bags.



"YOU STOLE MY CAR! "

Victim and Offender meet.

John Coker
formerly Chief Probation Officer of Hampshire

There's a lot of interest in hot-rodding, rioting and death on the roads, its good news, but what about the victims of these crimes? They are overlooked.

On the hottest day this century we moved house and one week later my car was stolen. Car theft is the most common and perhaps unremarkable of crimes compared with grave personal offenses and it is one which is relatively easily overcome by adequate insurance. But car theft is a crime and therefore I had become a criminal's victim for the second time in 10 years. The first was when my boat was burgled but the feelings then were different from this occasion. Being semi-retired and in a small way of self employment my car represented a major, irreplaceable investment, I looked after it carefully because it had to last my lifetime. I had no sentimental attachment to it, nor any great pride of ownership it was just an expensive machine that got me around conveniently, comfortably and reliably. In that sense it had an intrinsic personal value unmeasurable in cash terms as is so often the case with property lost through invasive dishonesty by another. Where the crime is of a personal type, more than the item itself is lost.

I was angry and astonished that it had gone and wished disaster would fall upon the thieves without damaging the car in the process of retribution. The policewoman who registered the theft on the form specially devised for the purpose was amiable and professionally sympathetic but it was just another car theft. The police thought it might have been "torched" i.e. burned out. They were realistically pessimistic about the chances of recovery. This exacerbated my vengeful feelings towards whoever had taken the car at night from our house. However, within three days it had been found by the police following a high speed chase in which another stolen car had turned over completely; surprisingly no one was hurt. However, it was a further three days before the police told me of its recovery! The car was in a damaged and filthy condition. Police opinions differed as to whether I could drive it away; a brief inspection showed that it was basically sound but not roadworthy.

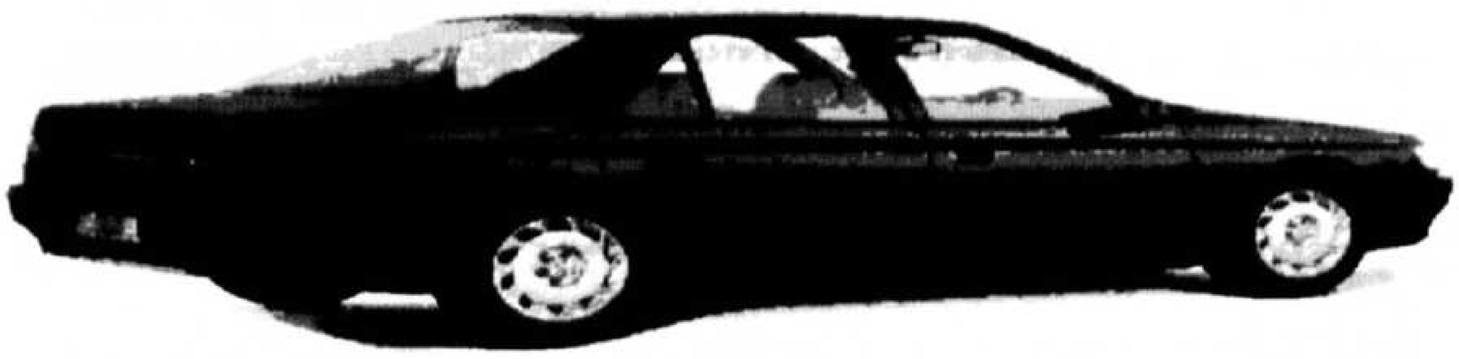
My anger against the robber was changing and I thought I would

like to meet him. I was curious about him, I wanted to tell him how I felt and I believed that by meeting him I could resolve some of the many questions in my mind; why pick on me, was there a continuing threat, were my wife and I needlessly afraid of further attacks, how could I resolve my primitive urge for vengeance, how was the crime executed and so on? There were feelings, too, of incredulity, vagueness and uneasiness like a cloud in the mind that will not disperse. Where a grave crime has been committed - and gravity is determined for the victim by his or her perceptions and experiences not the law's or anyone else's definition of gravity - then I imagine the consequences to be greater all round. I also wanted him to indicate that he would like to atone. (When I write this I feel slightly uneasy, for who is without guilt ?). I wanted to say that I did not wish him to go to prison. He had already been once before for a first offence and had learned more about the techniques of successful car theft. But my reason was that his guilt could best be expiated through reparation- a community service order, working perhaps with people who had suffered injury as a result of a motor crime.

I eventually discovered his name and that he had been put into prison to await trial. With the help of the police and the probation service and through the good offices and interest of the prison governor a meeting was arranged between me, the victim and him, the offender.

We met in the special visits room, our time was not restricted and we were given coffee by the supervising prison officer. I thought that the prison understood my intentions and their potential and that it was facilitating their fulfilment. (Prisons do not deserve the bad press they get which arises as much from a desire to be on the side of the angels, righteousness by association, as from concern; arm-chair reformers should try working in a prison or probation hostel.)

People asked me what we would talk about, fearing the complication of speaking to someone - a young criminal - against whom I had some pretty rancorous feelings and whose attitude to me was unknown, but which might be construed from the (wrong) impressions of criminals fostered by the media and public bodies of one sort or another. However, it seemed to me no more difficult to make conversation with him than anyone met casually in a pub, on a train, or in a marina. Indeed, it would be easier because we had an event in common, a mutual inquisitiveness about each other, and what the outcome might be. It was an adventure.



I explained that I was not interested in reforming him, that was entirely up to him and none of my business. I did not want to harangue or counsel him. I only wanted to talk confidentially and person to person, (more for my benefit than his). He told me he had come prepared to walk out if I had been disapproving or hectoring. As it was, we exchanged views, personal information and our distinctive experiences of the car theft. I got some understanding of his motives which helped me come to terms with the damage done. We talked together from opposite sides of the crime but from the same side of the human race.

We met on three occasions, the third in court. As a result of meeting face to face, I and my wife felt reassured by what he had said to me. I think also, that he and I saw the crime and its circumstances in a new light, to our mutual advantage.

The main purpose of the meetings with the man who stole my car was that I thought it might help me to overcome the crime and all its consequences. I do not know what he expected but clearly we had a common interest and business together.

How it affected our lives is impossible to say except that we both felt that something had been achieved, rather as one might feel after any interesting and serious encounter. Is more than that required? Perhaps we have become so used to expecting a pay-off from everything we do that we have forgotten that some things are worth doing in themselves.

Crime and criminals vary infinitely. No two offences or offenders are identical. We tend to lump them all together and treat them as if they were the same, advocating this or that new law or penalty as a panacea.

Logistic problems make it impossible to arrange for all victims of personal crimes to meet their offenders but there is a case for arranging for as many as possible to do so. Among its advantages, it would involve the public in the management of crime, help the victims and in some cases reform the offender. Government should recognise this in its philosophy and actions.

Snippets

E.WF Perry joined the Service at HMP Wakefield in 1940. He served subsquently at Parkhurst, Pentonville, Dartmoor and Bedford. The following comments came from the notebook he kept on first joining the Service.

- *Superior officers ... are entitled to a salute. When spoken to ... an officer should stand to attention.*

- *When a prisoner has to be reported for a disciplinary offence, the officer should speak the truth and say anything he can in the man's favour.*

- *In personal and private life, the officer should keep alive his interest in church or chapel ...*

- *To each prison there is appointed in an honorary capacity an educational expert ... his duties are mainly advisory.*

- *Complaints of ill health to be laid before the M.O. likewise ... anything suggestive of mental abnormality (obscenities) delusions, incoherency etc.*

- *The amount of adult crime in relation to population during the last fourteen years or so is either stationary or declining ... the treatment of boys and girl offenders is now on the right lines.*

- *there is a Government grant of 2 shillings per man for discharge.*

- *Young prisoners after serving three months [will wear] blue dress with red tie; shorts and stockings.*

- *Dartmoor is the only prison where rifles are carried.*

- *Prisoner's clothes will be aired and pressed with a tailor's iron so that ... on discharge ... may be as respectable as possible.*

- *A prisoner on the morning of discharge ... if destitute and cannot reach destination by midday ... given ... 12ozs of bread and 4ozs of cheese.*

- *All toothbrushes and trusses issued to prisoners may be retained on discharge.*

Interview

Brian Chapman is a 30 year old black man, who has just been released from prison after completing a 10 year sentence. During his time inside, he was incarcerated at Wandsworth, Albany, Brixton, Wormwood Scrubs, Wellingborough and Grendon. He is currently out on parole, and has recently joined the RRMT of HMP Woodhill.

David Wilson: As a black man do you find racism something which is common in your daily life?

Brian Chapman: *It is common, but it is quite subtle. People by and large don't rush up and start abusing you, but it is there in how people respond; in their attitudes. I'll give you an example. When a white person talks to a black person he'll likely try and use street language. What they think they are doing is trying to show you that they're OK and switched-on but what they are actually doing is revealing that they think of you at "street level", rather than as a university graduate, or a professional person.*

DW: Was that also something which was structural? Say, for example, how you were taught at school?

BC: *At school we simply weren't taught! Teachers didn't push, or create any expectation that we, as black children, could go on to college, or university. They always used to put us in the school football team, or running team, as if that was all that could be expected of us.*

DW: Well you certainly are no footballer! In terms of your dealings with the Criminal Justice System - probation, police, the magistracy - did you feel that you were being treated fairly?

BC: *I would say that there was definitely racism in all of my dealings with police - blatant racism. They would openly say "We've got you now you black bastard", and their whole culture created a feeling of being trapped, and stereotyped. They seemed to work on the view that every black person was a crook, and dangerous. I remember being in Highgate Magistrates Court, and realising that no one was listening to anything that we were saying; that no one listened to our submissions. It was a terrible time.*

DW: What about your time in prison?

BC: *I always found the younger prison staff more caring, but there was a hardcore of older staff who made it plain that they would like to kick your face in. Albany and Wandsworth were the worst. I remember at Albany writing to the ANC, and it was at the time there was still censoring of mail. The staff threw the letter onto my cell floor, and wouldn't post it. The following day one of the staff came into my cell, opened up his shirt to show me his National Front T shirt. He said, "just remember, this is the Isle of Whites".*

DW: Did you complain?

BC: *I'd no confidence that anything, other than personal grief, would be the result. The whole culture of the prison was*

white, and as far as I can remember, not one member of staff was black. In that situation no black person is going to complain. Being a prisoner is bad enough; being a black prisoner doubled your sentence.

DW: What about other aspects of prison life, such as the canteen, or the library? Did they cater for black people?

***BC:** Never, but that really wasn't the big problem. The problem was the attitude of staff. They would openly tell black jokes, and never pass-up an opportunity to comment on the arrest of a black person who had committed a crime. That is the problem, and that has to be tackled by education, and training, and recruiting black staff.*

DSW: Do you think that black people would like to join the prison service?

***BC:** Well, that is a big issue. A great many social attitudes would have to change first in the community, so that, for example, the Prison isn't simply seen as part of the "white establishment". You need to be open that there are racist staff, but that black staff would be positively supported in attempting to deal with that problem. Let's be honest, the money is good, and the job is secure, so there is really no overwhelming reason to prevent black people wanting to join the prison service, but that's why I mentioned social attitudes. It is not really possible yet to return to Brixton in your prison officer's uniform, if all your friends have experienced racism at the hands of prison officers in the past.*

DW: You've joined HMP Woodhill's Race Relations Management Team. What do you hope to achieve from that.

***BC:** I hope that what we talk about will be enforced, so that black prisoners will not feel so alienated. I hope that we can emphasise rehabilitation, and make that more than just a word. Black people, and especially black prisoners, are constantly being told that they are worthless. I hope that we can help create a regime that will allow them to feel more positive about themselves.*

DW: You've been released for a few months now. How are you coping?

***BC:** I'm coping well, remembering I did 6 years in jail. I've got my family and friends, and I'm keeping within that circle. I've got a job, and I don't live the life that I used to. It's not all easy though, and some things are hard. There are bills to pay, and appointments to keep. It is hard, but I'm pleased I'm doing it, and that I've still got my hopes for the future.*

DW: Any final thoughts about the prison service?

***BC:** It has to change. The Prison Service has got to recognise our different culture, and our different needs. They can't ignore those needs, as no matter what sentence black people get, they are eventually released back into society, and when they are they should feel positive about what has happened to them, rather than angry and frustrated.*

MANAGEMENT

GOOD GOVERNING STAFF MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES QUALITY MANAGEMENT CONVICTION MANAGEMENT ASSUMPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

by John Powls

John is governor of HMP Dartmoor, a former trainer at the Prison Service College and a member of the editorial board of this Journal.

Articles in management magazines over recent years have described managing prisons as possibly the toughest operations management job around. My personal experience would not lead me to want to argue with that view.

Our purpose statement, I believe, provides a solid basis for our work with inmates, but despite successive reviews the way we manage and lead is still not what our staff deserve.

For people who work in the service however the words of the purpose statement suggest a matching mode of management for our staff.

In other words staff rightly expect to be managed in a way which models the behaviour we expect them to show towards inmates, and are quick to perceive situations where they are apparently treated less than humanely. They will say for example, "You want me to treat these inmates with respect and work to address their problems but I am just a number to the Service". I am sure this is not unknown to organisations who treat staff similarly who work directly with customers and wonder why they get service complaints.

In the following paragraphs I argue that the aspirations in the purpose statement will not be achieved until a way of working which matches those gets into the guts of the organisation, to the working level and to the most senior levels. A significant element in this process is how managers manage and moreover how managers learn to manage in a new way. Such an approach represents a significant, though not unwelcome culture change, for Prison Service managers.

I have characterised my view of that mode of management as 'Conviction Management'. It attempts to distill what I believe about management and what I have learned from the process of change and from my contacts with other organisations. I have reason to believe that what is contained in the article has applicability to a wider audience than my colleagues in the Prison Service.

We have lived through an era in the last decade which was characterised, certainly at Prime Ministerial level, as being about "Conviction Politics".

As managers I think we are now in a decade where the environment will more than ever require conviction management (Criminal Justice pun intended). That is, management based on a set of beliefs about what works in getting effective relatedness among people at work, communicating that and carrying it through with the zest and enthusiasm that comes from conviction. I deliberately use the word relatedness rather than relationship, this is not about whether you and I like each other but how we work together to a common purpose.

I define management as being "getting things done, in an organisation, economically, **by other people**". Of course this is almost self-evidently true since once an organisation has got beyond a certain size DIY becomes a physical and mental impossibility. My

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

views on conviction management relate mostly to the human resource element of the definition, though they are relevant to the rest since my view is that getting the rest right is difficult in the long term without that element. If that element is right, however, the rest is so much more achievable. This is especially so in a world where responsiveness is a key issue for organisations.

If you're interested in quality for example, and who isn't, the real quality issue is not the application of Total Quality Management or Just In Time. These are vital disciplines in themselves, but secondary to the set of attitudes that lie behind those disciplines; the personal commitment to quality that comes from conviction.

PROFESSIONAL CARE

The issue here is caring, not in a wet or sentimental way, but in a professional way about your people, the work and resources you are accountable for and for the outcome of your actions. Organisations cannot care, people must care. If you don't care you can't expect it of others.

My belief is that the key to being effective as a manager is about what you do, that enables other people to get things done. I stress the word "do", because in my experience people trust and believe in what you do not what you say you will do or what the mission statement says. The power of this effect is the same whether the message you are giving by what you do is positive or negative. Remember, you have choice about what you do and moreover, about how you do it; also, if you exercise that choice consciously, you may choose another way than I suggest. To be effective though you must believe in your choice, it cannot be forced on you and be successful in application.

Because what you do is so important you must act in the required manner consistently, persistently and believably. People can spot phonies, flavours of the month and the latest initiative. Unless you believe in what you do, ie, have conviction, you will not succeed, nor will you have the necessary strength to persist when life becomes difficult or you are challenged. You will certainly meet difficulties and challenge, and temptation to give way through self-doubt.

Inevitably when you are moving from one style of management to another, particularly when one style has prevailed for some time you will enter a transition phase which is perhaps the most trying phase of all since people will be guarded and unsure yet wanting to go forward. This phase can be very demanding of you since people will look to check everything out with you whilst they are mapping out a new frame of reference for themselves. This is true even if no one liked things as they were before. Guard against your impatience and seek to build up a critical mass of people who can operate in this new environment, your area or organisation can then flip over into a new management culture.

VISION AND DIRECTION

Effective management also requires vision and direction. Not only about work and outcomes but about style. Conviction helps clarify vision and aids communication of that vision to others. If you are not

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

clear about your vision then how can you expect other people to help you achieve it; they can only help by guesswork or by accident. They will be able to tell if you mean it, and if you don't why should they.

What follows logically from all this, of course, is that you can't manage anyone by remote control. In order for people to see what you do and for the effect to work they have to be able to see you often enough to get the message and believe it. Effective management behaviour also provides a role model to follow and the behaviour will spread. The more it spreads the easier your working life becomes and the more you approach critical mass. Conviction gives you energy. Your energy motivates others.

The benefit of management being about behaviour is that behaviour can be learned and practised. Behaviour is the application of skills to personality so to be effective you don't need to be special or a certain sort of person, you need to learn appropriate skills which sit happily with you as a person and get you the results that you want. The skills must sit happily with you as a person since holding down a management job is enough of a strain without being an actor as well. The behaviours required are necessarily simple, not simplistic, interpersonal skills. Simple solutions are always best and best understood. It is the cumulative effect of a suite of these simple skills and behaviours which brings big results. When I talk these things through with people they often say, "That's common sense". I hope that's true but though it may be common sense it is all too infrequently common practice, though I see effective managers everywhere showing these skills to a level of unconscious competence. Commonly prevalent management cultures don't allow people to admit these 'soft' skills and spread the word lest they seem less than 'macho'.

MONTGOMERY OF ALAMEIN

Of course in these circumstances the best trainers of staff are their line managers. We have to get rid of the image of training as a punishment or implied criticism and substitute training as a reward. In my view if you can't train you can't lead or manage effectively. To quote the personal philosophy of one of the great leaders, Montgomery of Alamein, "My underlying principle of training my officers is that my role as a leader is to instruct them so that they can teach their men and thus be leaders in their own right. I train my officers to succeed, even in retreat. I have my officers train my troops specifically in the techniques we will use for the next battle. My troops understand this and have confidence in a special technique to fit a special problem or opportunity."

He was ruthless in removing those who could not or would not do this. It was indicative of the prevailing attitude in the senior echelons of the Army in those days which still persists in some quarters today that Monty was regarded as somewhat eccentric in his views.

Conviction alone is not enough of course. The world's greatest tyrants through history have not lacked conviction. In the concluding section I would like to outline 10 points which for me, seem to work in managing people to get things done. Things which I am passionate about, the roots of my conviction. These are as much

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

about how to do things, as what to do and apply in every task situation even an operational crisis. To go back to politics again, it was oft quoted that Ministers had differences of style, not substance, when they appeared to be telling a different story. In my view of management, style is substance.

The following articles each in their own way address facets of the issues I have raised.

Phil Wheatley, Area Manager, focuses these principles into the themes of governing whilst John Fisher, Head of Psychology at HM Prison Full Sutton examines the themes of cultural change and structural change within the prison service. Cynthia McDougall, Head of Prison Service Psychology with Martin Fisher and Philip Willmot from the psychology unit at HM Prison Wakefield deal with the strategies which may be used to assist staff in the process of change and Graham Smith from the Prison Service College offers the 'Quality Management' approach currently much in evidence in industry and commerce as a way forward. Finally Alan Rayfield, Area Manager, challenges some assumptions about leadership and its relationship to systems.

GOOD GOVERNING

Phil Wheatley
formerly governor of HMP Hull and now Area Manager, East Midlands.

INTRODUCTION

I have tried to describe in this paper the key features of good governing. I do not regard governing as simply a task for the Governor; I believe it should be a team task. The lower down the organisation of the prison the ideas and actions which I am describing as good governing exist, then the better for the prison. What I am absolutely sure about is that no establishment can work well unless the senior management team is working cohesively, and this must include a shared style of operation.

CLARITY OF PURPOSE

For any organisation to be effective, including a prison, there must be clarity about the purpose of the operation. To some extent the Prison Service has sought to clarify this by producing the Statement of Purpose. This is good in itself but needs translating into a more precise and concrete description of behaviour required from the staff of the prison. This means the governor and his management team must be absolutely clear about what they are doing and they must ensure all parts of the operation of the prison match the overall purpose. In developing this clarity of purpose other staff and disciplines should be consulted. It is vital that we set achievable targets grounded in the realities of prison life.

Governors need to be precise about who the prisons customers are and be committed to achieving the best quality service for those customers.

This means defining who are the customers, eg courts, public, prisoners, prisoners' relatives, official visitors and other agencies.

The Governor and his team should be clear who the customer is in each area of their operation and then strive to give the best possible service to that customer. This involves discovering what customers actually want and establishing close enough links with them to ensure that what is provided matches their needs.

Identifying what our overall purpose is and who our customers are should enable management to give staff clear messages about what sort of work is required from them and what constitutes good quality work. Too often staff are given little direct guidance on how to do their jobs or,

even worse, receive contradictory directions from supervisors and managers. It is unfair and unproductive to leave staff to sort out the inherent conflicts in jobs with no direction.

ENCOURAGING GOOD WORK

Once quality work is defined then great stress needs to be laid on encouraging such work. There need to be methods of identifying such work, and rewarding it. The more publicly we praise good work, and the more we celebrate successful work, the better.

Staff should be treated as our greatest asset. There should be proper care for their health and welfare and personnel policies which recognise the importance of treating staff well and ensuring that the staff who work best get whatever rewards are available. In order to do this successfully, rewards must be identified and management must control their distribution.

Underpinning this approach there must be a willingness to deal with poor staff behaviour, offering help and advice if necessary, but clearly showing that slip-shod and bad work will not be tolerated.

LEADERSHIP

Good leadership is essential and must be consistent with the overall purpose of the establishment. Governors must set achievable and proper standards for staff behaviour and those same standards must be demonstrated in the way all managers carry out their work.

In times of crisis, governors must be able to lead in a way which communicates clearly to staff that they can cope with the crisis and develop effective strategies for bringing the situation under control. Speed of decision taking, clarity of communication and a willingness to share the risks which staff are facing in handling the incident are all crucial factors. The strategies devised and the staff actions required to end any incident must be consistent with, and not undermine, the overall purpose of the establishment. The aim in dealing with any crisis must be not just to end the crisis but to return the prison to normal functioning with as little damage as possible.

ACHIEVING RESULTS

Successful prisons are interested in achieving real results. The emphasis is on action and getting things done. This means governors should work on resolving problems and achieving objectives with a sense of urgency and show a willingness to experiment and learn from experiments.

This style of operation requires a genuine 'open' door policy from all managers and relies heavily on the encouragement of informal face to face communication. Staff at all levels in the prison should be encouraged to contribute their views and ideas on how the running of the institution could be improved.

It is essential that Governors get around and see what actually happens in the prison thus gaining a reputation for being interested and understanding the real business of day to day operations. Hierarchical behaviour, for example insisting on formal terms of address and cultivating social distance from staff, is likely to be unhelpful in this. First name contact with staff is

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

helpful; a self-confident governor grade will need to rely less on formal status and will wish to encourage informal exchange of views and ideas with other staff.

To be an effective governor grade and know what is actually happening in an establishment requires all grades of governor to know about manpower deployment and finance. It is not sufficient to delegate these areas in their entirety to other grades of staff; and working knowledge of the technical aspects of the institution's operation is essential for all managers. Also essential is an understanding of the complexities of the inmate sub-culture and a clear grasp of how a prison is kept under control and secure.

Governor grades also need to be involved in the industrial relations strategy with a view to ensuring that they understand what impact their actions in any given situation may have on industrial relations in the establishment.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND SOLUTION

The aim of all the elements of good governing, as described above, is to identify as soon as possible problems and those areas where improvements can be made. Solutions should be devised and implemented as soon as possible.

Not all problems are best handled by managers taking instant decisions on the basis of their existing knowledge. Many problems are best handled in small teams which include staff with direct personal knowledge of the problem areas. If such teams are used, then they should be small, they can be multi-disciplinary and they must work to tight deadlines. Any recommendations flowing from such groups must be handled quickly so that change can be actioned promptly and staff can see that their work is valued and useful.

In general experimentation should be encouraged and it is possible in most areas to 'try' solutions. If the solution does not work, the experiment can be closed down and we can try again. To encourage this approach management at all levels must tolerate mistakes and failures. This is essential if change is to be encouraged. In the Prison Service we tend to be intolerant of mistakes and reluctant to take risks. In fact managers can afford to encourage risk taking providing it does not involve a threat to security or overall control of the prison.

As an aid to this process of encouraging innovation and change, managers should single out people with ideas and be prepared to encourage them and, if necessary, champion their ideas to ensure that action is taken on them.

CONTROL SYSTEMS

Effective management information systems are needed to help identify good work and to aid problem solving. Given the security nature of our work there is also a need to build in checking systems to ensure security procedures are fully carried out. However, if the impetus for change and improvement is to be maintained, control and checking systems need to be limited to what actually matters. Such systems should be as simple as possible and do the task they were designed for. Control systems should

never be an end in themselves, nor should they be used as a way of pinning the blame for disaster on junior staff when it should properly lie with senior management.

CONCLUSION

The world in which prison governors are operating is becoming increasingly difficult. Recorded crime is increasing sharply. Prisoners are serving on average longer sentences. More prisoners are charged with, or convicted of, serious crimes of violence. Trade Union activity, disputes and threats of industrial action remain at high levels. The national resources available to the Prison Service in a low growth economy are limited and asking for more from the Treasury requires hard and persuasive argument. The intervention of the legal system in imprisonment grows year by year. Pressure groups are better organised and informed and the media increasingly interested in our work. Ministers are stating publicly their disenchantment with the Prison Service and its management.

In such a difficult climate it is vital that prison management is fully effective, proving responsive to changing circumstances. The management style proposed in this paper provides in my view the best way forward using management development outside the Service to find ways of capitalising on our existing strengths.

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

STAFF MANAGEMENT IN THE PRISON SERVICE

A CULTURAL CRITIQUE

John Fisher is Head of Psychological Services at HMP Full Sutton having held a parallel post at HMP Highpoint.

INTRODUCTION

From the May Inquiry [1] onwards, we have seen a growing concern with the need to make fundamental changes to the running of the Prison Service - fuelled by a more general Government-wide desire for tighter management and efficiency. [2] That changes were necessary is probably not in dispute. More questionable are the process and nature of the changes that resulted, with their clear primacy of structure and finance over personnel and cultural aspects.

THE PROBLEMS OF DRIVEN CHANGE

Bureaucratic organisations, by their structure and in-built bias towards the status quo, are both unsuitable for and resistant to the implementation of change. Recent changes in the Prison Service have been implemented in a "top-down" directive fashion-fast but very prescriptive [2]. Not only have the various reorganisations and management changes been effected in this way but also a growing number of smaller "initiatives". Such an approach leads to little "ownership" or cultural change, particularly at the lower levels of the organisation - often what is achieved is mere compliance. Despite pretentions to the contrary, there is little real sense of "shared purpose". The mismatch between new initiatives and additional resources adds further cynicism. There are seen to be too many "high priority", "resource-neutral" initiatives, often "crowding out" local initiatives for which there is more staff commitment. An additional problem is the lack of coherence and coordination between the various changes and initiative.

THE NEW STRUCTURES

The structural changes that have occurred have not really healed a history of staff division. "Fresh Start" brought group working but functional isolation and lack of coordination. Officers were often portrayed as part of the problem rather than the solution. There is the divisive (and ironic) "unified" and "non-unified" split, marginalising and demeaning the contributions of specialist staff. Within the unified grades, the "uniformed"/"un-uniformed" divide is as wide as ever, particularly in the absence of the Chief. "Reorganisation" has yet to resolve the policy/operational rift it set out to bring together. Still the majority of policy is out of the operational management line - and anyway many of the problems may be as much cultural as structural. A related point is the too close dependence of the prison service on administrative generalists and ministers : management by the centre removed from establishment

reality. The role of the Area Manager is still emerging. Certainly there is a closer relationship with establishments than with the old Region. However, there is a danger now of Governors being overmanaged as well as the possibility of area (or directorate) idiosyncrasies emerging. Despite the useful DIP grouping many specialists feel they should have had a more discrete representation in the final structure.

THE NEW MANAGEMENT MODEL

The general thrust of changes has been towards a "divisionalised form" [3] with an emphasis on devolved but accountable and efficient management. The actuality in establishments is perceived as enhanced accountability and responsibility rather than increased delegated authority and autonomy. There is a greater emphasis on objectives and their measurements (in which process most staff have little real influence), as well as continuing bureaucratic/ procedural control of most work methods and content. The "objectives process" is generally seen as a means of criticising efficiency and as a basis for resource cutting. Much is unwieldy and time consuming. The over reliance on bureaucratic quantity measures as "performance indicators" leads to the measurement process being seen as a task in its own right, separate and often detracting from the operations concerned - with the very real temptation for upward looking "impression management" rather than making actual improvements.

STAFF MATTERS

Until very recently, there has been a low priority given to personnel matters within the prison service. Management styles have been characteristically reactive, formal and critical, placing a low value on good interpersonal relationships, thus producing a detrimental effect on "organisational health" [4]. Managers have been largely perceived as aloof and uncaring. Communications have over-relied on ineffectual, one-way prescriptive paperwork systems. Staff training is written off as "non-effective hours". Officers have had their built-in training hours reduced, and there is no allowance at all for "non-unified" grades. This is particularly problematic at a time when there is a rapid change in roles and a high level of inexperienced new staff. Management grades, in particular, have their skills largely assumed with no clear expectation of what is required of them. "Better Jobs", the Communications Survey and the Training Review are all to be welcomed. Ironically, "Better Jobs", in particular, has all the hallmarks of the usual top-down initiative. There is considerable cynicism regarding the implementation of such initiatives. We need concerted and resourced changes in attitudes and skills as well as systemic change. The difficulty is how to move beyond aspirational rhetoric and bureaucratic compliance to real, effective change.

AN ALTERNATIVE ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH

There is a need for a much greater emphasis on the role of human agency and cultural aspects of the organisation. We need to revive interest in the "soft Ss" - style, skilled staff and shared values - as well as developing the "hard Ss" - strategy, structure and systems [5]. The basic model should be that of staff as active agents who make decisions based on their values and beliefs : self-determination within cultural constraints [6]. This stresses the important role of cultural or personal control. Staff are encouraged to identify with or "own" a shared organisational purpose and to gain internal satisfaction from achieving such goals. Clearly, given the nature of the prison service's task there will always be a need for at least some control by output measures and bureaucratic procedures - it is rather a matter of shift of emphasis and greater integration.

A SHARED CULTURE

The need for a shared purpose has already been well argued [7], although appears yet to be achieved. A common culture has not only to be clearly defined but communicated to and identified with by staff. The latter process involves linking individual tasks, organisational goals and

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

personal values. Existing statements of aims/purpose and functions/objectives may be useful, however there is also a need for concise, general principles (for example, Dunbar's "Individualism, Relationships and Activities" [7] to act as "means models" [6] against which to judge the usefulness or otherwise of organisational activities. Managers have a key role in the transmission of organisational culture [8]. By their behaviour they model organisational values. If they are always seen to be preoccupied with paperwork and budgets, then that fact sends clear messages to staff, which are somewhat different from the official "mission statement". I would suggest a demonstration of the high value placed on interpersonal relations as being a more befitting value for an organisation so clearly concerned with people (prisoners and staff) - together perhaps with a "bias for action" [5] instead of endless papers and discussions.

INTEGRATION AND INVOLVEMENT

One of the more important implications for management style, as well as for structural aspects, is the need to further staff integration and involvement with the organisation as a whole. In terms of communications, staff need to understand and relate their work to coherent overall aims and the part played by others. There is a need to go beyond immediate "need to know" job-related information or rules, to given reasons and context. Communications, particular face-to-face communications, need to extend right down the organisation and to allow lateral "crosstalk". Staff need to be recognised for their valuable idea-generating abilities. Creative individualism and innovation should be encouraged. Communications should be two-way. Attempts should be made to provide opportunities for genuine staff participation in plans and decision-making affecting immediate tasks, or wider issues where appropriate. However, managers and staff need to be clear about the purpose of any consultation. It is also useful to offer opportunities for job rotation and joint working between different staff groups to enhance understanding and coordination.

RESPONDING TO EXISTING IDEOLOGIES

People do not join the Prison Service culturally innocent and, in the absence of a clearly formulated explicit organisational culture, they will develop their own. What individuals value or see as the aims of prison establishments will reflect their underlying ideologies about crime, work and life in general. It would be naive to believe that these views will be similar across the diverse range of prison service staff. There may be a number of different, perhaps competing, ideological groupings amongst staff. Unfortunately differences are often highlighted at the expense of considerable communalities. Obviously open communications and mutual understanding can help redress the balance and lessen some of the real differences that do exist. Sometimes it is possible to develop superordinate constructs that reconcile apparently competing values - for example, "care" and "control" come together in Dunbar's concept of "Dynamic Security" [7]. However more direct, positive and specific responses to particular ideological demands may also be required. This process might be conceived as a translation strategy to link a variety of sets of values held by different staff groups with common organisational goals. For example, it might be possible to integrate the views of prison officers who have a "justice" approach to crime with the aims of prison education by (justly) offering prison educational facilities to staff [9]. In some cases the differences that exist may be too great and it may be easier for staff to take on the values of their particular unit rather than those of the organisation as a whole. There will probably always be some staff whose values are such that involvement with the organisational culture will be limited to instrumental compliance.

SELF-DETERMINATION

The model is that of self-determination within cultural constraints. Having examined the cultural aspects, I turn now to the self-determination element. External control of staff behaviour is very demanding of management effort and resources. Where such mechanisms exist,

subordinates tend to rely on them and to test their limits. Given clear organisational goals and values with which staff can identify, there can be more emphasis on internal or personal control of behaviour. This can be seen in two ways. Firstly, in terms of self-motivation. People will work towards internalised goals with little external control other than feedback on goal attainment - a sense of achievement, responsibility, or expertise are their own rewards. Secondly, in terms of discretion over work methods. Given clear targets and an understanding of the organisational context in which they occur, staff can be given more autonomy over how to achieve them - thus reducing the need for detailed rules and work procedures and offering a greater flexibility and adaptiveness in the face of changing circumstance. There are two reservations about autonomy in the second sense. Some staff may not want more discretion or higher levels of responsibility and feel threatened by the prospect. Also, some task methods may need to be standardised or coordinated (although this should not be assumed) reducing the scope for individual discretion. In these cases expanding job variety may be the answer - extending the range rather than the level of responsibility and perhaps the discretion to move between different tasks.

JOB ENRICHMENT

We need then to consider whether jobs can be redesigned to enhance individual control and make greater use of staff's talents. It may be possible to use appropriate delegation. The terms of any delegation need to be clearly agreed by managers and staff. Delegation of means (by gradual stages and to varying extents) but control of ends is probably the best. Alternatively it may be possible to expand the variety and scope of the job. Delegation and variety may be combined by giving a staff member a specialist responsibility in addition to more routine tasks. The use of interpersonal skills and the development of a particular body of knowledge are often particularly satisfying. All staff should perhaps have a yearly interview with their line manager to discuss their job description with a view to "enriching" tasks.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Not only should staff skills be recognised and utilised, they also need to be developed. People need to feel competent if they are to become more self-determined. They also need a sense of progress. Training both recognises staff skills as important and provides the means for developing them. It needs to have a much higher priority (not just "icing on the cake" when staff are spare); it needs to be ongoing (not just at the start of careers or new jobs); and it needs to be relevant : able to be put into practice at establishments (not just filling course places). Training costs money, but then so do inexperienced and disillusioned staff. In the broader timescale, the planning of staff experience and job rotation needs to be systematic, equitable, democratic and sensibly timed. More generally, a more efficient, caring approach to promotion and postings would make career moves a more positive experience and reinforce a more positive organisational culture.

OBJECTIVES

Contracts and the objectives process (at all levels) are, I am sure, here to stay, but these can perhaps be made more responsive to "people" factors. Used appropriately, a hierarchy of objectives can usefully reinforce corporate goals and values, and the inter-relation between the parts and the whole. Ideally, they should be negotiable, concern "ends" rather than "means", and focus on quality as well as quantity of delivery. The whole process should be introduced with staff involvement not by imposition. In the prison service there is little real room for staff discretion in the setting of routine objectives - much is effectively predetermined at corporate level or above. Even establishment, functional and personal improvement objectives are often predetermined by top-down pressures and priorities, although there is at least scope for manoeuvre here if there was not such great competition for limited resources. The detail of current objectives

and baselines, together with the plethora of headquarters prescriptions, often amounts to control of means not ends. As argued before, this may be necessary by the nature of the tasks, but should be challenged.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

In terms of measures or "performance indicators", these often appear to attempt to quantify (or ignore) the unquantifiable. We need to develop measures of quality. Performance indicators, particularly at senior management level, could be streamlined to concentrate on deviations from standards set - allowing for more detailed, time-limited "focusing in" investigation of problem areas where necessary. Both negative and positive feedback or achievement should be communicated down the management line. "Grass roots" staff could be involved in the auditing of (corporate) objectives. This would not only check baselines against "grass roots" reality, but would facilitate staff involvement with the contract process, enhance liaison between different staff groups and add new responsibilities and variety. A scheme of this sort has recently started at HMP Highpoint with a positive response from those staff involved.

STAFF FEEDBACK AND APPRAISAL

With a more culturally-sensitive, self-determined approach to staff management there is less need for supervisory monitoring, checking and control of work - particularly the "means" aspects. However, staff do need ongoing (not once a year) feedback on their performance and, even given internal satisfactions, specific praise given promptly and where it is due is a powerful motivator. The same cannot be said of criticism, which, if not handled carefully, actually reduces performance. If criticism is necessary, it should always be given in a problem-solving framework. Generally, staff need to feel supported as well as supervised. In a bureaucracy such as the prison service some type of formal staff appraisal is probably inevitable. The current ASR procedure is too infrequent and concentrates on rather subjective, vague rating scales. Assessment of performance against agreed standards would be preferable - and would certainly be in keeping with current thinking about the objective process. However, to the extent to which staff are involved in job baseline setting, any direct links between achievement of these and pay could lead to very cautious target setting. Given that routine job baselines are unlikely to offer much scope for staff participation, then perhaps this is not a serious problem, as long as the more negotiable developmental (improvement) objectives are, as now, kept separately from the main ASR record.

THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

In many ways this is all another version of an exhortation for "Better Jobs". The crucial issue is how to translate paper aspirations into a cultural reality. As already discussed, managers have a key role in the transmission of organisational values and culture. Cultural transmission is more about doing than saying: words are unconvincing. To act on cultural values in a wholehearted way requires some internalisation of or identity with those values on the part of managers. This is not likely to be forthcoming unless their own managers are modelling (and rewarding/resourcing) these values - and so on up the management line. So the question becomes one of leadership from the very top. Senior managers must communicate values clearly in a way that staff can relate to them and back up their words with actions. Unfortunately, this has not been the experience of the prison service in the past. This is primarily as a result of the involvement of "career" civil servants whose values and skills may not be particularly appropriate to the running of the prison service (a point recently argued by Brendan O'Friel in his address to the 1991 Prison Governor's Association Conference [10]). Managers, like all staff, are also more likely to identify with organisational goals if they are personally involved in decision-making ; and in training and other activities that embody the values required.

BUDGETS AND RESOURCES

If managers are to "practise what they preach", they may also have to "put their money where their mouth is". Arguments about efficiency notwithstanding, the government will get the prison service it pays for. It is unrealistic to expect to bring about the sort of cultural change envisaged by initiatives such as "Better Jobs" at zero cost. There may be longer term gains in terms of reduced sickness and turnover and higher productivity, but the main benefits would ultimately be the quality of service delivery not savings. The solution I believe lies partly in better forward planning so that planned developments can be linked into the Public Expenditure Survey process and at least be bid for.

CONCLUSION

I am convinced that lasting change in the Prison Service will not be possible without changing and utilising the organisational culture. Clear shared goals and values within which staff are afforded opportunities for self determination will not only enhance staff motivation and satisfaction but enable the service to be more flexible and adaptive in achieving its goals. How to bring about such cultural change, and particularly the issue of leadership, should now become a priority concern of the Service, rather than continual preoccupation with the organisational structure.

REFERENCES

1. *"Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the United Kingdom Prison Services", HMSO 1979. (May Inquiry).*

2. *A useful account of recent management history is given in: Evans R, "Management Models and Performance Monitoring in the Prison Service", Prison Service Journal, No. 78, 1990.*

3. *Mintzberg H, "The Structuring of Organisations", Prentice-Hall, 1979.*

4. *Cox T and Smith T, "Organisational Health : Prison Service", Prison Dept., 1990.*

5. *The "7 Ss" model ("Staff" and "Skills" are separate in the original) and "attributes of excellence" are given in : Peters T J and Waterman R H, "In Search of Excellence", Harper and Row, 1982.*

6. *These ideas are elaborated in the context of regimes in : Fisher J and Towl G, "Man and the Regime : A Means-Model Approach to Functional Integration", Prison Service Journal, No . 77, 1990*

7. *Dunbar I, "A Sense of Direction", Prison Dept., 1985.*

8. *A detailed analysis is given in : Schein E H, "Organisational Culture and Leadership - A Dynamic View", Jossey-Bass, 1985.*

9. *Staff ideologies and prison education are discussed in : Towl G and Fisher J, "Education in Prisons : Ideology and Change", Prison Service Journal, (in press).*

10. *O'Friel F B, "Improving Top Leadership in the Prison Service", PGA Conference Paper, 1991.*

Staff responses to ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Cynthia McDougall
Martin Fisher
Phillip Willmot
are psychologists working within the prison service.

Before reading about organisational change, try to solve the following problem:

Two train stations are 50 miles apart. At lpm on Sunday a train pulls out from each of the stations and the trains start toward one another. Just as the trains pull out from the stations a hawk flies into the air in front of the first train and flies ahead to the front of the second train. When the hawk reaches the second train, it turns around and flies toward the first train. The hawk continues in this way until the trains meet. Assume that both trains travel at the speed of 25 miles per hour and that the hawk flies at a constant speed of 100 miles per hour. How many miles will the hawk have flown when the trains meet?

Some of you, when presented with this problem will have said,"Oh, good, I love problems like this". But, be honest, the majority of you will have thought, "Oh no, this is a maths problem, I hate these. I never could do them at school.There's no point in my trying, it's just a waste of time. What are these psychologists playing at". If you had negative reactions about tackling this kind of problem, then you are no different from a large group of college students who were faced with the same task (see*). Their negative thoughts occurred throughout the 5 minutes allotted to the task, and indeed, despite the fact that the problem requires no sophisticated maths skills, a large number of the students got it wrong. (If you have not already done so, see if you can now solve the problem and check the answer given at the end of the article. You see, it's easy.)

The above exercise illustrates how negative thoughts, often based on past experiences, can affect our approach to solving problems, and how anxiety about our inability to complete a task can stop us from looking realistically at the problem to see if it is really as difficult as it looks.

A similar response may occur in our working lives when we are asked to perform a new task or change our way of working. It is very natural to have concern about whether we will be able to make the change, how we will compare with others in operating the new systems, and whether we will find the new way of working disagreeable. All of these anxieties can stop us realistically appraising the changes we are being asked to make, and lead us to make assumptions that the task is much more difficult than it really is.

Another quite normal reaction to impending change is the "worst case" analysis of the situation. The introduction of the Inmate Grievance Procedure at Wakefield, Hull and Lindholme, gave a good illustration of this "worst case" analysis. There was much expressed anxiety that the new system would produce an impossible amount of work, with inmates abusing the system, and flooding staff with requests for written replies to complaints. We all could think of one or two inmates who would do this, and went on to assume from these "worst cases" that many inmates would behave in the same way. In reality we have found that there are one or two inmates who are flooding in requests for written replies, but by and large the rest of the inmate population has not presented these problems. Worst fears about the increased level of work have therefore not been realised. In anticipating change therefore we must guard against imagining that the worst events we can think of will be typical of the whole situation.

Having given some reasons why resistance to change might be unnecessarily negative, it has to be acknowledged that organisations and their employees often have different aims. While the organisation as a whole may need to change,individuals within the organisation have different priorities, so that, for some people a change will be seen as necessary, exciting and progressive, while for others it will be seen as unnecessary and threatening to everything they want to preserve in their jobs. Managers are the link between the people who make the decisions and the staff whose day to day work may be most affected by these decisions. The way managers prepare staff and help them through a change will determine whether the change will be effective.

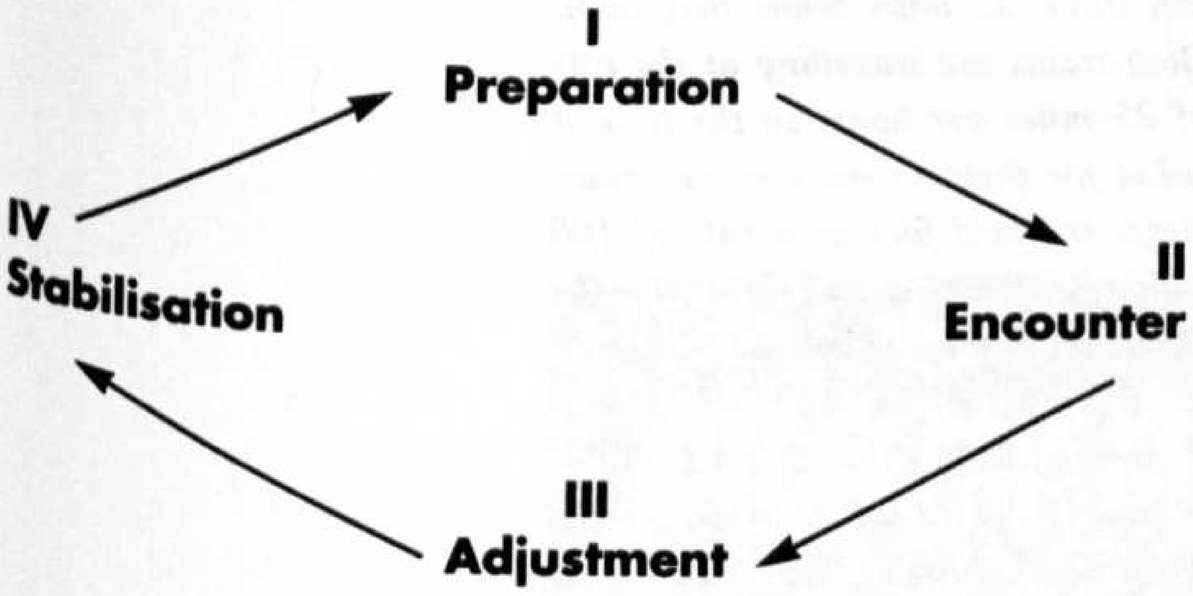
THE EFFECTS OF CHANGE ON STAFF

As already stated, organisations and employees often have different aims. The main aims of the prison service are to keep prisoners in custody and to look after them with humanity,while staff have more personal requirements such as financial security, personal development and satisfaction from their work. These personal needs may not be in dispute with the aims of the organisation, and obviously the organisation and its employees depend on each other if they are both to achieve their goals.When changes are introduced by an organisation they are usually explained in terms of the benefits and effects they will have on the organisation as a whole or on particular groups within the organisation. Effects of changes for the individual members of staff are not usually described, as these are likely to be different for different people, depending on their attitudes, personality and ability to change. If the change appears to fit well with the individual's needs and goals, then the change will be seen as a positive thing. On the other hand, if the change does not appear to fit in with his needs and goals, then he will feel that his interests are not being considered, he will feel threatened, angry, and his work will suffer.

THE CYCLE OF CHANGE

When change is being introduced to an organisation, there are a number of stages necessary to the process. The

following cycle shows those stages:



and each of these will be discussed.

PREPARATION

Although the cycle of change appears to start with 'preparation', it can be argued that the starting point is really 'stabilisation' to an earlier set of circumstances. This stabilisation militates against future change especially if that stabilisation has been in place for many years as was the case in the prison service before Fresh Start.

No matter how good an idea is in terms of improving the running of the prison service, if staff see it as decreasing the quality of their job, then it will be very difficult indeed to make them feel enthusiastic about it. It is important for managers therefore to explain fully the need for change and encourage realistic appraisal of how this will affect individuals, to avoid the exaggeration of pitfalls and negative assumptions already described. Although negative aspects of change tend to come to mind first, positive aspects of the change need to be brought out and new approaches encouraged. The manager should however listen sympathetically to the legitimate fears of staff and where possible take their interests into account. If these can be accommodated by imaginative working within the new system, this could benefit everyone. If change is to be successful it is important that it is not simply imposed, but that staff should be supported in dealing with uncertainty and be assisted in adopting a more flexible approach to the work.

ENCOUNTER

The period when change is first introduced can create uncertainty for everyone. It can be seen either as a challenge or a problem and is less likely to be successful if viewed as a problem.

Inevitably there will be initial difficulties and, if staff have not been adequately prepared, when difficulties are encountered they may lose motivation and become pessimistic about the change. Management support and encouragement are essential at this stage, and, as sense is made of the new role, stress will decline.

ADJUSTMENT

As staff become more familiar with what is expected of them, and uncertainty about the job is less, a much more realistic assessment of the new approach is possible. A certain amount of 'fine-tuning' can take place, so that ways of working can be improved, to the benefit of the organisation and the individual. Staff at this stage will have a much clearer view of the new system, and, if they are committed to making it work, will begin to feel comfortable working within the changed environment.

STABILISATION

In the stabilisation stage, most staff will have adapted to their new roles, and become effective contributors to the system. They know what is required of them and feel secure in what they do. If however the individual's adjustment to the new role has not been effected by this stage then it is unlikely that there will be an improvement over time, or that the individual will be fitted for his changed role. This is obviously a situation to be avoided, and management support at earlier stages in the cycle may avert such a consequence.

CONCLUSION

Change can be met with anticipation or resistance. The way we are prepared by management and prepare ourselves for change can affect our progress through the stages of the change cycle. Even if staff have personal reservations, once a decision has been made, a positive and flexible approach to the change is much more likely to achieve a favourable outcome for the individual and the organisation. After all, it might even make things better!

Answer to Bird and Train problem:

Since the two train stations are 50 miles apart and the trains are travelling toward one another, each will travel 25 miles before they meet. Both trains are travelling at the rate of 25 miles per hour, so the time it takes for them to meet is one hour. Since the bird flies at a rate of 100 miles per hour, it will fly 100 miles before the two trains meet.

** Bransford, John D and Stein, Barry, 5. The Ideal Problem Solver. Page 6. Published 1984. Freeman & Co, New York.*

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The solution for British Industry

Graham Smith is a trainer with the Prison Service College

There is no doubt that the pressure is on. You can see it everywhere you go whether as a customer or as a supplier. Great efforts are being made by companies to supply quality goods and services, give value for money and therefore repeat business and customer satisfaction. It's not perfect but it is getting better. That is the perception - but is it the reality and is it happening because we want to improve or are we being pushed?

Being pushed is a great motivator and motivation is a dynamic management approach that requires constant attention. It always has and always will. Living the quality message is, as Dr Smith rightly says, a philosophy. It is a culture all of its own to be experienced by all levels of the organisation and not just left to be perceived by the customer. Everyone has to want it, need it and live it.

This then is the real challenge to British Industry during the next decade. Things are on the one hand changing so fast but on the other not fast enough. It can be done - indeed it must be done - there is no real alternative. The 1990's have all the signs of demanding quality management approaches in order to survive but to what cost?

I have been brought up to believe that quality equals expense. "You get what you pay for" and all that stuff. Nowadays however I see things differently probably because I am involved with training managers to manage. More and more I talk with them about the quality aspects of each part of the manager's job. The problem with my approach is that coming from the training section the quality message is all very well but it has to be adopted back on the job and at all levels. It requires a passion and enthusiasm from the top down that involves everyone with emphasis at the basic relationship within the 'them and us' syndrome.

In industrial relations training I tell managers that 100% of all problems are their fault. No-one ever argues when I qualify this statement in terms of quality, ie

We have poor selection procedures

We don't train employees properly

We don't appraise good or poor performance

We don't deal with conflict effectively

We don't involve employees with policy or change

We put up with un-professionalism and low standards

The list goes on, pointing out the obvious, yes, but also raising questions about what we, as managers, can do about it. The irony is that the answers to many of these problems in terms of quality are at virtually nil cost, ie

Selection of people with appropriate skills and knowledge

Rewarding genuinely good standards of performance

Using good inter-personal skills at all levels

Displaying professionalism at all levels.

I often use the quotes "People listen to what managers say but they believe what managers do" and "What you measure is what you get - no more, no less."

British industry needs to get to grips with these two statements in order to go forward.

The quotes and improvements above are possible at little cost but there are profound benefits to be gained. We do not need to read libraries of books or spend thousands of pounds on training to see the way forward. We already know! All we have to do is adopt this more dynamic approach to management.

Quality managers have always been around - I know because I have worked both for them and with them. The trouble is that they were generally self-motivated individuals, working to their own personal standards of performance and professionalism. They were rarely living the company ethos of quality management because either there wasn't one or if there was it was not communicated to them effectively. It was therefore a matter of personal pride and enthusiasm in producing that part of the product or service for which they were responsible that made them quality managers. Shortage of materials, staff, equipment and time, were problems enough but they always had the ability to keep enthusiasm high and the team, group or section together in readiness for getting back to normal.

British industry must get its act together - and fast. It must

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

start pushing rather than being pushed. Yes, it has all been said before but will we (or can we) do it?

The answer is YES! It doesn't happen overnight but it will happen if you want it to happen. Quality management requires a constant audit of performance not just at the product or service end of the organisation but at each and every phase of its production. It is said that 9O% of managers lack the interpersonal skills necessary to carry out the audit process when dealing with people. We know this is true and so whether or not you want to call in quality management or another concept to improve that record doesn't really matter as long as it is improved. The alternative is to stay as we are which is not an alternative at all.

The pressures are increasing to improve. It does not necessarily matter what title you give it so why not "Quality Management"- at least it does focus the mind on a way of solving the problem. There are too many driving forces for change that cannot be ignored. Labour shortage predictions, 1992 entry into the European markets, expensive borrowings and competition might be enough but for some companies the law is beginning to sniff around 'Corporate responsibility' when failure has occurred.

As a customer I am getting more of a taste for quality and as an employee I am questioning more and more the qualities that my managers display to me. I will believe what I see them do, which in turn will stimulate me to apply similar tactics and values when I deal with my subordinates.

Quality management must not be confused with purely value-for-money products or services. They are in my view only part of the overall picture. Changes are required at all levels. Training will help but companies must adopt the quality ethos dynamically whether it is by mission statements, corporate objectives or whatever. This period of what I call 'arrested development' in Britain must end now. No one will ever say it's going to be easy, just difficult.

Employees have to be won over. Trade unions have to be convinced, along with shareholders. Objectives have to be clear, realistic and achievable via a systematic quality approach.

Quality management is here to stay by whatever name we choose to call it. It's already been adopted by our competitors. We can do better!

CONVICTION MANAGEMENT

John Powls

In the opening section I described the background to the development of the term **'conviction management'** and its roots in the changes of the last 5 years in the Prison Service.

When I coined the term "Conviction Management" I had a set of beliefs strongly in mind which are central to effective management in any context but particularly so in the Prison Service where at every level we manage people whose business is people management. Simply set down those beliefs are:

1 Management is getting things done in an organisation, economically **by other people**.

2 All managers lead by example whether they know it or not. The example can be good, bad or indifferent.

3 People believe what you do not what you say.

4 The key to effective management therefore is about what you do which leads other people to get things done.

5 The effective things that you can do are simple though not simplistic behavioural skills which are more than cumulative in effect when brought together.

6 Because they are skills they can be learned and practised. You don't have to be a special type of person to be effective you just have to do the right things for you in the right situations.

7 Because management is about what you do and what you are seen to do, it must be performed in interpersonal situations. You cannot manage anyone by remote control.

8 People can spot phonies, the flavour of the month or the latest initiative. They can also spot when you are committed. They will react accordingly. Therefore to be effective you must believe in what you are doing, ie, have conviction.

9 You will need your conviction to sustain you through self-doubt, detraction difficulties and hard work. It also helps you have more fun and job satisfaction because your successes mean more. Conviction helps you to care; not in a wet or sentimental way but in a professional way about what you do and the outcome of your actions.

10 No one has all the answers. We should all be learning all the time and trying to improve our performance. Once you stop you become a liability. Training is therefore part of a reward for being a manager, not a punishment for not performing well.

I am personally committed to this approach. Conviction alone is not enough, however. The following describes types of behaviour which seem to me to have worked and continue to work in getting people to get things done and the implications of all of this for training and the role and behaviour of trainers.

VALUE/EXPENSE

Official reports often say that, "Our staff are our most valuable resource", when they mean, "They are our most expensive resource". Think about how you treat something which is really valuable to you, not just expensive. My fundamental belief is that the vast majority of people who work in organisations want to make an effective contribution, to be involved, to be part of a success and are responsible and can be trusted. This needs to be encouraged, harnessed and given opportunity. All too often we build our systems, particularly personnel systems, on the opposite assumption.

Wherever you can, act as personnel manager to your own staff and take an interest in them as individuals. In my experience this brings a quicker positive response from all staff than any other single act.

On a personal level always seek to add value yourself, to add something distinctively yours and worth as much if not more than your cost. If you don't, what are you doing there? Helping individuals achieve potential helps the whole organisation achieve its potential.

A colleague who is now very senior in the Prison Service and who was an early hero for me once told me, "One of my proudest moments as a manager came thankfully early in my career when I was a junior governor theoretically in charge of a lot of older, wiser and much more experienced staff. They worked hard for the team effort and were gracious enough to train me to do my job well enough to get me promoted. I came to leave at the same time as a member of my staff who was retiring after thirty years in the job but who was still lively and involved. At our joint leaving do he pressed a sealed card into my hand and said to take it as advice for the future. I thanked him and opened it later. It said, 'In the last couple of years you helped me and gave me some time when I needed it. I have never felt more valued in all my years' service. If you can keep this up you won't go far wrong.' I have always remembered that and still keep the card in my desk drawer many years on".

INTEGRATION/SYNERGY

In these times we have to get the best out of what we've got. In my view we cannot get people to even recognise let alone approach their best where we take a narrow view of their abilities or by constraining them within their current specialist functions.

To quote Tom Peters, "Any organisation with more than 4 people on the payroll is essentially a hopeless bureaucracy". In any large organisation, any form of structure hampers, choose the least hampering version and then set systems in place to break across structure. Take a multi-disciplinary approach to everything and always involve the working level staff.

Encourage synergistic thinking. Exercise your role as an integrator and use information to be a 'cross-pollinator'. Develop the widest range of personal contacts you can within your organisation and elsewhere; challenge your staff to do the same.

One of the paradoxes we have found in re-organising our structures is that the clearer structures become, the better vertical teamwork becomes and the more divisive the structure becomes laterally between functions as empires were built. I set out to address this by insisting in my group of functions that every group, project team or committee was set up on a multidisciplinary approach and including working level staff. Steadily as project reports or minutes of meetings begin to seep through they began to include positive comments on the pleasures and power of using a multi-disciplinary approach and results accrue accordingly.

If there are any goodies around, ie trips out, conferences, extra training etc, these used to be a perk for managers only. We now seek to choose the most appropriate representative for the establishment regardless of rank or role.

COURTESY/INTEGRITY

Both nil cost items which actually achieve results. This extends not just to personal courtesy/integrity but to organisational courtesy and integrity, eg, if you absolutely have to make rules play by them even when it hurts and make the same rules apply to everyone so that you don't end up demeaning people by default or on purpose.

If you want to know what people think, ask don't guess. Never take silence for assent.

It is often said that, "I treat people as I would wish to be treated". That would be OK if everyone was me. We are all different and need to be treated differentially to get the best out of us, in other words treat others as they would wish to be treated.

These are perhaps the simplest of all the skills but perhaps the most profound. All that is required is that you get to know your people well enough so that you know what works for them and vice versa. Simple observation backed up with talking to clarify will get you what you want to know. Every contact should be a learning experience.

Simply being courteous brings enormous results and when modelled effectively soon sets a tone which makes an enormous difference to a working environment. All of us still have a long way to go in organisational courtesy terms. Much of British Industry is still riddled with rules and practices which demean people despite some of the small but growing number of good examples around. This is not only a turn-off for people but it stunts their contribution, making them feel less than they are.

A few years ago we wanted to acquire a desk-top publishing system to make our printed material more effective. I thought the simplest thing would be to ask the woman who would be its primary operator to select a suitable system. So I went to see her boss. He said, "But she can't. She's just a typist". I talked to the woman herself who was obviously interested but eventually also came out with, "I don't think I can. I'm just a

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

typist". Several days of persuasion later she was assigned to the project. She contacted suppliers and other users, evaluated systems, produced a brilliantly presented and argued evaluation (done on the machine she had selected of course) got the finance approved, set the tendering arrangements, beat the price down from the suppliers unmercifully, organised maintenance and backup contracts and training for her colleagues and an open day for other staff to show what the machine could do. We now have a superb facility which I doubt we would have had, had we listened to "Just a typist". The view of typists has altered in that bit of the organisation at least.

The highest form of courtesy is to listen. First you must present yourself in such a way that people will talk openly to you. The simplest way for an individual or an organisation to begin to be perceived as having integrity is doing what they say they are going to do when they said they would do it and not seeking to 'wriggle'. When you speak or communicate do it plainly and directly. Don't speak for posterity or speak in code. (If you want to know what that means look at the last set of minutes of your management meeting or management/union meeting.)

LEADERSHIP

People often talk about leadership by example as though there was a choice. You are doing it whether you think you are, intend to or not. Take the paradox view, that the leader's role is a supporting enabling role and carry your authority lightly. As an illustration of what I mean by this look at your organisation chart, you know the type of diagram which by lines, dots and boxes shows the manager at the top and the working level at the bottom. Of course, what is really important to the organisation is how well the people at the working level deliver the product or service so turn the diagram upside down to show those people at the top and the various levels of management supporting. The really effective leaders are the ones who work hardest and best to support and enable their staff to deliver not the ones who worry about judging how important they are by the number of dots and lines below them on the chart. I have used this as an illustration with many groups and it seems to help in thinking about teamwork and professional relatedness too. People focus on what is actually important, achieving delivery.

The most effective leader I have worked for used to take the same approach always when I or my colleagues went to her with an issue. She worked hard and was herself busier than any two of her staff but she would give you time and would always say, "OK, let's remind ourselves of what we're trying to achieve, and where this issue fits in", then follow up with, "How can I help?" We always knew what she stood for, what was required of us and where we were going and when she said she'd help she did, and quickly. That was a marvellous leadership example to follow with my staff.

POWER/CONTROL

Once you get people engaged and involved and delegated to, managers have traditionally worried about power, control and status. Power is a strange

phenomenon; real, effective power runs away as soon as you try to hold onto it tight. You achieve real power by giving it away, by empowering others. Seek to develop control and grip by ownership and dispense with tyranny at all levels.

If you saw someone in the street giving away ten pound notes, assuming that someone was not deranged, you could assume they were rich. It is the same with power, authority and control. If you delegate these effectively people will rightly assume that you are powerful and have authority and control. In fact the effect will magnify since the five or six people who work to you can effectively control much more collectively for you than you can do yourself. The effect is magnified again when they pass it on to their staff. The focus, however, is still on you.

The other assumption made if you follow this process is that you are secure and confident in your position, this will spread to others too. The Prison Governor I learned most from in this regard went through this process with myself and my colleagues. He was a quiet, unassuming man, but yet no one ever doubted who was in charge. One day after about eighteen months together our team was sitting chatting about developments and one of my colleagues said, "Governor, I've just looked at your job description and the last job you delegated to me seems to be the only thing there that isn't already delegated. What will you be doing with your time from now on?" "Dear boy", came the quiet reply, "I shall be Governing." And indeed he was.

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

THE OTHER HALF OF THE CONTRACT

Managers have traditionally been very assiduous at writing highly detailed job descriptions specifying what staff are required to do. That misses the other half of the contract what staff have the right to expect of their manager.

As managers we have many customers including our own staff, peers and our bosses. Why don't we treat them as customers, find out what they want (not always straightforward) try to supply it, then supply more, different and better. Write managers' job descriptions to include this information.

Take feedback from your staff on how you are doing against these indicators and act in a way which allows them to let you know how they feel without being threatened. You should then begin to find out what is actually going on in your organisation and eventually your staff will act to deal with problems instead of them hitting you unannounced.

Many of the items on this list were developed from asking my staff what they expected and needed of me. This is a continuing debate. Obviously you need to judge the time and place to do this. Sometimes in the early stages of negotiation a third party facilitator is useful. Some people have used colleagues, others consultants. I have used a professional acquaintance from ACAS who I knew could be relied on to give me the truth, unvarnished but in a usable form.

MANAGEMENT AS A MINIMALIST ACTIVITY

It is my considered view that most organisations are

overmanaged. I have been pleased to see the trend towards flatter organisational structures of late but we still have a long way to go. Sometimes the first constructive step to take is to get out of the way and lift the weight of management off your staff, then get behind them and support. One of the more telling notes I have seen written by a prison officer said, "The project finally succeeded despite management intervention"

If there are to be less but more effective managers then rewards for working level staff should be geared to the responsibility they can take on and the learning they do. Reward systems should be geared towards giving individuals a personal stake in the enterprise and recognising contributions to its purpose. Managers, particularly good managers, are transitory; this needs to persist beyond individuals and get into the guts of the organisation. So management must be more of them and less of you.

I have to go outside my own organisation for this example. My best new experience in management this year was to visit Judith Donovan Associates, a rapidly expanding advertising and mail-shot business based in Bradford. Judith herself is a bundle of energy and fun and is into so many other activities linking business development and the community in Bradford that it is surprising she has time for anything else.

Management at JDA is certainly minimalist, the structure is very flat, no more than three levels. She recruits good quality people, not because they know the industry necessarily (in fact she often recruits specifically because of no previous knowledge of the industry and often changes people's functions internally to get a fresh view), she develops them with a first-class personal programme in which she takes a direct interest and then challenges and supports them to give their best and rewards their efforts.

Best of all she gets out of the way and lets them get on with it and they give her remarkable business performance. You can practically feel the place humming with activity from three streets away. Most remarkable of all she has retained this atmosphere whilst growing from a three-person outfit to a several hundred person outfit.

In such an aggressive sector it is hardly surprising that Judith's biggest problem is other agencies trying to poach her staff. Personally she is still trying to get more by intervening less.

CELEBRATION/FUN

Contrary to what one occasionally reads in learned management texts dealing with strategic planning the management world that I know is full of uncertainty, ambiguity and risk. Once you learn not to be frustrated by that it's OK. Successes can be few and far between so learn to celebrate them widely. Celebrate the successes of others wider and louder than your own.

Work should be fun, yes, you remember fun. I certainly work better when I'm enjoying myself and so does everyone else I've ever asked. Sometimes though you can only see the fun in retrospect.

I was talking to one of my staff recently about this area and she recounted a story of her previous manager. They worked at an establishment near the west coast. "One day" she said, "We'd just had a successful try out of a new system of work but were a bit stalled on how to go forward and going round in circles. All of a sudden he says, 'Let's draw some pictures in the sand', so we all piled in the cars and went to the beach. It was freezing cold but we all had a laugh splodging and skimming stones for twenty minutes or so, then we got to talking and solved the problem in ten minutes drawing diagrams with a stick in the wet sand. It was the quickest and most productive management meeting I've ever been at. The only problem was, for a while after we got back I couldn't get rid of the guilty feeling for having enjoyed myself when I was supposed to be at work. I've got over those feelings now though."

TIME

Rene McPherson once said that, "Once you put on the hat of manager you give up honest work since the higher up the ladder you go the less work you do which is of direct economic value to the organisation. The only thing left is how you spend your time." Spending time is a tremendous activity since it dispenses your most valuable resource, yourself. Think how to use it flexibly and effectively. A small amount of time spent usefully with other people can bring large effect.

Don't plan on large amounts of time, contrary to some time management approaches, my experience of management is about brevity, fragmentation and variety. Learn to love it.

The best discipline I gave myself in this area was to stop having shouted conversations with people over my shoulder as we passed each other in a corridor on the way to the next bit of work. I decided to stop for a couple of minutes, exchange social pleasantries, ask the other person what they are involved in and show some interest and then say a little about my current pet project. Total time invested two to three minutes but the effect is out of all proportion to the time spent. You acquire and pass on lots of information, find out what's going on and get to know people. This works.

INITIATIVE

Always have an attitude of constructive dissatisfaction. Encourage others to champion their causes, always champion the cause of innovation yourself.

You are the prime controller of the initiative of all those people who work for you. Your view of the world expands or contracts theirs. Be open and an effective learner and learn from anywhere, anything and anyone and provide an environment where people can use initiative and teach you. Allow people to learn from you too.

Read Rosabeth Kanter's 10 rules for stifling innovation and stop doing all the things that she lists.

Remember that the rear view mirror is highly ornate and lovingly fashioned with rose tinted glass. It always affords 20 x 20 vision but, useful though it is, it does not offer the best view for driving

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

forward. Avoid 'ritual dancing', doing things or having things structured in a particular way because its always been like that or because, 'That's how I like it' is not a good reason for doing anything. Your staff know that, and suffer from it, even if you don't. Your biggest motivator and also a nil cost item is to give people opportunities.

There are all sorts of thinking exercises you can go through to expand your own horizons. One of the great initiators of change I have known said to me once, "You know, all it took for me was to realise that I didn't already know everything that was important about the business. So I started to sit and listen to my people talking and they had more good ideas than I knew what to do with. Secretly I was staggered by the creativity and lateral thinking going on, but pleased that I didn't have to think it all up myself. Now I just tell them, 'Surprise me!'"

All of the above operates in a context, the bigger picture. Every time you set out to get others to do something remember that, that something isn't an end in itself, it is part of the bigger picture both in terms of the aims and the work of the organisation and in terms of conviction management, so think before you act as to how you will use this opportunity to behave in the way outlined above and thus sustain and strengthen the message. Always find a few minutes and a few people everyday to give a short speech to on conviction management. Act like a contagious carrier, infect as many as you can! You cannot be everywhere and others will act as a role model too. You can do this at whatever level you are at in your organisation with your people.

What I am proposing is not easy nor achieved overnight, nor a recipe for instant success. It is a process for months and years not for days and weeks. I have never believed in the 'one bound and he was free' prescriptions for managers. You will only believe it if you try it and get results too. So be prepared for success to take time.

CONVICTION TRAINING

Perhaps it almost goes without saying, but my view is, that to get conviction managers you need conviction trainers, that is trainers in tune with that culture who believe in what they are doing and model the skills, knowledge and attitudes required. For that time that the training is going on the trainer is in the manager role to those being trained and must act accordingly. Without this training will be ineffective, marginal, wasteful and probably seen by people as an unnecessary distraction from 'the real work' rather than a help to get things done.

The other principles also apply. All management training should be undertaken and delivered in a multi-role, multi-function, multi-disciplinary way. Knowledge and skills-based activities should be seen as ways of addressing attitude issues which should be dealt with openly.

Identifying and training managers in core competencies is OK if all you want your managers to be able to do is jump through a prescribed set of hoops a little better. If you want conviction managers who will help you to drive your

organisation forward their training must address the issues of why's and not just what's. If the why's aren't established, discussed and accepted managers are unlikely to see the value or relevance of the what's beyond 'Is this required of me'.

If training is to help people get things done it follows automatically, of course, that the trainers must understand and believe the why's. The answer to why is never because somebody else, however high-ranking, says so. Trainers need to be at the hub of the organisation.

If not, core competencies, then what? It will not have escaped the majority of you reading this magazine that the simple, not simplistic, interpersonal behaviours I have referred to as key to conviction management are key to the role of trainer. This gives trainers a central and leading role in such culture change and wise leaders will recognise this. Training in a specialised functional sense however, must also be a minimalist activity.

In a conviction management culture the prime trainers of people should be their manager in the role of mentor. In my view therefore, the central themes of work done by trainers for managers should be active, participative and to assist them to learn to be effective learners and trainers. Other core competencies can then be added and by a variety of cost effective training methods. In fact, in that culture training is likely to be in demand as people begin to be motivated to develop and are rewarded for doing so. In other words, a learning organisation develops and convictions about that become part of the way things get done, a reward, a celebration and fun!

My own personal journey is only just beginning but in my view, going back to the lady I mentioned at the start, There Is No Alternative and I make no apology for expressing so directly to you what I feel to be true or for the rhetoric. Rhetoric is intended to convince.

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

ASSUMPTIONS

Alan Rayfield is an Area Manager having previously governed HMP Long Lartin and HMP Parkhurst.

In an ideal world we assume that there would be no need for any of us to make assumptions; we would be rational, calm, objective and govern our lives by decisions made only after thoughtful consideration of the evidence. However, the world is not like that and probably never will be so long as human beings remain on this earth. Because we are irrational, agitated, subjective and governed in the main by fear we shall make assumptions and live by them as the only way to survive the awfulness of reality.

Assumptions are comforting: they prevent us from having to think for ourselves or having to examine our behaviour. They and their first cousins, custom and practice, are the main psychological defences we have to defend our peace of mind from the uncomfortable truth. We seek the company of others who hold similar assumptions who become our natural allies in the battle for survival. Thus by their presence and through the system of values we hold in common the world becomes a safe, predictable place. All who dissent are considered deluded or dangerous and kept at the frontiers of our lives. Most of us are formed in this way and we have much to lose if our assumptions are challenged and found wanting. Our comfortable existence would be threatened.

With the exception of the Pol Pot's of this world Governments of every political hue in every state usually reflect the commonly held beliefs of their people. Their policies remain remarkably consistent over the years whatever the nature of that government. The Czar would recognize the problems facing his successors and the Manchu emperors would have applauded the authorities response to Tiananmen Square. In the liberal democracies government policies are based upon the assumptions to be found in the beliefs of the ruling parties. If one examines what governments actually do as opposed to what they say they will do then there are marked similarities in the actions of various political parties because they share certain basic assumptions regarding their own nation and its place in the world. For example the foreign policy of France has changed little in four hundred years despite revolutions, dictatorships and democratic changes of government.

However, government servants have to make day to day decisions and administer the machinery of government and the only guidelines they have are precedent, pragmatism and the ethos of the ruling party. Being conscientious they try to act as the minister would have them do and before long assumptions are being made about what the minister will or will not support. In this spirit submissions are made to him or her which will reflect the policy of the government or, more likely, decisions are made

at lower levels which need not be brought to the attention of the minister. These decisions will be made without specific political guidance (since manifestos are long on rhetoric and short on evidence) but based on an assumption about what the minister might decide were he or she to be asked. By now we are a long way from the manifesto and policy is being made in the name of the minister by those who assume that they know his or her mind. Although to be fair much departmental policy remains the same whatever political party is in power.

There are no exceptions. All departments build their policies upon actions necessary for their own survival, the minister's known wishes, past practice, available resources and the prevailing tide of public opinion. One cannot condemn this practice; it is the way of the world. The Prison Department falls into line with everyone else and even in the mythical golden age of the Prison Commission policy was based as much on assumption as on evidence. In those days, however, Home Secretaries did not bother themselves with prisons or prisoners except when executions took place. Thus policy arose from such assumptions as that good citizens could be created out of delinquents if they were taught a trade and thus acquired the work ethic. Similarly upright young men were recruited from the middle class who, led both staff and inmates in the hope that their example would brush off on the led (the "goldust" theory). These assumptions may not all have been realised but they created a humane, lively service infused with optimism for the future.

These assumptions seem naive and oddly innocent now but they sprang from an honourable tradition which believed in the continuous progress of man on this planet and contained solid grains of truth about human behaviour and motivation. They sprang from the self-confidence of the society that produced them and no political compromise or bureaucratic anxieties were involved in their creation.

Perhaps that is the heart of it. We are no longer self confident, certain of ourselves and the future of our nation. The steady, onward march of progress has been halted by war, economic uncertainty and the outcome of evil political ideologies (although one should be glad that we can still recognize evil when it appears). We no longer assume that man is in control of himself or his destiny and uncertainty, doubt and fear now guide us. Our policies presently are governed by other assumptions. Fear of failure, of exposure by an irresponsible media to an ignorant public, of European bureaucracy and also of the fallibility of man. We are humane but no longer aspirational; we have glimpsed the pit and no longer see the stars. Is it any wonder that we seek refuge in ever more weighty manuals, detailed legislation and instruction. Anything to keep the emptiness at bay. But we cannot lead our people by systems alone, we cannot better their lives by more hygienic conditions if we have no purpose other than the maintenance of the system itself. We must continue to live in hope and build on that hope for without vision the people perish and that is an assumption we should all support.

MANAGEMENT
GOOD GOVERNING
STAFF MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
QUALITY MANAGEMENT
CONVICTION MANAGEMENT
ASSUMPTIONS

STAFF APPRAISAL IN THE PRISON SERVICE

A WAY FORWARD

David Wilson is governor of HMP Rochester, Kent and this article draws upon work he began when taking part in the senior management studies programme at the Prison Service College.

I think most members of the Service would agree that the time is ripe for a major overhaul of our staff appraisal system. Backlogs, overmarking and other problems have been topics of conversation for long enough. Many people are ready to point a finger at everyone but themselves, but this article will argue that it is the system that is at fault rather than individuals.

The Lygo Report, in just half a page devoted to appraisal, focuses on some the symptoms of malaise. However, it says nothing about the causes, except that the form and guidance are overcomplicated. And it contains little on solutions, apart from the important suggestion that the performance assessment form should be separate from the promotion form.

THE PURPOSES OF STAFF APPRAISAL

My belief is that the causes of the problems have something to do with a particular tradition of public service organisations. In contrast to the private sector, there is often a lack of clarity concerning the overall aims of the organisation. To put this in the kindest way possible, there may at least be a number of expressed aims, as in our own mission statement. Confusion of purpose may also be found in individual areas of activity such as staff appraisal.

Our Annual Staff Report (ASR) guidance notes start promisingly enough with a simple definition of the purpose of the report as 'to provide information...which can be used to help improve performance and to make the most of the job holders' abilities.' This definition is unfortunately complicated by the acknowledgement that reports serve a number of functions, 'including determining performance-related pay, assessing suitability for promotion and postings, and the appraisal of staff serving a period of probation or trial.'

DISENTANGLING TYPES OF APPRAISAL

A number of writers on staff appraisal have argued for separating different types of appraisal, and in particular for separating performance reviews from those concerned with potential, promotion or pay. Furthermore, many private sector organisations have put this principle into practice. Why should such separation be important?

The clearest answer that I have come across is in a book co-authored by Gerry Randell(1), one of the leaders of a seminar on staff appraisal at Newbold

Revel not long ago. Randell asserts that, in order to motivate people, assessment of performance, for example through the use of box markings, and improvement of performance should be segregated. He argues that it is unnecessary to 'measure' behaviour before trying to change it, diagnosis and 'treatment' being all that is required.

I would suggest that measure ment is actually a barrier to critical examination of performance. How often do reportees focus on their box markings (and regard Box 3 as 'adverse'!) rather than their actual performance? And how often do we overmark (unjustifiable use of Box 2) with the understandable excuses of not wishing to damage morale or cause defences to be erected?

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASR SYSTEM

One reason for our slowness to recognise the virtues of separating types of appraisal may lie in the fact that the Civil Service has had a staff appraisal system longer than most other parts of the public sector. The system's well-established nature appears to have inhibited any effort to reconsider basic principles or react to new ideas. Over the years, responses to major new initiatives with implications for staff appraisal have tended to add to the complexity of the existing system, assuming the implications have even been acted upon in the first place.

Thus the introduction of individual objectives in 1985 took the shape of the unintegrated addition section to the ASR which is not submitted to Headquarters. Initiatives concerning corporate goals - the Annual Performance Review (APR) and Governors' contracts - were not directly linked to the ASR system at all. Performance related pay was implemented by feeding straight from existing ASR box markings.

APPRAISAL BASED ON SETTING OF OBJECTIVES

What is the best way forward? I start from the assumption that the main aim of our appraisal system should be to improve the performance of the Service as a whole by improving the performance of the individuals within it. The commonest approach in other organisations is to base performance appraisal on work objectives rather than, as in our case, on job descriptions. Although some sort of opening statement of the purpose of the job is needed, traditional job descriptions are increasingly seen as too woolly to be of much practical use. The frequently bland comments on fulfilment of the job description on page two of the ASR appear to bear this out.

I suggest, therefore, that objectives should form the basis of appraisal and should no longer be relegated to a subsidiary section of the ASR. At establishment level, they should derive from the contract with the Area Manager. The contract itself is far too cumbersome a document to provide a basis for appraising the Governor. Experience In other organisations suggests that only about six key objectives should be set, although each may group a number of items. They would have to reflect those aspects of the contract of most importance in each particular year, taking account of both maintenance (corporate) and improvement objectives. Where

appropriate they should be quantified.

The same principles would apply to objectives for Functional Heads and Intermediate managers. For many other staff, both in establishments and at Headquarters, the prevalence of teamwork should be recognised by the setting of group as well as, or instead of, individual objectives.

DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

Appraisal of performance with respect to work objectives leads naturally to consideration of the personal needs of staff. The current ASR is so weighted towards assessment that there is insufficient provision for identifying short and long term training and development needs. Any new system must include this. The performance review could continue to be conducted as an annual cycle, with at least one intermediate review focussing partly on personal needs and goals.

PERFORMANCE PAY

It is now necessary to turn to a large fly in the ointment, performance pay. I have strong doubts as to whether merit pay is appropriate at all to our setting. In the prison service individual performance is very dependent on the performance of others, unlike, say, the job of a salesman. Furthermore, important areas of performance, and therefore overall performance, cannot be quantified. This distinguishes us from profit-making organisations, which stand or fall on financial criteria. Can it really be said that performance pay schemes improve the performance of those of us to whom they already apply? It could better be argued, I think, that interest in people on the part of their managers is a much greater motivator.

However, merit pay schemes are probably easier to introduce than to get rid of and the tide is still flowing strongly in their direction. Given that they are likely to continue in existence, and indeed become more widespread, their relationship to the rest of the staff appraisal system is of crucial importance.

In line with the views already expressed on assessment, the method of performance review based on objectives that I have outlined should not involve box markings or anything similar. Information and comment on how far objectives had been achieved would suffice. However, in determining merit pay, assessment in some form would have to continue, which makes a degree of separation from the performance review important. The latter would be best conducted by the appraisee's line manager, with higher level managers then drawing on that review, as well as taking account of other factors, to determine a score for the purpose of the pay review.

PROMOTION

Assessment for promotion similarly needs to be conducted separately. For many staff with no wish for, or immediate prospect of promotion, the current annual assessment seems a pointless and possibly damaging exercise. Assessment should therefore be carried out only if and when a person applies for promotion. Apart from reducing the workload, this would have the advantage that reports would be up-to-date. At present, even when all reports have been submitted, the latest one that the

promotion board can consider may be more than a year old. The submission of annual assessments also produces pressure to mark people 'fitted' prematurely in anticipation of a requirement for more than one such marking.

Consideration should also be given to greater use of extended interview procedures. Too much weight is given to the existing interviews, which can test only a narrow range of qualities.

PROBATION AND TRIAL PERIODS

Special appraisal arrangements could continue for new staff who need to be assessed during their period of probation, as well as for those staff whose level of efficiency suggests they might be candidates for early retirement or dismissal. In the latter cases, line managers would need to signal the need for a trial period with special documentation.

SUMMARY

To briefly summarise, I suggest that our first need is to find a means of introducing performance reviews that are based on objectives and which avoid box markings. The second need is to disentangle the various purposes of appraisal, especially the three main ones - performance improvement, assessment for financial reward and assessment for promotion. One way of differentiating these purposes is to say that they are chiefly concerned with the present, past and future respectively.

CONCLUSION

The ideas in this article represent a radical departure from our present ASR system and will be controversial to some. However the scheme outlined has certain similarities with some of those recently introduced in other parts of the public sector such as the National Health Service and universities.

I see no reason why reform could not be considered in the context of our present organisation structure. That said, agency status would no doubt facilitate the development of more independent personnel policies. The further nudge towards agency status provided by the Lygo Report is therefore all the more welcome.

REFERENCE

(1) *Randall G.A Packard P. Slater J. 1984 Staff Appraisal - a first step to effective leadership Institute of Personnel Management*

Scene from here

Brixton Prison

Under this title we invite someone who is not a member of the Service but who knows us well to contribute a reflection on some aspect of our work. Alison Liebling has spent some time with the Service researching suicide and it is on that work that she bases this piece about Brixton prison.

Alison Liebling
Research Associate, Institute of Criminology

Last week my colleague Helen Krarup and I visited Brixton prison, taking with us a handful of students from various courses and three Fellows from my college in Cambridge. I had been invited by its governor, Andrew Coyle, who knew of my interest in suicides in prison. He knew that a research project was being carried out, and felt, like other prison governors, that the problems being faced by Brixton were important and relevant to any such study. Like other prison governors, he was told that had the time been available, Brixton would have been included in the research in some way. We chose those establishments which were involved in the research for their 'representative' nature. Brixton stood out as having a particular nature, and perhaps a particular kind of problem. In this case, an exception was made: we decided to make the time. Our project is almost complete, we are running out of time, resources and energy after almost two years of interviewing, discussing, observing and listening in more than twenty prisons. But such was the scale of their experience at Brixton, we decided to take one more day out of our already rather unrealistic time-table.

The visit was combined with an unconnected motive on my part: I had been asked so many questions about my research here by my non-criminology colleagues, with such intense interest, I offered to take two or three Fellows along to introduce them to some of the realities of prison life. There were two aspects of the prison world that I wanted them to see. First, that it was a human world, with the whole spectrum of human nature and feeling evident in a most unusual way; that the environment of a prison cannot be judged by its physical conditions alone. To describe a prison, you have to articulate this aspect of its nature. My natural response to their questions was to ask whether they had ever visited a prison. None of them had. This is hardly unusual, but then neither was the level of their interest. Their very real interest deserved a response. Secondly, and related to the first point, during some of our conversations I had hoped they would have a chance to see that prisoners were people, and that incidentally - so were the staff.

With the governor's permission, the day was arranged. Two features of the day deserve putting on record. The first is that the staff went out of their way to make sure that our visit was a full and valuable one. We were divided into small groups, given different governor 'guides' throughout the day and we were encouraged to spend as much time as we could talking to prisoners and staff as we worked our way around every inch of the prison. We were shown the best and the worst of life in Brixton. Staff on the hospital talked with relief about suicide prevention, about changes, developments and improvements in their facilities, their training, and their confidence. Officers talked about their experience of inquests, their exposure to

criticism over recent years, and their sense that somehow a change of mood higher up had led to a real turn around in the possibilities for change. Support was forthcoming, and at last, progress was being made. One prisoner in the new hospital ward talked of coming from hell (the old hospital, upstairs) into heaven. The key change? His duvet, the cleanliness, and a complete change of attitude amongst the staff. The staff were happier, he said; when they are happy, we are all human.

A recent article by Skegg and Cox in the Lancet illustrated how in New Zealand the prison suicide rate increased strikingly (more than six-fold) in Auckland, over and above any increase in numbers, when restrictions were introduced on the transfer of psychiatric patients to mental hospitals. This sort of abrupt increase cannot be accounted for by the increasing number of 'at risk' prisoners alone. The effects of such a policy change on staff morale, facilities and condition for other prisoners and the sudden imposition of unrealistic expectations on hospital and other staff to be able to cope with such a drastic change, is like the experience of Brixton in reverse. Last week, they were proud to tell us that there had been no suicide in the prison hospital for over a year.

The second feature of the day for me has emerged since our return. My three colleagues from a Cambridge college have not stopped talking about their visit. They learned so much; the range of emotions they felt was a surprise to them and to me, the seeds of change that have taken root in their perception of the world of crime, punishment and prison has been marked. The meeting together of an establishment wanting to throw open its doors, and a small group of inquiring outsiders seems to have sent a ripple through a very old and, some would say privileged college, if my reports from those who are feeding the 'ripple' back to me are correct. I would like to think that an important barrier has been broken. What emerged during the day, with quite a force, was something like compassion. As the prison service chaplaincy would tell us, compassion changes both the bearer and the receiver. Watching the process in motion, and being a part of it, is the kind of experience that has made me into a prison suicide researcher.

The televised documentary about Brixton, shown shortly after our visit, reinforced the sense of tragedy and urgency, mingled with concern and narrowly averted despair, which we all witnessed. As we heard on this programme, the root of the problem lies outside, not just in the courts, but amongst ourselves, in our ignorance and our lack of involvement in a world hidden behind concrete walls. From where we sit, the prison world must be one of the easiest to misunderstand. One or two other establishments subject to fierce criticism in the press have been opening their doors, of late. The consequences of this openness has been a marked change in the approach of those allowed access into prison, particularly from the media and campaigning groups: suspicion and hostility becomes replaced, or at least modified, by a shared sense of adversity and struggle.

For the victims of crime, seeing what really lies behind prison walls can be a way of 'repairing' some of the damage caused. The present isolation and the exaggerated confrontation between offender and victim brought about at the hard end of the criminal justice process is destructive and meaningless. Howard Zehr illustrates this point in his book, 'Changing Lenses'. He argues that the criminal justice process is defined by rules: the system establishes guilt, and then the state inflicts pain. The process is central, the outcome is not. The result is a net increase in harm. By 'changing lenses' the author means that if we switch the focus from the offence to the people and relationships involved in crime, we can respond constructively to both the offender and the victim; we discover that justice can repair. To use Howard Zehr's own analogy: by exploring our new depth of field we perceive that what we need is a restorative lens; our focus should be on the future, on reconciliation and responsibility. The words responsibility and hope are beginning to be heard in some of our prisons, despite 'impossible circumstances'. Perhaps establishments themselves have a role to play in changing others' lenses. A chaplain once said to me that his keys were to open doors, not just to shut them. He made a valuable point.

Prison • Brixton

Lookout

A colleague recently sent me a cartoon entitled "The Complete Duty Governor Kit". This consisted of a rather fit-looking man, wearing a rucksack, running shoes, and talking into a mobile 'phone. Hanging out of one trouser pocket was a copy of the Prison's contingency plans, and out of the other the appointments section of The Times. (What on earth was he doing reading The Times?).

Like all good jokes, this seemed to me to strike a familiar, and also a rather depressing note. The new Duty Governor fetish is part of that larger fetish to have someone, somewhere to blame for every problem; a fall-guy for every failure; a neck on every block.

The source of this fetish can be located without the usual search through the Psychiatrist's Handbook, and is to be found in the knee-jerk reaction of Politicians in the Home Office to every escape, or newspaper headline. The sooner we get Agency status so much the better.

Black Workers in the Prison Service

In this article Mr Alfred writes about a pilot study he was invited to carry out in 1990 drawing upon the experience of a number of black Prison Service staff. His comments are controversial and David Waplington, then Head of New Entrant Training at the College was asked to respond. He does so in the article immediately following this one.

Between January and June 1990, I carried out a small piece of research into the recruitment and experiences of black* prison officers in England and Wales. This research included 12 interviews with serving black and white prison officers, interviews with Home Office officials and Community Relations Consultants, interviews with other community relations practitioners, observation of Race Relations training at the Prison Service College, Newbold Revel, and discourse analysis of Home Office policy statements. The research does not claim empirical validity and is intended as a pilot study. This article examines two aspects of the research manifestations of personal and institutional racism and current strategies for tackling it.

Terms: By **personal racism**, I refer to actions, attitudes, or words used by one person, or a group of people, towards another where such actions, attitudes or words are hostile, unpleasant or carry negative connotations, and where this is due to racial differences. By **institutional racism**, I mean the existence and operation of systems, structures, policies and practices which discriminate either directly or indirectly against a particular racial group. In neither form of racism is intentionality a determining factor.

While monitoring systems are unable to provide an accurate picture of the ethnic breakdown of prison staff, a snapshot survey carried out in 1988 although having a response rate of only 37%, revealed that 0.75% of respondents considered themselves to be of ethnic minority origin (Smith, 1989 : 52). This compares with 4.5% in the general UK population. This paucity of black staff impacts on the prison service in several ways:

Firstly, the image of a predominantly white service militates against attempts to boost ethnic minority recruitment. When, as part of the research which informed the South-East regional targeted recruitment campaign, 'Care for a Challenge', serving black staff were consulted in 1987 by white officers at Newbold Revel about the attitudes of black people towards a career in the prison service, responses included:

"A job to be avoided - inhumane and authoritative - to quote an acquaintance - 'I would rather join the National Front than Prison Service'";

"I feel they are very resentful to anything that represents authority, borne out of ignorance and a lack of knowledge";

"I feel most of them are still apprehensive about how they would fit in or what role they would have to act out. Whether or not they would be considered a token nigger".

Secondly, when black people do join the service (and the institutional racism of the recruitment process is discussed later), there may be additional pressures placed on them by black inmates:

"Some feel that if they come in here they'll be faced by this hostile group of blacks saying, 'Why are you here to lock me in? You're my black brother or sister'. (Black female officer)

"They're not supposed to join the law enforcement type things ... they're the baddies ... you should be the one being chased, not the one chasing." (Black female officer)

Thirdly, there may be pressure to 'perform' and to present a positive image of black people. A black prison officer may be seen as representing all black people:

"Feel you've got something to prove ... for the whole of your race. Didn't want her [an officer she felt was being racist towards her] *to say I had a chip on my shoulder"* (Black female officer).

"If a black does anything wrong I get more annoyed with the black person than I would with a white person because I feel you let the side down and then you let people say, 'Oh yeah that's another black doing bad'" (Black female officer).

Another officer (Black female) spoke of a complaint lodged with the training officer by a black staff member who felt a new black officer was giving a poor representation of black people by wearing her hair in locks.

Fourthly, where there are few black staff, and where grievance and disciplinary procedures relating to racism are manifestly ineffective, and largely unused, the personal racism of white staff not only goes unchecked but has even been sanctioned by the Prison Officers Association. Following one of the earlier attempts by the Service to encourage black people to apply to become officers, a cartoon in the POA Magazine (December, 1982) depicts a monkey clutching a banana and picking its nose. The Governor and another officer regard him apprehensively. The caption reads, *"Don't worry Chief - he'll look better in his uniform!"*

The extent of racism in our prisons is illustrated by McDermott (1990) in her research into race relations in five adult male prisons in the Midlands. She found that, *"nearly three out of five black [prisoner]s, almost half of Asians, and a third of whites thought staff were racist"* (ibid, p 219). Only 7% of staff felt some of their colleagues were racist.

Indeed such is the prevalence of racism in the prison service, and such is its debilitating nature, that a common theme running through research into the experiences of black staff is that the attitudes of white staff cause much more stress than problems with inmates. In the USA, Jacobs and Grear (1977) found significant differences between black and white staff in response to the question, *"With which group did you have most trouble?"* 34.6% of whites identified 'inmates', compared with 3.6% of non-whites. 78.4% of non-whites indicated either co-workers or superior officers as their most troublesome group, but only 34.5% of whites did so.

Much of the personal racism is directed towards black inmates, with white officers either unaware or uninterested in the effect this may have on black staff.

"Officers calling inmates 'niggers', 'coons' ... you think that's gone out the window? Well, it hasn't" (Black female prison probation officer).

Similarly, Genders and Player (1989) raise questions of racial discrimination in disciplinary proceedings, written assessments, the allocation of work and the allocation of living accommodation, much of it based on stereotyping, and some of it deliberately vicious:

"'You just can't have them doing this job. It would be different, wouldn't it, if it was a banana factory I was running here - then it would be right up their street.' (civilian supervisor)" (Genders and Player, 1989 : 127).

Perhaps most disturbing are the consistently clear admissions from prison service managers that such racist attitudes abound, and the seeming reluctance to tackle it. The POA again condone it with a cartoon, this time in their June 1988 magazine. Two white officers are shown talking about a black inmate, portrayed in a less than flattering manner:

"He wants some of this fresh tart the staff keep talking about."

Again, the HMI report on Wandsworth (Home Office, 1989) is highly critical of work on race relations:

"We heard a number of general complaints about racism. Many staff wore unofficial insignia and we believe some of these have racist connotations. No insignia should be added to uniforms and slashed peaks are no less intimidating" (ibid, p61).

Only recently was a circular designed to eliminate racist insignia (The Guardian, 10/5/90) sent to establishments and even then no mention was made of slashed peaks. Since the first Home Office circular on race relations (CI 28/81), nine years needed to elapse before such a ban was imposed and, in the meantime, Governors, Boards of Visitors and the HMI have all tolerated such dress. John Tyndall's estimation in 1980 that, *"we do have a larger than average number of supporters of the National Front among prison officers"* (Whittingham, 1980 : 4) seems likely to have been true then, and may still be true now.

The Prison Service is also infected by **institutional racism**, often allied to indirect discrimination (Jenkins, 1986 : 3), whereby, for example, selection criteria are applied which, while uniform for all applicants, have a disproportionate impact on ethnic minorities. With regard to recruitment, the existence of height restrictions is both unnecessary and indirectly discriminatory, particularly with regard to Asians. Such height requirements have even less validity since the introduction of crosspostings in 1986 (Morris, 1987 : 151) and modern techniques of control and restraint make physical strength an insignificant qualification to be a prison officer. I understand from Home Office officials that the height requirement is likely to be abandoned in the near future.

Targeted recruitment advertisements, while helpful in their appeal to ethnic minorities, may be sabotaging themselves by not only carrying discriminatory height requirements, but mentioning the need to possess, 'a sense of humour'. Not only is it impossible to test whether an applicant has this nebulous quality, but such a characteristic is culturally determined and ethnocentric (Jenkins, 1986 : 76). and has no place in an organisation which, at the foot of the same advertisement, professes itself to be an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Moreover, black applicants may be asked different questions from whites during selection interviews, designed to assess how they would cope with the racism they will face:

"I'll always remember this ... Chairman said to me, "Mr X, you've been selected as a prison officer ... you order an inmate to do something and he turns round and says 'Why don't you eff off you black wog and go back home?"' Those were the exact words the Chairman used to me" (Black male officer).

"[He said] 'You're a very, very brave woman.'... I just said thank you. Now I realise what he meant" (Black female officer).

"I can remember it to this day. 'If an inmate came up to you and said, 'Hey sister, how's things?' what would your reaction be?'" (Black female officer).

While it may be pragmatic for managers to ask such questions, though answers to hypothetical questions are poor predictors of actual future behaviour, posing such questions to black applicants is discriminatory and comes perilously close to vindicating the belief of many black staff that they have to be twice as good and twice as tough as whites to survive. A syndicate recommendation at the National Conference of Police Recruiting Officers, held in 1986, falls into a similar trap, stating,

"Care should be taken to select for appointment candidates who seemed to

have the strength of character and maturity to deal with the inevitable pressures [facing black police officers]" (Record of Proceedings, p7).

The message from such differentiated interviewing is that black officers need to be able to deal with racism, rather than one which undertakes to eliminate racism so that black officers no longer need to deal with it. The latter approach would involve anti-racist interviewing in which questions are asked which are designed to elicit whether a candidate holds racist attitudes, or is committed to the race relations policy.

The effects of racism can also be seen in the differential patterns of **career development** for black and white officers. While monitored information is not available, there is only one black governor grade, and very few principal or senior officers. Some of this may be due to the scarcity of black staff at grade 8, and any increases here will take time to filter through into management levels. However, some staff interviewed said they were reluctant to move, or attempt to move, into management positions because of the perceived isolation of black people at that level (Black female officer), the lack of confidence in all-white promotion boards (Black female officer), and the observation that the views of a black senior officer were often ignored by her colleagues in meetings (Black female officer). In addition, one officer felt that, while undergoing her initial officer training, she was being pushed into becoming a Physical Education Instructor (PEI) because she was black and good at sport:

"I thought I'd seen the last of this at school ... I feel race or colour will make it harder for me to get to the top" (Black female officer).

One strategy for dealing with manifestations of racism is to leave it to the individual to cope or leave. Jacobs and Grear (1977), researching the reasons for the termination of employment of 55 former prison guards in a maximum security prison in Illinois, found that *"the most significant variable in explaining the termination of their prison work is race"* (ibid, p57), and postulate that there is a highly effective deselection process operating whereby those black officers who are either most attracted to the prisoners or most antagonistic toward the prison regime, *"resign, are fired, or change their attitudes"* (ibid p316).

In my own interviews, most staff spoke of laughing things off, of being thick-skinned, of not allowing things to bother them. Home Office participants in a one-day conference for serving black staff held in January 1990, stated that

"every one of them had a story to tell ... some mild, some quite awful ... Where an officer had been in an establishment for a long time on his own his success and acceptance by colleagues is going to, and this sounds quite insulting actually ... the individual had really learnt to be white."

Such a coping strategy may be effective, even imperative, for the survival of the individual, but it is incumbent upon the Prison Department to do something more than follow a 'sink or swim' approach. Currently, heavy emphasis is placed on **training** as a means of combatting racism.

Pre-1985, race relations training was organised separately for different grades of staff (Genders and Player, 1989 : 33). Governors, Race Relations Liaison Officers and Chief Officers all attended different, nationally organised, courses. Since then, training has been organised more on an establishment basis, with race relations teams from individual estabishments undertaking training designed to achieve three objectives: legitimate race relations as a subject for training; impart information; and develop action plans (ibid, p33).

Much emphasis is placed on the race relations training received by what used to be termed New Entrant Prison Officers (NEPOs), as part of their 9

week course at Newbold Revel or Wakefield. Alongside a thick information pack given to every NEPO, ten 45-minute sessions are devoted to race relations, with a written test at the end. The sessions are designed to change behaviour not attitudes, and are carried out by the college tutors who are all experienced prison officers. I observed 4 45-minute sessions, taught by two different staff members, and was disturbed by what I saw.

Sitting in on two sessions run by a principal officer who admitted that he had never taught race relations before, I witnessed highly racist opinions being allowed to go unchallenged. The trainer had little knowledge of what constitutes racism or of race relations legislation, and the race relations policy was something perceived and presented as being imposed by 'them' and that 'we' need to follow. Unchallenged responses to the question, *"Why do we study race relations?"* included:

"To find out where Mr Z [a black officer] comes from."

"Hygiene. It's not that they're dirty. Well, they are dirty. But that's just how they do things. It might disgust us, but that's just how they do things."

At other points in the sessions one officer related how, when he was an estate agent, he never sold houses to Africans because they were so unreliable. Another agreed and said that, working for a car rental agency, he never rented cars to Africans unless they could produce 6 forms of identification because they signed long, indecipherable names and used to go home with the cars. These observations brought only, *"I see"*, from one of the trainers. The other cracked racist jokes, made everybody laugh, and then asked rhetorically, *"Is that racist?"*

On questions of Prison Service policy and the law, the trainer was equally poor. When one officer said that the Service had lowered standards to attract black applicants, this went uncorrected; when another asked how it was that it was acceptable for adverts to state that they wanted ethnic minorities but that it would be racist if adverts said they particularly wanted whites, the trainer was unable to comment.

If race relations is to be taught there is clearly a need to provide skilled race relations trainers. It is unreasonable to expect experienced officers, who are competent at teaching handcuffing, control and restraint, and the escorting of prisoners, to be able to teach a subject as complex as race relations without adequate training. A firm of consultants, Pearn Kandola Downs, has recently completed a review of race relations training in the Prison Service. Commenting on the NEPO training, they calculate that, while 6000 NEPOs have received race relations training, only a few trainers have done so. They identify problems of consistency, lack of regular follow up and evaluation, and a lack of guidance about acceptable standards of behaviour with regard to race relations (Pearn Kandola Downs, 1989).

The inadequacy of the NEPO training is reflected in comments from both black and white staff:

"Something and nothing really ... I don't realy know what they hope to achieve by it anyway" (White female officer).

"Didn't pay much heed to it ... I've never felt that I've needed to be aware of race relations" (White female officer).

"You'd have, like, an hour of race relations and then you'd have another subject. And that lecturer would came in and give, like, a racist joke which undermined everything that had been said ... Lecturers should have been committed to it from the very first day and not just when we got to the 10 hourly sessions" (Black female officer).

Other black staff spoke of the awkwardness they felt when race issues were discussed, and of having their eyes opened about the kind of service they were entering:

"I was totally against having it [race relations training] ... you just focus people's attention on it ... there were some words I heard up there I hadn't ever heard applied to blacks ... some of my black friends there, they felt uncomfortable ...life was going on very normally, we're all getting on well then you suddenly ask us to look, y'know, delve into this thing and they didn't really like it" (Black female officer).

"Apparently, every black person comes back here with the same thing about the training officer being as racist as you can get ... That makes it even more difficult for black officers I'd have thought if you start with racism even on the training programme" (Black female prison probation officer).

Another officer felt the silence and lack of discussion about the results of the race relations test *"seemed really sinister"* (Black female officer).

Common attitudes to the training, expressed by NEPOs and serving staff, were that it was too long, irrelevant, could not change attitudes anyway and was only undertaken so that the prison service could say it was being done. It had all 'gone too far' - now white people were at the bottom of the pile. Stories of how people were now being sacked for asking for a black coffee, of how it was illegal to refer to a black binliner, and of how only blacks and lesbians get jobs nowadays circulated in abundance.

While Genders and Player (1989) locate such attitudes in the occupational culture of prison officers, McDermott (1990) believes the working class background from which most officers are recruited, with its attendant powerlessness and deprivation, means that, "any policy that benefits one group is often perceived to be at the expense of the group one rung up the ladder" (ibid, p226). Thus, equality for blacks can only be at the expense of whites and will inevitably be resisted.

Other NEPO race relations training, carried out by a Governor 4 with much experience and knowledge of race issues and, equally importantly, with a strong commitment to the race relations policy, appeared more effective. His sessions challenged racist beliefs and stereotypes and imparted much information about white migration patterns and colonial exploitation, placing race relations in an historical context. In addition, some serving officers felt it important to have received information about other cultures and that they had been prepared for what they might face in establishments.

What emerged from my observation, the consultancy, and the comments of NEPOs and serving staff is that it is imperative that race relations is taught by skilled and knowledgeable trainers. This could be achieved through intensive training for College tutors or through buying in race relations trainers, in which case a strong argument can be put for ensuring that such trainers are black, with direct personal experience of racism. Failure to do this runs the risk that race relations training may serve only to legitimate and perpetuate racist attitudes and stereotypes. Bad race relations training is worse than none at all.

** At the risk of over-simplifying, the terms 'Black' and 'ethnic minority' are used interchangeably here to refer to both black and Asian people. This in no way implies that diverse ethnic minority cultures and experiences are similar. It is done to stress the commonality of ethnic minority experience, insofar as all ethnic minorities share the potential to be victims of racism.*

References

Genders, E. and Player, E. (1989) Race Relations in Prisons Oxford : Clarendon Press.

Jacobs, J. and Grear, M. (1977) 'Drop Outs and Rejects: An analysis of the Prison Guard's Revolving Door.' Criminal Justice Review 2 (2), 57-70.

Jenkins, R. (1986) Racism and Recruitment. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

McDermott, K. (1990) 'We have no problem: the experience of racism in prison' New Community 16(2), 213-228.

Pearn Kandola Downs (1989) Review of Race Relations Training in the Prison Service. Unpublished .

Smith, A. (1989) Talk reported in 'Equality of Opportunity' - A Conference held at HM Prison Service Training College Newbold Revel, 18-21 July 1989. Unpublished.

Whittingham, M. (1980) 'Racist Police, Courts, Prisons.' The Abolitionist 5, 2-4.

Black Workers in the Prison Service

A Response

David J Waplington
Head of New Entrant Training Prison Service College 1987 - 1992

Thank you for letting me see Mr Alfred's article. I think it is biased and would quote the conclusions of the Survey of Race Relations by Pearn, Kandola and Downs. The general view is that NEPOs are better trained, more professional and have a better understanding of race relations than their more experienced colleagues. Training needs to provide them with guidance on how to counter the pressure they will receive from more experienced officers to behave in ways which are not professional.

Mr Alfred did not see the whole of our Race Relations training. Had he done so he would have seen that confrontation of student attitudes occurs later in sessions which show how attitudes affect behaviour and relationships. Tutors report many shifts of attitude among students at this stage.

Mr Alfred saw the first part of the course and from his report I can identify that he saw the very first session. At the beginning of this session we ask students "Why do we study race relations". Then in small groups they have to list their reasons on a newsprint sheet. There are 4 groups in each class and I have never seen less than 5 reasons on a group's list. Mr Alfred has only listed two items. I assume the rest were positive which is very good considering there has been no teaching input whatsoever at this stage. I would add that this is a definite training strategy designed to overcome the group hostility tutors encounter when teaching race relations. This strategy avoids tutors being seen as having the "right" attitudes and students the "wrong" ones. It utilises the positive reasons that students themselves have given for studying race relations.

I cannot accept that trainers would be poor when covering Prison Service policy. The second session of the Race Relations package is a tightly scripted and unambiguous presentation of Home Office and Prison Service Policy on race relations. After the opening session during which some attitudes may be allowed to go unchecked, the message given is clear; "The Service is your employer and this is the behaviour it insists upon."

The objectives of our course are behavioural, however, we deliberately aim for attitudes. This means considerable difficulties for tutors and students alike, particularly as we are continuously assessing general suitability to be prison officers. A central dilemma is how far to allow people to talk honestly about their prejudices. In some instances issues which arise in class are dealt with in private during tutorials. The best tutors are able to handle all this sensitively. More importantly they can spot the many subtle expressions of prejudice and expose them openly, giving their group added awareness. This is however a high level training skill and not all tutors are so skilled. For this reason we have increased our monitoring and have developed and undertaken additional staff training looking at our delivery of race relations material. We have also recruited our first black tutor. Race Relations training is not an area where we can be complacent and we fully recognise this.

PRISON AND UNIT MANAGEMENT AND DYNAMIC SECURITY

Ron Robson is a Senior Assistant Superintendent at Bathurst Gaol. He has been a custodial Prison Officer since 1978. Ron is a graduate of the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge University and is at present engaged in doctorial studies at the University of New South Wales.

INTRODUCTION

Unit management refers to a system of managing inmates that allows for a democratic approach to inmate management. The concept is part of an overall philosophical approach that attempts to provide humanitarian treatment of inmates within the boundaries that are set by the need for prison managers to contain inmates in a secure environment.

There are other elements to the overall philosophical approach. Amongst these is dynamic security. The management philosophy that incorporates these elements is known as de-centralised management. Definitions of the above concepts are provided later in this paper.

This paper will explore unit management and the concept of dynamic security as a pro-active management tool. It will show that in a de-centralised management structure there are inherent interactive processes that create an atmosphere conducive to more effective prison management.

UNIT MANAGEMENT

> *'A unit is a small, self-contained inmate living and staff office area, operating semi-autonomously within the confines of a larger institution' (Lansing 1977)*

Unit management is a system of managing inmates that encourages the use of de-centralised management within institutions (Smith and Fenton 1978), reduces tension, increases the level of participation in inmate/prison officer relationships and interaction (McLennan and Simmons 1985c), is cost effective (Karlstrom 1987), and may have some effect on recidivism (Witte 1983).

A unit may house as many as 100 inmates. The design of the prison may be a limiting factor in the size of units. Nelson (1988) noted that new generation design prisons were best suited to 50 inmates per unit with one supervisory prison officer. However, many units are in prisons that were not purpose-built for unit management. In New South Wales the number of inmates per unit varies. In Bathurst, for example, the units house between 19-20 inmates per unit. The new Lithgow Prison in western New South Wales has 50 inmates per unit. The staffing profile for each unit at Lithgow consists of one unit manager, two correctional supervisors and one case manager. The redesigned Goulburn Prison operates on very similar staffing structures but has larger units than Lithgow.

The new unit management design at Lithgow and other prisons in NSW has not addressed the phenomenon observed by Brawn (1985) at Edmonton who stated that,

> *It (Edmonton) had a built in flaw, it was easy for staff not interested or confident in dynamic security to retreat into the office, close and separate themselves from the prisoners.*

Further confirmation of this was reported by Robson (1989) who noted staff spent less time interacting with the inmates after an industrial dispute retreating into their unit office. The level of withdrawal from the programme depended on the individual staff member.

Unit management reduces the number of inmates within the prison to manageable size groups. Robson (1989) identified a reduction in sociopathic behaviour when comparing Bathurst to two other similar sized institutions employing traditional line management.

Unit management employs one person to supervise 25 or less inmates per shift. The traditional wing may have 100 or more inmates supervised by two staff. So why choose unit management? There are a number of so called 'hidden benefits'. These may vary from reports of fewer serious incidents with better inmate morale and lower tension levels (Smith and Fenton 1978) to increased staff/inmate communication and interaction (Simmons and McLennan 1985).

Tulkens (1987) considers prison officers as the creators of the social atmosphere in the prison. There is also evidence to support the concept of prison officers being 'change agents' in the prison environment.

The lower number of inmates per supervisor allows the supervisor to develop relationships with individual inmates and the unit group. This in turn requires certain interactional skills that are obtained through extensive training programmes.

The initial training programme at Bathurst allocated considerable time for training unit managers. Training during 1982/83 was for a period of five days plus follow up on the job training. At the time this was considered sufficient. Jepson commenting on the English system of training in 1988 felt that 39 hours per officer per year was sufficient.

> *The unit training programme at present being implemented in NSW requires a minimum of 14 days to a maximum of 25 days for the introductory programme. (Robson l990a).*

It can clearly be seen that unit management requires a commitment to staff training by management. This commitment must be reinforced through on-site training. The present Bathurst on-site training programme consists of two hours per day for 16 officers out of a total of 144 officers and staff. This is complemented by seminars and training days.

The use of a decentralised management system allows staff to make appropriate decisions at the workface rather than the decision being made for them by a person who is removed from their circumstances by a traditional pyramid management structure.

The unit management system allows and perpetuates interaction between inmates and staff. It is this interaction that forms the basis of dynamic security.

DYNAMIC SECURITY

It has been noted that relationships between inmates and prison staff had been, "tenuous, even alienated". (McLennon and Simmons 1985b). Whilst the Control Review Committee reviewing the English system acknowledged that,

> *at the end of the day nothing else that we can say will be as important as the general proposition that relations between staff and prisoners are at the heart of the whole prison system and that control and security flow from getting the relationship right. (CRC 1984).*

Unit management provides the framework for the development of interaction between staff and inmates. It is through this interaction that staff develop a pro-active role in management. Pro-active management entails staff anticipating events through knowledge gleaned from the interaction that takes place within the unit. This knowledge is then used to prevent possible incidents taking place. Instead of reacting to an incident, this concept requires staff to defuse the event by action before it becomes an incident.

It has been stated that dynamic security is not only about interactive processes. It appears to be much more involved than simple interaction. Robson (1989a) has defined dynamic security as,

> *security developed by staff at the workface through the use of interactional skills rather than excessive use of security equipment and large numbers of staff.*

Dunbar (1985) identified three principles of dynamic security. These were individualism, relationships and activity. He had observed the concept in operation in North America and noted,

> *New York State through these principles had reduced dramatically escapes and assaults on staff ...by knowing what is going on in a prison establishment, in addition to providing a safe and secure background against which the whole range of activity making up the life of the prison takes place.*

Security and control are interrelated issues. Security refers to the secureness of the institution, whilst control refers to the administration of the prison. If the environment created by the method of control is severe, then security may be tested more frequently. However, if the control mechanism is creating a harmonious atmosphere within the prison environment then security is less likely to be tested.

Jepson (1988) developed the principles identified by Dunbar further. Individualism requires the utilisation of latent or taught skills by acknowledging their presence and

encouraging their development within the individual. Relationships placed the emphasis on interactional skills and their use as a dynamic force in understanding the individual's needs and responding to those needs. Activity refers to both structured and unstructured activities that allow for personal development and growth within individuals.

Dynamic security is therefore a concept that encourages participation between staff and inmates. It was implicit in Dunbar's (1985) proposal that whilst people were engaged in some form of activity the risk factor was lowered. If this activity also involved staff then the interactive processes involved have a greater opportunity to develop and mature.

Security can mean different things to different people depending upon their perspective . For example, Young (1987) interpreted basic security to mean 'prisoners must not be allowed to escape' whilst Boyle (1977), saw it as unnecessary and oppressive. Jenkins (1987) noted, that concentration upon control is likely to stimulate resistance. Whilst King and Morgan (1980) state,

> *The higher the degree of security ... the more likely it is that regime disadvantages will accrue to prisoners.*

Security can be safety for individuals, members of the public, staff and inmates. That there is a primary role in escape prevention is not questioned. Policies that require secure containment rely on the security of the institution to keep inmates within it. There are at least two types of security-perimeter security with the 'paraphernalia of maximum security' (King and Moran 1980), characterised by electronic surveillance equipment, heat detectors, infra red scanners, razor wire and internal security, that is security within the walls.

Perimeter security, whilst important, is not discussed within this paper. The controversy that surrounds appropriate level of security have been dicussed by King and Morgan (1980). This paper accepts that there are unresolved issues. This author feels that the appropriate level of security could and should be influenced by the development of dynamic security within the prison. The link between those interactive processes and perimeter security is not clear. What is clear is that if dynamic security is operating the pressure on perimeter security may not be as strong. If the interactive processes are operating in the manner outlined above then pro-active management and a more harmonious in-gaol climate may mean that the perimeter will not be tested.

Dynamic security is not just a staff orientated process but operates across cultures. Evershed (1987) in her review of the 'Special Unit' 'C' Wing at Parkhurst Prison said instead of the use of retraints, that staff were,

> *encouraged to use their interpersonal skill, in dealing with such antagonistic behaviour as verbal abuse ... to employ their skills to prevent difficult situations arising.*

The processes recognised by Evershed had been utilised in an Australian experimental unit by Schwartz (1985). Those principles were extended to the unit management experiment at Bathurst.

The process operates across cultures, so it will not function if inmates do not participate. The building of relationships between staff and inmates is a two way process. Interaction implies that a relationship exists even if it is only at the most basic level. The importance of relationships in developing a harmonious tension-free living and working environment cannot be over-emphasised. Security is often described in different ways as it impacts on different individuals to varying degrees. Dynamic security is described as a concept that creates a safe, tension-free working and living environment that is conducive to prison 'time' being served in the easiest possible manner for all concerned.

Control is a difficult concept to unravel. Control may be based on power. Power gives authority and authority gives control. It is how this power is utilised in the institution that is the secret to prison control mechanisms. Forbes-Farmer (1988) described an exercise in regaining control of a violent state prison.

The loss of control had taken place over time and drastic physical actions accompanied by lock-downs had failed to retrieve the situation. What did work was

changing the environment of the prison by installing a system of decentralised unit management to create a safe working environment. This was achieved by placing emphasis on interactional skills of staff and by providing structured activity. Control need not be repressive. To function it requires acknowledgement by inmates of the staff's work role, acceptance of their present status and a wish to do their 'time' in the easiest possible way.

Control as a mechanism may be subtle or harsh. Its harshest form can and does cause aggression. The same ends can be achieved by more subtle means. Control is not simply understood as 'who is in charge of what'. It is more a matter of how that 'charge' is employed to gain maximum results from its use. Control is the mechanism whereby an environment is created. In the dynamic security sense, control is achieved through development of the interactive processes that enable staff to develop a 'feel' for what is happening in their area.

CONCLUSION

Dynamic security is not a concept that operates on its own. It is a supportive factor in the development of a de-centralised unit management system. It is just one of the major components that complement de-centralised unit management. The model developed by Jepson (1988) from Dunbar's (1985) original concept places emphasis on three principles:

Individualism refers to the development of individuals through utilisation of latent or taught skills.
Relationships placed emphasis on the interactional processes.
Activities referred to both structured and unstructured activity that encouraged individual growth and development.

Through development of unit management operating within a de-centralised structure an environment is provided that is conducive to the interactional processes described as dynamic security. The combination of these two concepts provides a positive environment in which individual growth for staff and inmates takes place. The security and control of the institution operates pro-actively and efficiently whilst a reduction in anti-social behaviour can be anticipated.

Bibliography

BOTTOMS, A. AND LIGHT, R. (EDS) (1987) *PROBLEMS OF LONG TERM IMPRISONMENT.* ALDERSHOT, GOWER.

BOYLE, J. (1977) *THE PAIN OF CONFINEMENT.* EDINBURGH, CANNONGATE.

BRAWN, G. (1985) 'AN EVALUATION OF A UNIT LIVING CONCEPT IN NORTH AMERICA', IN *CORRECTION PLANNING, PROGRAMMING AND ARCHITECTURE.* AUSTRALIA, CRIMINOLOGY RESEARCH COUNCIL REPORT.

CROUCH, M. (1983) 'SECOND UNIT PROGRESS REPORT (APRIL-MID AUGUST 1983)', BATHURST GAOL, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, (UNPUBLISHED PAPER).

DUNBAR, I. (1985) *A SENSE OF DIRECTION.* LONDON, HMSO.

EVERSHED, S. (1987) 'SPECIAL UNIT', 'C' WING HMP PARKHURST', IN A. BOTTOMS AND R. LIGHT *PROBLEMS OF LONG-TERM IMPRISONMENT.* ALDERSHOT, GOWER.

FORBES-FARMER, J. (1988) A CASE STUDY IN REGAINING CONTROL OF A VIOLENT STATE PRISON', FEDERAL PROBATION, 52, 11-48.

GLASER, D. (1984) 'SIX PRINCIPLES AND ONE PRECAUTION FOR EFFICIENT SENTENCING AND CORRECTION', FEDERAL PROBATION, 48:4, 22-28.

HAZELRIGG, L.E. (1968) *PRISON WITHIN SOCIETY.* GARDEN CITY, N.Y. DOUBLEDAY.

HOME OFFICE (1984) *MANAGING THE LONG TERM PRISON SYSTEM REPORT OF THE CONTROL REVIEW COMMITTEE* LONDON, HMSO.

JENKINS, M. (1987) 'CONTROL PROBLEMS IN DISPERSALS', IN A. BOTTOMS AND R. LIGHT (EDS) *PROBLEMS OF LONG TERM IMPRISONMENT.* ALDERSHOT, GOWER.

JEPSON, N. (1988) *A SENSE OF DIRECTION: A SERVICE RESPONSE.* LONDON, HMSO.

KARLSTROM V. (1987) 'SWEDISH VIEWPOINTS ON PRISON BUILDING', *COUNCIL OF EUROPE BULLETIN.* STRASBOURG, 10, 4-9.

KLAUS, A. (1976) *ASSESSMENT OF A PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT OH CLOSE SCHOOL.* ROCKVILLE, SACRAMENTO, MD 20850.

KING, R. AND MORGAN, R. (1980) *THE FUTURE OF THE PRISON SYSTEM.* HAMPSHIRE, GOWER.

LANSING D., BOGAN, J. AND KARACKI, L. (1977) 'UNIT MANAGEMENT: IMPLEMENTING A DIFFERENT CORRECTIONAL APPROACH', *FEDERAL PROBATION,* 1, 27-33.

MCLENNAN, C. AND SIMMONS, D. (1985B) 'INMATES ATTITUDES TO BATHURST GAOL', SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, (UNPUBLISHED PAPER).

MURDOCH V. (1978) *PRISON SOCIAL CLIMATE.* UNPUBLISHED B.A. HONOURS THESIS. DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOIGY. UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE. N.S.W. AUSTRALIA.

NELSON, W. (1988) 'COST SAVING IN NEW GENERATION JAILS: THE DIRECT SUPERVISION APPROACH', *NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE CONSTRUCTION BULLETIN.* WASHINGTON, US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

PERETTI, P. AND HOOKER, M. (1976) 'SOCIAL ROLE SELF PERCEPTIONS OF STATE PRISON GUARDS', *CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND BEHAVIOUR,* 3:187-196.

ROBSON, R. (1989B) 'MANAGING THE LONG TERM PRISONER' *HOWARD JOURNAL OF CRIMINOLOGY.* 28:3 187-203.

ROBSON, R. (1990A) *ISSUES IN PRISON MANAGEMENT: UNIT MANAGEMENT IN NSW PRISONS.* UNPUBLISHED PAPER PRESENTED AT THE UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS IN HAVANA CUBA AUGUST 1990.

SCHWARTZ, D. (1983) *SPECIAL CARE UNIT: DEVELOPMENT OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PENAL THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY.* SYDNEY, DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES.

SMITH, A. AND FENTON, C. (1978) 'UNIT MANAGEMENT IN A PENITENTIARY, PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE', *FEDERAL PROBATION,* 42, 40-46.

SIMMONS, D. AND MCLENNAN, K. (1985) 'PROCESS EVALUATION OF THE BATHURST GAOL TRAINING PROGRAMME, RESEARCH FINDINGS (OCTOBER 1984-APRIL 1985)', SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, (EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE BY ANGELA GORTA: UNPUBLISHED PAPER).

SIMMONS, D. AND MCLENNAN, K. (1986B) 'BATHURST GAOL EVALUATION UNIT MANAGEMENT REPORT (MAY-DECEMBER 1986)', SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, (UNPUBLISHED PAPER).

TULKENS, H. (1987) COUNCIL OF EUROPE PRISON INFORMATION BULLETIN. SALZBURG, 9,10-11.

WITTE, ET AL. (1983) *THE EFFECTS OF A LESS COERCIVE PRISON ENVIRONMENT AND GRADUAL RE-INTEGRATION OF POST RELEASE PERFORMANCE: AN EVALUATION OF MORRIS'S MODEL OF IMPRISONMENT AS IMPLEMENTED AT THE FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION AT BUTNER.* CHAPEL HILL, INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES.

PRISON & UNIT MANAGEMENT & DYNAMIC SECURITY

Letters

Dear Sir

PRISONERS ARE ANTAGONISTIC TOWARDS THE PRISON SERVICE BECAUSE OF THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH THEY ARE HOUSED (WOOLF)

Not true. Prisoners are antagonistic towards "the system" that put them in prison.

Prisoners are no different to people in society, except the former are behind bars and the latter are not. Prisoners want to achieve the same goals as people in society but their deprived, social, economic and educational background prevents achievement by the legitimate route, so the illegitimate route is taken. Some get caught. They end up in prison. But it isn't the Prison Service they are antagonistic towards but the system that denies opportunities to those with poor life chances; a system that having denied opportunities then thinks that people should be happy with their lot, or in this case, their little. It is those who are unhappy, who won't settle for their lot, who strive illegally for the goals and consequently end up with us.

Once inside we do not deny that there is antagonism but it is crucial to realise that this is "redirected" antagonism. If Woolf's statement were to be correct then it would follow that "good" prisons with modern buildings and facilities would never have trouble. This of course is not the case. Many disturbances have taken place at the so-called "better" establishments and there are numerous examples of indiscriminate, illogical violence, for example the burning down of well-equipped association rooms and gymnasia. If the anger leading to these acts had been provoked by conditions in which prisoners were housed one would expect those establishments with the poorest facilities and the worst overcrowding to be the target for destruction. The evidence simply does not support this theory.

We believe then that prisoners are angry and bitter at a system which put them in prison, and that they act without regard for where they are - whether in good or poor conditions - and this anger is often manifested by an explosion leading to an "I've got nothing to lose" rampage.

Thus better conditions are not the antidote for all prisoner hostilities. The problem is much larger than this and has its roots in society. Antagonistic behaviour can therefore be expected to continue unless we team up with prisoners in an attempt to help them improve their lot when they return outside. At the moment what we consider to be good preparation for release may not coincide with the prisoner's view, and it's the prisoner's view which is important if we are to have any chance of deflecting him from his previous life-style outside and his antagonism inside. Some of the working or studying out schemes in the community have been enthusiastically received by prisoners and although statistics are not available we suspect these schemes are more likely to have a short and long term positive effect on behaviour, short term inside prison and long term on release, than are either mass production workshops or totally prisoner attended classes, although we recognise that both work and education in prison have obvious benefits, some operational, some economic and some worthwhile in themselves. We recognise also that some prisoners welcome opportunities in prison for educational advance or skill-learning work.

The community approach to prison sentences leads us to look at our urban prisons in a different light, for they all have the advantages of city/urban locations and they are well fixed to facilitate, in the community, education, work, jobclubs, and the potential to enable prisoners to take up full time paid employment and perhaps pay a proportion of wages to the prison for board and lodgings.

It could therefore make sense to centralise our resources into 80 or so "city prisons" and to allow the remaining 50 or so establishments to eventually become redundant. These City Prisons would be multi-functional with prisoners being allocated to the establishment nearest their home. They would be served by good public transport. There would be ample opportunity for the education and community involvement already mentioned together with potential for maintenance of good family ties.

The community prison idea has for some time now been developed into practice at Holloway Prison, and prisoners see the opportunities for community involvement as being more important than a number of other considerations, including facilities for better family ties. When asked by Tactical Management and Estate Planning Unit whether they would prefer an increased number of small establishments around England and Wales in the prison estate to facilitate better family ties, Holloway prisoners unanimously said they would prefer a small number of Holloway type establishments in strategic areas. Family ties although important did not take absolute priority, although obviously transport links were held to be important.

Woolf says justice cannot be stopped at the prison gates. We believe that if life was in the prisoner's perception more just on the outside we would have far less antagonism inside. The prison service finds itself with the unenviable task of unravelling years of injustice on the outside and with an unrealistic expectation by society that it should be able to turn people around for the better within a determinate custodial sentence. The idea of City Prisons affording vastly increased opportunities to improve, in the community, the lot of people who eventually become prisoners may be one way forward.

Stacey Tasker
H.M.P. Holloway

Reviews

WELCOME TO HELL

compiled and edited by Jan Arriens

Published by Ian Faulkner Publications Ltd Cambridge 1991 £9.95
ISBN 1 85763 000 9

This is a horrifying book that should lead you to act. The gross inhumanity of the death penalty is exposed through a collection of letters from men on Death Row in USA. Their writing shows such intense humanity, variety and consideration coming from Death Row that it moves one to tears. The book is a reflection of creative interchanges between letter writers who care for each other. "Life Lines" involves people who have been moved to action by writing to those on Death Row showing concern and commitment and receiving in turn powerful responses of sensitivity and intensity.. The work arose from a documentary "14 days in May" made for the BBC by Paul Harmann showing the last days of Edward Earl Johnson, a man of open simplicity with no hatred as he faced death. His dignity in facing his end and the compassion shown by his fellow condemned friends led to people acting in order to join with those so isolated. From the depth of darkness has come the most spiritual and joyful expression of life.

The comforting by men on Death Row of distressed letter writers who have contacted them is utterly moving. The words jump out at you and you gasp at their directness and complete belief in goodness, at the power of people in despair showing love to strengthen those outside sharing their helplessness.

Some of those on Death Row proclaim their innocence with such simplicity that you know they are right. Others admit their guilt and demonstrate their contrition. From both there is a reaching out to touch others lives with warmth and love in spite of the "desperate, impotent rage" many feel about their treatment by a system that has to find an object for hatred.

We know from Terry Waite's testimony in his wonderful statement in that hangar at RAF Lyneham that the card of John Bunyan from an unknown writer had moved him intensely. It is this reaching out to share common humanity that "Welcome to Hell" portrays in a most powerful way.

As we face the continuing debate about the death penalty in this country this book should be required reading for all participants. One only has to listen to the voice of the condemned, guilty and innocent, to realise how wasteful, brutal and savage our systems of control have become. It is not good enough to dismiss the matter as an aberration of the southern states of the US. The words of those on Death Row speak to us of the pains of imprisonment in any setting and are a testimony of the capacity for humans to share concern and love in the direst of circumstances.

TC Newell
Governor
HMP Grendon - Springhill

JOINT CENTRE FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES

Day conference:

PARTNERSHIP IN THROUGHCARE

Friday 25 September 1992

Speakers:

Helen Edwards (NACRO),

John Harman (South Yorkshire Probation Service),

Robin Halwood (Governor, Leeds Prison).

Small group sessions on the arts in prisons, family days, substance abuse services, suicide prevention, deportees, and many other topics.

For further information please contact:

Centre for Short Course Development
Sheffield City Polytechnic
43 Broomgrove Road
Sheffield
S10 2NA
Tel (0742) 532511 or 532514