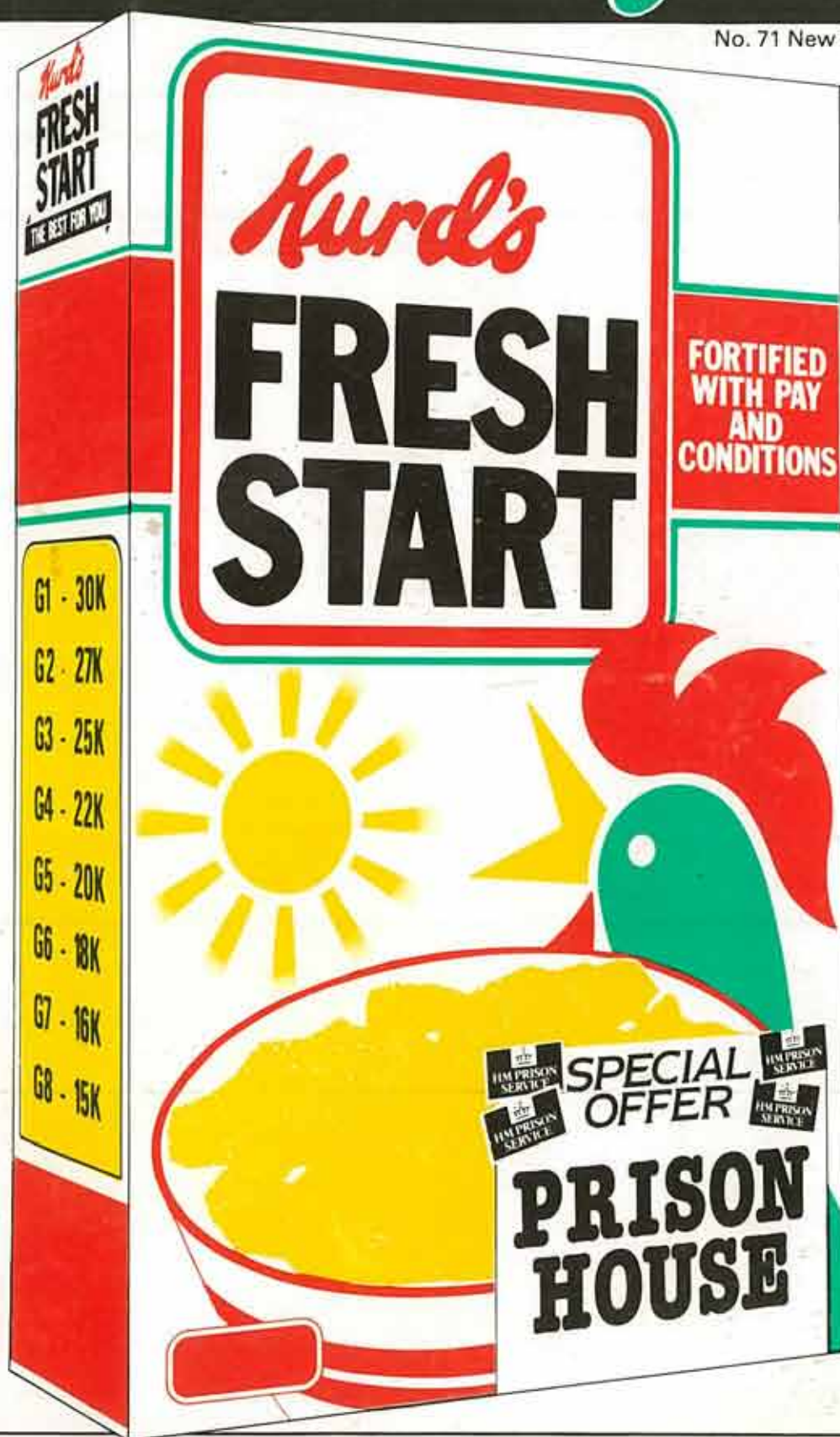


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SPECIAL
ISSUE

FRESHSTART Replacing the old Porridge ?

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Comment

This bumper edition of the PSJ is devoted entirely to the debate about the implementation of "Fresh Start" within the Prison Service — perhaps the most radical change the Service has seen since the Gladstone Report at the turn of this century. "Fresh Start" has undoubtedly set the Prison Service on a course which will see it well into the next century. At present, however, all levels of the organisation are pre-occupied with the immediate impact of such profound change and the articles in this edition reflect the anxieties and difficulties associated with managing change on such a large scale.

For those unfamiliar with the details of "Fresh Start", it is worth briefly outlining its significant features. It is best understood as a fundamental re-orientation of the Service in three key areas. First, we have in one bound freed ourselves from the constraints of an overtime-driven organisation. The vast majority of staff are now paid a basic salary and hostages to fortune in terms of industrial action by means of withdrawal from overtime have been removed. Uniformed staff are now paid a good wage in return for civilised hours of work and in consequence see more of their families. Secondly, the management structure, and in particular, the line of managerial accountability, has been reorganised, with the former Chief Officer rank incorporated into the Governor grades. There is now a clear line of accountability from basic grade officer through a hierarchy of ascending grades to Governor Grade I, and

beyond through Regional Directors, to the Deputy Director General and the Director General. Adequate incentives in the form of financial differentials have been built into each level of the management line. Finally, the deployment of uniformed staff has been de-centralised to group managers, the former Principal Officer rank, who now carry considerably enhanced responsibility for managing and directing a group of staff immediately accountable to them for their day to day activities. Concomitant with this measure of de-centralisation there now exists a much greater scope for group managers to deploy staff flexibly to meet the needs and tasks of their particular groups. Thus, the Prison Service is now implementing massive change in all these three key areas, and the debate reflected within these pages will no doubt continue for several years until the Service has adapted to the changes and settled down to entirely new ways of working.

Inevitably, this edition of the PSJ is somewhat inward-looking and "in-house", and may not mean as much to a member of the general public as a member of the Prison Service. Nevertheless, in keeping with our recently stated policy of making the journal more relevant to practitioners, the Editorial Board decided that we must devote the whole of this larger than usual edition to this particular subject. We hope that our wider readership will also appreciate a private family debate opened up in this way to more distant relatives and friends.

A VIEW FROM ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS

Eric Caines

Fresh Start was surrounded by paradoxes. The major paradox, and the question which came to dominate the debate as the arguments for and against Fresh Start were developed, was how more and more could be going into the Prison Service for less and less by way of return. That the ever-widening gap was due to the uncontrolled growth in staff costs as a proportion of total expenditure is probably no longer in dispute. The opposing views as to why this had been happening — on the one hand that the Service was over-staffed or at least that staff were badly deployed; and on the other, that the total funding made available was too little and that the internal disparities would have been remedied by raising the ceiling — are still relevant, though the backcloth to the debate is now different.

A further paradox was that, in its separate parts, Fresh Start was neither fresh nor a new beginning. Many of the separate pieces of what came to be the final Fresh Start package had received constant attention over the years and had been the subject of a variety of initiatives, most of which had foundered. Overtime had been a constant preoccupation of both management and the POA for a number of years and some bitter battles had been fought over it; structural reform as an issue had been running almost as long as Coronation Street; attempts to reduce the number of allowances had made little progress; a change to monthly pay had been first mooted in 1963; and so on. The only thing that was new about Fresh Start, therefore, was the fact that it bundled all these separate items of concern into a single package, which package also contained — and this was truly new — significant reforms of the pay and superannuation systems.

Another paradox was that through the entire long, drawn-out period during which the Fresh Start idea was being

sold as a broad programme of reform, a major preoccupation was with the most abstruse and specific points of detail. This attention to the small print was necessary if for no other reason than that, when Fresh Start finally appeared, it was evident that the individual prison officer would want to compare every aspect of what was on offer with his present individual circumstances. On the terms and conditions side, therefore, as opposed to the working practices side — where the conscious decision to leave as much as possible to be settled locally, out of a recognition of the differences between one prison and another, was taken at a very early stage — the finer points of detail were recognised as being very important and were debated endlessly. The staff of the Service, as a group, were packaged and repackaged and looked at from every different viewpoint. The interests of women prison officers; new entrants; the over 55s and the over 60s; specialists etc, were examined and re-examined in the search for a balance with the widest appeal.

Yet in reality — and it is easier to say this from a distance — what was important was the vision which held the separate parts of the package together, the conviction on the part of the Prisons Board and the team leading the work that sights had to be raised and a new direction taken. It was this vision and excitement which kept the team going through the most difficult phases of the development of the package.

The final paradox was that whilst it had proved impossible for so long to bring about significant change on so many separate fronts, it was possible, in the event, to bring about the single all-embracing major change. It was as if no area of debate had to be mapped out and the only thing which could be found which was entirely new was the totality of all the bits and pieces with

which everybody, in one way or another, had become so familiar and on which everybody had positions. The one thing on which nobody, however, had ever been invited to take a position on was Fresh Start as a whole, which, as presented, actually required people to think through their positions rather than assume familiar and comfortable postures.

But though Fresh Start may have been larger in content and concept than anything which had been attempted before in the Prison Service it was, nevertheless, only a beginning. And it is only in relation to the way in which it is used and followed-up that its importance or otherwise for the Prison Service will be judged in the years ahead. In its essence, Fresh Start is no more than an opportunity to allow the Service to bring about changes of far more lasting effect than the changes imported by the reform itself. Indeed, Fresh Start was never intended to be more than an administrative reform from which real and long-lasting service reforms could grow. The real concern of the Prison Service has to be with how prisoners are dealt with, which bears not only upon such broad matters as self-respect and public perception but narrow matters such as security and control and relationships between staff and inmates. For too long, the Service had been concerned with the range of matters contained in Fresh Start and had been directing too much time and effort to them. The Fresh Start initiative was an attempt to set these aside and to create the opportunity for the energy and will of the Service to be directed to the wider issues.

As the Fresh Start team realised, however, this would only be done if Fresh Start moved the Service on to a plateau of perceived fairness in relation to the way staff themselves were treated. Feelings of fairness or unfairness in the Prison Service, as in any other area

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A VIEW FROM **The Director of Personnel and Finance**

Joe Pilling

When I returned to the Prison Service in May 1987 after a gap of 5½ years a few immediate impressions registered even before Fresh Start. Cleland House feels like a Headquarters whereas Ecclestone Square had moved the cheerful to be glum and the depressive to be suicidal. The Prisons Board has bedded down and is playing the part that its architects had intended. Newbold Revel has been acquired though circumstances have so far prevented it from fulfilling its natural role. It is ideally suited to be the symbol and focus of all that is best in the Prison Service and will no doubt become that in due course. Above all Headquarters has a stronger link with the wider Service which is presented effectively to the rest of the Home Office and more widely in the criminal justice system.

But it was only a matter of days before I realised that my working life was going to be dominated for a long time to come by something called Fresh Start. It was curious to find myself as the adoptive parent or wet nurse of a scheme in whose conception and gestation I had played no part. But it was not difficult to persuade myself that the infant was healthy and much needed.

I am too close to Fresh Start to be objective and we are all too close to it to be anywhere near developing a historical perspective. In this article, written as a member of the Board working for the greater part of every day on aspects of Fresh Start, I simply want to offer some reflections organised around four questions -

- why did we do it?
- how are we doing?
- what will it look like when it settles down?
- have we lost our vision?

Since last May I have heard many

critical comments about aspects of Fresh Start but not one single person has said to me that we should have left things exactly as they were. We might look back nostalgically to some aspects of the good old days but we all recall features that we could not describe with pleasure or pride. Members of staff worked week in week out for year after year for numbers of hours that were bad for them, bad for their families and bad for the job. There was widespread recognition within the Service that work was organised inefficiently. Some examples were notorious. It was bad for our image and bad for our self-respect. Although the problems had been recognised, it seemed impossible to break into the system and do something about it.

Here and there for a period of years because of a coincidence of personalities the difficulties in the relationship between the chief officers and junior governor grades would be resolved satisfactorily and the system would work well. But the problems recurred too often and the success stories were too few to suggest anything but the need for a different structure. Could our talk about enhancing the role of prison officers and career development seem more than hollow when there were what must have seemed artificial barriers in the way of an officer's progress from the landings to the highest posts in the Service?

In running establishments almost everything turned on the person and personality of the governing governor. Fewer might have been critical of this than of some other features of the old systems but no-one would deny it. In an increasingly complex world it was an approach that put a limit on what even our best governors could achieve. In the nature of the system they tended to be involved in everything that happened. Change in every aspect of the

life of an establishment needed to be referred to them. Beneath the governor were many able, mature and senior staff frustrated by a lack of responsibility appropriate to their ability, maturity and seniority. It seemed that insights into management systems and structures well proven elsewhere in the public and private sectors—in the UK and overseas—were ignored in our Service.

It may seem unnecessarily morbid and negative to uncover these pre-Fresh Start sores at this stage. But I believe that it is healthy to keep doing it until we are through the teething troubles of the transition to Fresh Start. Nothing is better calculated to put our current difficulties into perspective.

With a copy deadline some months ahead of the publication date it is unwise to be too specific and detailed in considering how we are doing in moving to Fresh Start. If it was not clear to everyone a year ago, it is clear now that Fresh Start is a process and not an event. To get as much out of the opportunities as human frailties will allow will take a matter of years and not months. On top of that, as the Home Secretary has said in public more than once, no-one would have chosen to introduce Fresh Start against a background of a rapidly rising prison population. The speed of implementation was an added difficulty. It would have been quite impossible to move over on a single date across the whole of England and Wales but it was the unanimous view of all the senior managers to whom I talked that it would have been unfair to staff for implementation to have been strung out more than it was.

These are all factors that make it a small miracle that we have got as far as we have but there is ample evidence that we have no room for complacency. The observation—'We have done Fresh Start here. What's next?'—reveals

ARCHITECTS VIEW

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of employment, derive basically from the way staff are rewarded, from whether they believe themselves to be part of a Service which offers satisfying jobs and opportunities for professional improvement and career advancement, and from whether or not there are sufficient numbers of staff to allow the required jobs to be done properly. Fresh Start was an attempt to attend to the first of these areas. Though a sense of unfairness through the transitional period may linger in the minds of some individuals because of what they regard as unacceptable changes imposed upon them, the overwhelmingly positive response to Fresh Start, when the matter was put to the vote

last year, was some indication that this particular objective had been achieved. But it also attempted to prepare the ground for advances in the other two areas. Certainly, restructuring gives the opportunity, bolstered by imaginative training and personnel management, for the development of careers on the basis of merit and achievement. And if this is accompanied by the progressive raising of entry standards, an evolutionary change of enduring significance can be achieved.

In the shorter-term, however, what must be attended to — as a matter of extreme urgency — is the conclusion of an agreement with the POA about staffing levels. A complementing system which can be accepted as providing fair levels of

staffing, determined on the basis of agreed measures, must now be put in place quickly. Devising such a system will be fraught with problems, but a start had already been made when Fresh Start was accepted and efforts must now be redoubled to complete the work. All complementing systems have their problems, the principal one being of making the system responsive to changing circumstances, but these are not insuperable.

If all this work can be satisfactorily completed, these perception of fairness can be used as the foundations for advances in the wider areas to which I have referred. And if this article serves to reinforce this wider Fresh Start vision, it will have served a useful purpose. ■

quite a lot about the speaker and quite a lot about the establishment but the message is not what the speaker intended to convey.

Not the least remarkable aspect of 1987, which should seem in time to have been a remarkable year for the Prison Service, is that we set about evaluating the move to Fresh Start as quickly as we did. The process has taught us a lot and developed our thinking to a further stage. At the time of writing it promises to have been a positive and constructive exercise pointing the way forward for the year ahead.

The short response to how we are doing seems to be pretty well considering and we have a clear view across the Service of what the next stages should be.

In the midst of the turmoil of transition it is encouraging to keep looking forward to the intended destination. We also need to keep doing it because each time we do some parts of the destination come a little clearer and every now and again some part is jettisoned and replaced by something else in the light of more experience. In a sense this is the counterpart of the catalogue of problems that drove us to Fresh Start.

I am looking for a Prison Service where

- everyone has a clearly defined and satisfying job with specific tasks on a specific timescale
- everyone knows to whom he is accountable and knows clearly what that person thinks of his performance

— everyone works hard but has ample leisure at reasonably predictable times

— annual staff reporting is rigorous, honest and open and helps to ensure that promotion to all levels is on merits

— the contribution of each occupational group is properly valued with the Service working as a multi-disciplinary team rather than fragmented by misunderstanding and rivalry

— anything that matters to us is measured, if it can be, so that we know whether we are doing well or badly

— we have a management system that helps us to make improvements year on year rather than relying on the accident of the right man in the right place to secure change despite the system

The necessary preoccupation with attendance systems and management structures in the last 2 or 3 years has prompted questions from time to time about a loss of vision. What about the prisoner? Has Fresh Start become an end in itself? I suppose that is the sort of questioning that I and other members of the Board find it easiest to understand and respond to. It is anxiety expressed for the highest motives.

My first response is that Fresh Start is a worthwhile end in itself (as well as a means) and it is quite wrong to be ashamed of it or apologetic for the time it has taken up. The features towards which we are moving and which I have just described are worth

it for their own sake in the interests of both our staff and the taxpayer. It is a proper object for stewards of public money to seek to get better value for that money.

Second, effective management systems and the efficient organisation of work are needed before we can deliver any vision that we might have. Fresh Start is a means as well as an end. Without the changes it brings we might dream but our dreams will not become a reality. There is no real tension between better management and better regimes for prisoners. The two complement each other and are not alternatives.

Finally, it may be true that management issues have sometimes seemed to loom large in the last year but the Board has found time to consider various aspects of regime delivery as well. Work has been going ahead on *A Sense of Direction* under Gordon Lakes' leadership. In June we studied the outcome of detailed Regional surveys of progress in carrying forward *A Sense of Direction*. At a later meeting further developmental work on regimes was commissioned and we undertook to return to the subject soon and to re-examine the issue of whether a 'mission statement' would help us meet our tasks.

The Board has kept its commitment to the fundamental tasks of the Service and there can be no doubt that staff at all levels in establishments are as keen as they ever have been to improve the service they provide. My firm belief is that in due course Fresh Start will be seen to have helped us to move up a whole gear in our delivery of that service. ■

Initial Thinking on the role of the Governor under Fresh Start

Andy Barclay

Governor, HM Prison Norwich

I r  collect as Deputy Governor at Wandsworth working through an exercise with the Governor, Bill Guinan, to determine the amount of his time over which he had control. The result was quite remarkable as almost 75% of his week was out of his control — it was controlled by routines, ‘statutory duties’, the number of managers and trade unions who expected direct access, demands from Region and Headquarters to attend management and training meetings, and attendance at institutional meetings. Bill’s favourite phrase and actual practice was ‘delegation with confidence’. Yet he had little control over the majority of his time to set objectives, monitor, plan and develop policy relating to that large, complex institution.

It was this experience, and similar recollections from other Governors in the past that led me to share the feelings of the de Frisching group that in the development of the management structure it was essential to ‘free up’ the role of the Governor. The de Frisching group summarised their recommendations on the role of the Governor in the following way:

‘The Governor has the final responsibility for steering the direction of the establishment, creating a sense of purpose and commitment and enabling staff to give of their best. To achieve these goals, the Governor needs to be freed from detailed duties which tie him down and prevent him from managing his establishment in the round. To exercise his key leadership role, The Governor needs the space and capacity to keep in touch with the staff and with the inmate community. He must be able to judge the mood and temper of the establishment, and in that context, to chart the way forward.

He will do this most effectively through interaction and teamworking with his senior management team. A firm structure will enable him to delegate confidently, to define objectives for his managers, to allocate resources to them for their achievement, and to assess their performance against specified targets.’

I thought in this article it would be useful to share some of the thinking of the de Frisching group and respond to some of the arguments that have been presented to me about the new

management structure

‘The Governor needs the space and capacity to keep in touch with staff and the inmate community.’ Traditionally the Governor’s rounds, it has been argued, has been the Governor’s means of keeping in touch with the grass roots of the establishment. In many establishments the Governor’s rounds have been a combination of routine, ritual and carrying out ‘Statutory Requirements’ that could be more effectively delegated. I can guarantee that many Governors used to have a set pattern every morning with adjudications, applications, visit to the centre, visit to the kitchen, cup of coffee in the hospital, and then back to his desk. This routine has been predictable to the extent that, if he visited at another time of the day, the greeting was still ‘Good Morning’.

The Management Structure under Fresh Start and the delegation of tasks to senior management and intermediate managers should allow the Governor to be freed of those routines and rituals, and to choose where, who and when he wants to visit. This will

be a far more effective way of grass roots contact. Fears have been expressed that the delegation of responsibilities to senior managers and intermediate managers will isolate the Governor. The contrary in my opinion is true. For example, if the Governor can delegate the adjudication responsibility his appearance in the prison is not governed by the daily routine i.e. time of adjudications. Further the Governor can monitor and manage adjudications through doing them when he chooses, setting standards and by scrutinizing the white sheets each week. The greater control of his time should enable the Governor to personally and more effectively keep in touch with staff and the inmate community, and be seen to be more closely involved not more isolated.

The 'personal responsibility' of the Governor for 'Statutory functions' as laid down in Prison Rules, Standing Orders and Circular Instructions is an issue which has led to much debate. There seems to me to be two sides of the coin here. First, many of the requirements, we discovered on the de Frisching group, were more to do with tradition than what is actually said in Prison Rules and Standing Orders. For example, as far as we could see there is no requirement to taste the food but simply to examine and sign the menu book; a task which can be delegated. Visits to the hospital can be delegated to other Governor grades as can the majority of the other visits e.g. to rule 43s, and rule 48s. The other side of the coin is that Circular Instructions from Headquarters have often looked to **personal** involvement by the Governor in decision making within the prison. This may have been as a reaction to a serious failure in a system or, as a precaution to ensure the implementation of what is perceived by Headquarters as a sensitive policy decision. While clearly the final responsibility for that decision making lies with the Governor he cannot personally be involved in everything all the time. He must rely on delegation of decision making and then rely on his own monitoring procedures to ensure that those decisions are being made correctly. Each Headquarters division with their own policy responsibilities have to bear in mind that the Governor is responding to policy making from over ten Headquarters divisions and regional Office. Our recommendation was that 'A firm structure will enable the Governor to delegate confidently', and

Headquarters need to be confident of that structure operating under the management of the Governor rather than demanding the Governor personally to make individual decisions.

The management structure is designed to enable the Governor to have a manageable span of control i.e. 6 or 7 senior managers reporting directly to him. The clear definition of their responsibilities will enable him to delegate but also control what is happening within the establishment. It has been suggested that the disappearance of the Deputy Governor and the Chief Officer leaves the Governor without his right-hand men and again rather isolated. To counter that I would argue the reduction of the number of people directly accountable to the Governor will enable the Governor to steer the direction of the establishment more effectively with less overlapping of responsibilities and criss-crossing of communications. Specialists within the establishment particularly have felt they will be more remote from the Governor and their voices will not be heard. The aim is that the Head of Inmate Activities or another member of Senior Management to whom specialists are accountable will have more time to support those in the work they do and represent a balanced and accurate picture of the specialists' work to the Governor. The reduction of the span of control will reduce the need for a 'right-hand man' because he will have a smaller, manageable team to rely on for information and communication purposes.

The Governor needs to develop a sense of common purpose in that team and it is through that team work that the Governor will gain more effective support. In turn there is a need for all members of that team to have an overall understanding of the institution, rather like the old Chief Officer and Deputy Governor, rather than perhaps only seeing the institution from their own work stand point.

The Governor should exercise a personal role for all staff and inmates but not in the traditional sense of all having direct access on any issue. Delegating responsibility and decision making to senior management and group management levels does not mean that the Governor loses a personal role. We all know examples of how relatively trivial issues have taken up the Governor's time when they could have been dealt with much more effectively at a lower level. I

recollect sitting in the Governor's chair one weekend at a previous establishment when a dog handler plus a dog walked into my office to insist that I did something about a car that was blocking his car in the car park. Then there was the memo from an officer asking me if there were any size 17 collar shirts available. The Governor has inherited this from the old paternalistic role and this clutters up his time. What is important to maintain is personal contact between the Governor and staff and inmates on relevant issues where his personal intervention can make a difference, where problems have not been able to be resolved at a lower level. The caring role for both staff and inmates can be more effective where he has managers who can resolve problems for staff and inmates effectively and he can concentrate on those large problems which really do need his personal attention.

In a similar way the Governor's role in relation to industrial relations can be more effective if the union representatives can see ways of resolving issues without going to the Governor's office or without awaiting the formal meeting with the Governor. The Governor clearly needs to maintain good working contact with the various staff representatives in the establishment, but if he is constantly tied down to resolving issues that could be resolved by his other managers, the larger issues are not given sufficient priority.

The role of the Governor as the interface between the establishment and the Regional Office and Headquarters has to be of major importance. It is essential in the policy making of the Department, on national issues and local issues that the Governor provides significant inputs from the local level. We have all had experiences where one part of Headquarters has not linked in with another part of Headquarters and contradictions in policy have resulted. The Governor is in the unique position of receiving documents from all policy and operational divisions, and implementing them in a co-ordinated way within his establishment. What is often obvious to the Governor is not necessarily so for one particular policy division looking at one particular aspect of the establishment. It is essential that the Governor's knowledge and experience is drawn upon by those divisions in the formulation of policy, and essential that Governors readily and constructively contribute opinion

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“*A little touch of Harry in the night*”

Trevor J. Gadd

Governor, H.M. Prison, Wakefield.

Governing in the past

‘I am writing to confirm formally that it is proposed to post you in your present rank to take charge of Wakefield Prison in succession to...’ Such was the memorandum I received from P7 Division in March 1986 (i.e. 1986 BFS—Before Fresh Start). Having already been an in charge governor at two previous establishments, I viewed my appointment to Wakefield Prison as a reasonably logical, if somewhat flattering step in my career. By then I believed I had a clear idea of the role of an in-charge governor in the Prison Service and the kind of style required to carry out such a task effectively.

For those of us who came into the Prison Service in the two decades immediately following the Second World War, the shadows of ‘A.P.’ and Sir Lionel Fox, the Chairman of the Prison Commission for most of that period continue to dominate the ethos of the Service. This ethos contained within it a clear concept of leadership with an emphasis on individualism, personal example and a total commitment to the task to be done, if necessary at the expense of personal circumstances. It is probably not surprising that such a Prison Service inevitably attracted to it highly indi-

vidualistic, at times eccentric, people who saw an opportunity to exercise a style of leadership and command particularly suited to their own temperament; an opportunity rarely available in other professional jobs outside of the armed services. It was, therefore, perhaps no mere chance that the majority of governors of that era came from an armed services background. It was this concept of governorship which I inherited and carried into my own perspective of the governor’s role.

It is perhaps necessary to have experienced this phase in the development of the Prison Service personally, before one can understand and appreciate fully what this style of governing had to offer in terms of motivating prison staff in the achievement of the perceived objectives of the organisation. This goal was primarily enshrined in Rule 1 of the Prison Rules, clearly orientating the Service to a rehabilitative function, whilst creating a closely knit hierarchical and familial environment for staff: an environment in which they could identify with, and work towards, the widely accepted aims of the Service. I believe that the highly individualistic style of governing during that period was peculiarly suited to the situation. Looking back in time,

I recognise now that much, perhaps too much, was invested in the person and personality of individual governors; governors who could, and at times did, exercise a despotism, not always benevolent, over both inmates and staff in the furtherance of Rule 1 and the maintenance of a hierarchical and disciplined service. Lest I should be judged a harsh critic of this system and style of governing, let me say now that it appeared to work remarkably well in achieving a willing commitment from most grades of staff, who contributed to a consensus view of what they were in the Prison Service to do.

Thus Prison Standing Orders setting out the statutory duties of governors clearly underlined the personal responsibility and ubiquity of governors in carrying out their command function. Above all, this necessitated a close interface as contact between governor and staff, so that both supervision and direction emanated from a personal relationship based on mutual respect and professional competence. It is perhaps worthy of note here that this mutual respect was established during that period when a significant proportion of prison governors came into the Service as direct entrants. That

this did not appear to provoke the resentment of uniformed staff to any great extent, itself indicates both the high quality of the governors recruited into the Prison Service and the symbiotic relationship between newly recruited junior governor grades and the uniformed grades, wherein each recognised the role they had to play in, and the contribution they were able to make to, the Service.

It is a commonplace saying that the Prison Service is in the people business. It is an organisation comprising widely disparate groups of people amongst both staff and inmates. In prison the product is a human one and no prison can be a viable community unless prison staff show the kind of leadership which can draw together the many different, often conflicting threads, sometimes in a 'conspiracy of co-operation', which constitute the living anatomy of a prison. Such leadership can only effectively have its genesis and driving force in the person at the apex of authority and responsibility—the governor. This in my view, requires a significant measure of personal and direct contact between the governor and his staff to be fully effective. Ultimately leadership has to be direct, not vicarious, if it is to motivate staff to achieve the recognised objectives of the organisation. Equally, the objectives of the organisation need to be clearly understandable and attainable, and will be more likely to motivate staff if they are also inspirational. It is not, I believe, unrealistically nostalgic, in looking back at the immediate post-war period to see it as a time when the confluence of Rule 1, the method of the recruitment of governors, and the individualistic qualities of such governors, contributed to a highly motivated prison staff who believed that some of their rehabilitative work at least was crowned with a measure of success.

Governing Now

I am mindful that much has been written on leadership in many scholarly books and articles over the years and I do not intend to intrude into this much trodden and academic field of study. I would, however, like to enlist briefly the aid of our greatest playwright who, 400 years ago, expressed my concept of leadership in its most succinct and elegant form. On the eve of the battle of Agincourt, King Henry V walks through the camp of his anxious army

to find out for himself the state of morale of the men upon whom his destiny and life will depend the following day. Shakespeare describes the scene thus—'For forth he goes and visits all his host; Bids them good morrow with a modest smile ... (they) beholding him, pluck comfort from his looks ... His liberal eye doth give to everyone ... **A little touch of Harry in the night.**'

Now we have experienced our own exodus from the immediate post-war period and, like society at large, have been wandering the social and moral wilderness of the 1960's and 1970's, emerging into Fresh Start! With Mount Sinai and C.I. 55/84* behind us, we see the hills of the promised land on the horizon. What Mosaic laws for governors have both tradition and the new beginning brought? Have we conceived a new concept of leadership building on what has been tried and tested in the past, or are we shedding what is perceived as a threadbare cloak for new garments? What do we now mean by leadership in the Prison Service of the 1980's? Have we moved away from the belief in the essentially direct symbiotic relationship between the governor and his staff in order to achieve a viable and purposeful prison community? Is it no longer appropriate, in this age of financial control and current management theory, for leadership to be exercised in an individualistic, paternal, even eccentric, manner in the Prison Service of this decade and the future?

These are questions easier to pose than to answer. Whatever answers are attempted, they must be sought in an understanding of the changes in both society and the Prison Service over the past thirty years; changes which have almost certainly shifted the focus of purpose of the Prison service. The passage of time and a greater understanding of the changes in society have undoubtedly brought the view that Rule 1 is no longer an appropriate or attainable objective for our organisation. It may be that the concept of positive custody is more relevant to our present circumstances and that C.I. 55/84 will probably command respect as a more realistic, if somewhat bland and systems-orientated, statement of the aims of the Prison Service. It is to the attainment of these new objectives that governors must now address themselves, recognising that leadership must operate within a clear context of cost-effectiveness and management accountability.

Governing in the Future

What then is the governor of the 1980's and into the next century to be? Is he to be the managing director, cum accountant, of a public organisation, chairing a board of managers, who implement his command function and directives in organising the work force? In the present re-organised Prison Service can the governor only effectively carry out the policy of the Prisons Board vicariously, through subordinate managers, isolating himself from the detail of the routine work of the prison and problem solving so as to remain relatively free to plan and direct in a more coherent and organised manner? Is he to conform to current management theory that he will be at his most effective if his span of immediate supervision and direction is limited to a handful of his subordinates?

If so, I gaze upon such a governor with a sense of unease. Not because I necessarily challenge the fundamental concept of a new management theory in the Prison Service, but because I fear that the practical application of it may be interpreted too literally and narrowly, and may fail to meet the level of leadership that the Prison Service still requires. No doubt, if released from the everyday pressure of what is now seen as routine work and problem solving, a governor may well be able to focus more of his attention on the wider strategic aspects of effectively managing a modern prison establishment. There is, however, a price to be paid for this if a correct balance is not struck between managerial remoteness and the personal involvement of the governor in relation to all his staff. That price is amorphous management, lacking in inspirational direction and personal example.

I look at two aspects of governing to try and illustrate the paramount importance of governors retaining a direct contact and involvement with staff and inmates: there will be others which this article does not have the opportunity to explore. There is a current view that governors should no longer be required to carry out the formal daily round of the prison and the personal conduct of adjudications. This view tends to see such functions as routine and more appropriate to senior managerial grades short of the governor himself. I will not deny that from one viewpoint such functions can be seen as routine in a mechanical sense, but I would wish to argue that it is important how, and by whom, they are executed. I have no doubt that

there is a clear expectation from both staff and inmates that these are two important areas where direct contact should be made between the governor and the staff/inmate community of the prison, and that this community judges the quality of leadership at such points of contact. If the selection and promotion of governors to command is efficient, then the governor has to be the most professionally experienced, and dare I say wisest, officer of the prison. Staff and inmates have this expectation of the governor and look to him as the ultimate authority and source of understanding of the prison community. Not only mutual respect, but trust also, are bonds which must bind together the governor with the prison community and trust will not flourish without personal contact. Thus a member of staff must have the opportunity of contact with the governor, both formally and informally if this sense of trust and confidence is to be maintained. The daily round of the prison offers such opportunity, limited though at times it may be in practice.

Similarly, we must recognise that prisons are not perfect organisations of efficiency, fairness and justice.

Because of this, the governor's awareness of his prison must rest on more than a vicarious knowledge. He must retain direct contact at two important points at least; the personal hearing of applications where practicable, and the execution of the ultimate disciplinary authority through the adjudication procedure. These are two of the critical throbbing pulse-points, the touch of which can tell the governor much about the state of his prison. Through applications, inmates can appeal to the highest authority in the establishment and, by and large, are prepared to accept decisions at this level. Equally, staff are aware that an inmate's direct access to the governor ensures that they must maintain high professional standards of conduct in their dealings with prisoners. In the case of adjudications, the governor is again given the opportunity to set his standards of conduct for staff, as well as for inmates, and in doing so to establish the tone of the establishment in the discipline and control context. Additionally the governor not only sets, but maintains, a consistent approach to control and discipline, and from his own professional experience defines the limits of tolerance or

mitigation as appropriate. The increasing judicial scrutiny of adjudications has now made it increasingly important that these are carried out with the highest standards of professional thoroughness and natural justice.

I have set out here some personal reflections on the past, present and future roles for the prison governor. I have no monopoly of wisdom and others of greater and wider experience may well wish to mount some counter-arguments to the conventional views expressed here. For me, however, the Prison Service will continue to require the style of leadership I have argued for and which I believe to have served our organisation well. I do not see my role in the new era of Fresh Start as being limited to the leather upholstered chair of the managing director in the board room. Nor do I believe that what I call 'chateau generalship' has much to offer the Prison Service — (1914-1918 were not seen to be vintage years for high leadership). If Fresh Start is to be our St. Crispin's day, then we remain in sore need of 'a little touch of Harry in the night'. ■

* Circular Instruction 55/84: Management in the Prison Service.

INITIAL THINKING — *continued from page 6*
and suggestions to Headquarters.

The implementation of Fresh Start has had many hiccups but I think the experience has enabled us to learn the value of good communications from Headquarters to Regional Office to the Governor, and the importance of the Governor as the key communicator between Headquarters and the Institution. Cascading (I hesitate to use the word!) through the institution should be easier using the clearer lines of the new management structure with a clearer identification of roles and responsibilities. Communication has always been, and will always remain, a key part of the Governor's role.

Equally, leadership must always be the prime role of the Governor. Because the Governor no longer carries out his role in the same way does not mean that leadership is not central to his role. I have tried to illustrate that the leadership role is quite compatible with the defining of objectives and targets to provide a sense of purpose and direction for the establishment and its managers, the allocation and control of resources, performance monitoring, acting as an interface between the establishment and Head-

quarters and exercising a personal role with staff and inmates. There is still room within these skills and techniques for personal style and the exhibition of personal qualities of leadership.

The de Frisching group attempted to clarify the command role of the Governor and his subordinates within the establishment and to distinguish it from the day to day management of the establishment. This is another example of how there is a need in the more complex institutions for the Governor to be able to delegate responsibilities, in this case to the Head of Custody. It does not remove his overall responsibility for incident control but does delegate the command of small incidents to the Head of Custody and the command structure. Clearly, where there is a very serious incident, such as a hostage or a major inmate disturbance, the Governor needs to take personal control; but more minor incidents should be, and can be, dealt with by the Head of Custody.

There is no doubt that the Governor's role has become far more complex and the need for management skills accordingly far greater. The wide range of responsibilities the Governor

now carries would have been alien to the Governor of 10-15 years ago — financial management, race relations policy, detailed contingency planning, target setting and so on. The Governor can no longer as an individual do all these things personally but must rely on the team working at senior management and intermediate management levels to ensure the implementation and delivery of all these policies. How he uses his time is a key to this and the initiative of Fresh Start gives us an opportunity to free up the Governor from the old rituals and routines, the old paternalism, and change the attitudes of intermediate staff that the only way to make decisions is to have personal access to the Governor. I believe that the new role of the Governor can enhance the personal style of the Governor, the personal leadership of the Governor and his personal role for staff and inmates. The aim of the new management structure linked with team working, effective delegation, definition of objectives and allocation of resources is to enable the Governor to 'steer the direction of the establishment and to create a sense of purpose and commitment.' ■

STRANGEWAYS MAKES A FRESH START

F.B. O'Friel

Governor of Manchester Prison

This article was completed in January 1988. It represents my personal views of the implementation of Fresh Start at Manchester Prison, up to and including that date.

Background

The "Fresh Start" project probably had its roots in mistakes made within the Prison Service in the late 60s and 70s. One of these was to allow the uniformed staff to become excessively dependent upon overtime, at the expense of job satisfaction. This was caused by inadequate management and a lack of leadership and understanding at the top of the Prison Service. A second mistake was that prison management structures failed to develop adequately as the task of the Prison Service at establishment level grew more complicated. The arrival of increased numbers of specialists (both uniformed and non-uniformed) and the growth in the complexity of the staff task, combined to put pressure on old simplistic management structures so that they became increasingly ineffective. The situation was compounded by the

management split between the senior uniformed grades and the junior governor grades. A particular complication was the manner in which specialist managers, both uniformed and non-uniformed, should fit into an establishment's management structure. Recognition of the first of these problems can be seen in the gradual development of manpower management. But the technical solutions to the overtime problem proposed by manpower personnel found little support at Prison Board level and tended, in retrospect, not to be sufficiently radical to overcome the problem. We have to remember that the 70s was a time when policy work, not managerial control, was the priority among senior Civil Servants.

In parallel with the interest in manpower management, a number of partial solutions to the problems of management structure were developed within the Service. These solutions were put into effect in a number of establishments and generally proved to be a vast improvement on the old, simple structures. Unfortunately, again, there was little interest in, or stomach for, grasping

these difficult problems at the top of the Service and, while experiments continued into the 80s, the lessons being learned were not fully picked up until the Fresh Start project got under way. I was fortunate in gaining direct experience of some of these early experiments, including personal involvement in new management structures at Birmingham Prison. I was able to implement some of my own ideas when I was appointed Governor of Featherstone Prison in 1980.

As the Fresh Start project gathered way, I found myself with some involvement in its initial development in my role as Deputy Director of the Midland Region. So, on appointment to Strangeways in February 1986, I had a clear idea of the likely way that Fresh Start would develop.

Developing the Management Structure

Consequently, on taking up post in September 1986, I immediately started to implement an accountable management structure. I knew that any move towards a clearer manage-

ment structure would be likely to come under the umbrella of the changes envisaged in Fresh Start. Throughout the first 6 months of my Governorship, elements of this new structure were the subject of controversy, as some of the staff felt that Fresh Start was being implemented prematurely. Many staff now feel that the early work we undertook on management structure enabled us, in fact, to move smoothly into the Fresh Start management arrangements.

The management structure changes I started to make at Strangeways showed some interesting variations on the Fresh Start blueprint. One complication was that Strangeways had within its curtilage two distinct radial prisons, one of which was the former women's prison now used for Remand prisoners. This former prison housed some 600 remands. In addition there was the former male prison which consisted of four wings containing between 900 and 1,000 convicted inmates, and a fifth partitioned-off wing, housing around 200 young offenders.

I split the prison into two separate Governor IV commands. The first command managed the Remand prison and the Young Offenders wing, with responsibility for around 800 prisoners. Fortunately the Young Offenders wing was adjacent to the Remand Prison so the link, while not ideal, was physically possible. The Remand prison traditionally had a Governor IV in charge, although the delegation of authority to the postholder had varied considerably over the years. Giving him clearer delegated authority, including adjudications, and adding the Young Offenders wing to his command was a relatively simple task.

The Main prison represented a more interesting challenge. For many years it had been the prerogative of the governing Governor and the senior Chief Officer, with considerable lack of clarity about the subordinate line of accountability. This became the second Governor IV command, with the postholder taking over an office on the Main prison centre and accepting delegated responsibility for all matters, including adjudications, for around 900 inmates.

Each Governor IV was given 2 Assistant Governors and one Chief Officer Grade II, as his immediate subordinates, to organise and run his prison. That structure, set up in out-

line in September 1986, has developed gradually over 15 months as our basic Fresh Start management structure for handling the residential areas.

The Deputy Governor, who had previously had a very wide ranging set of duties, was given a more precise job — now known as Head of Operations. To him reported the Senior Works Officer and the Chief Officer I (Discipline). The arrangements with the Senior Works Officer continued under Fresh Start but the responsibilities of Operations in respect of staffing matters have been moved to Management Support Services. This leaves the Governor IV Operations with a large, and rather more precise, block of work, including the Internal Operations group (Security, Gate, Dogs, etc.) prison auxiliaries (a group of around 40) and the management and supervision of the External commitment (Courts, Escorts, etc.). In addition, Operations became responsible for the management of night staffing and for co-ordinating control on weekends, bank holidays and during the evenings.

Before taking up post I obtained agreement to upgrade one AG post to a new Governor IV post. This was to head up a section known as "Support Services", converted at the time of Fresh Start to "Inmate Activities". This post was to undertake the difficult and delicate task of the supervision and support of the specialist areas, including Probation, Education, PE, the Chaplaincy and, from the introduction of Fresh Start, industries.

Finally, Management Support Services was set up in September 1987, and in addition to the financial audit and regime monitoring elements, took on a new personnel role and responsibility for catering services for the entire establishment. The Head of MSS, an SEO, was left with 2 HEOs reporting to him and acquired two Governor Vs.

Working the Management Structure

In order to make a management structure of this size and shape work, issues of management style had to be addressed. If we were going to have proper, accountable management, authority and responsibility had to be delegated down the line as far as possible. We also had to avoid the danger of abdication rather than delegation. Two examples of working the struc-

ture may help. Having delegated adjudications to the 2 Governor IVs in charge of the 2 parts of the prison, arrangements for covering absences had to be made; essentially the governing Governor does this. So every Monday and Friday, at least, in the absence of one of the residential G. IVs on his long weekend off, the governing Governor will adjudicate in one part of the establishment. The Deputy Governor and the other Governor IVs only conduct adjudications at weekends or in the absence of the Governor. This arrangement has the advantage of putting the bulk of the adjudicating work continuously with the officer responsible for managing that part of the prison, while the Governor I retained some direct involvement with the adjudicatory process. A crucial element in spreading the task of adjudicating more widely lies in the quarterly standards meetings held between the various adjudicating Governors.

A second example of management arrangements in practice is the control of staff. Under Fresh Start the abolition of the central detail made it essential that other arrangements were made when a Group Manager was unable to manage from within his own resources. The arrangement we have worked satisfactorily since the inception of Fresh Start is that a Group Manager unable to manage from his own resources reports up the line to his G. V, and through to his G. IV. Within the single G. IV command, resources are re-arranged wherever possible. If, however, the G. IV is unable to meet his total commitment from within his own resources he reports this to the Governor, at a regular staff planning meeting each week. At that meeting, arrangements for support between the various G. IV commands are agreed in outline, with the details settled direct between individual G. IVs. On the one occasion since Fresh Start commenced, that it has been necessary to shut down a whole section of Inmate Activities (for other than odd days) this was arranged by means of a planned one-week shut down, announced in advance by Governor's order.

Group Working

The task of moving a very large number of uniformed staff from weekly paid, overtime driven systems to monthly paid group working was a considerable one. Strangeways had

had the advantage of a Fresh Start exercise by a Regional Team, in March 1987. It was only on the 19 May 1987, however, that I was given instructions to prepare for implementation of Fresh Start Group Working at the beginning of July, and received copies of the report to work on. The time scale was terribly short. The effort required from the entire staff, particularly in terms of changes in attitude was quite enormous.

From the start of the exercise we decided that the only way to proceed was to push the work of implementation down our developing management structure. Consequently the first step was to identify our Group Managers and their supporting Senior Officers and then the work groups themselves. The Group Managers were given the task of preparing to implement the Fresh Start report in their individual groups. Problems were referred through the G. Vs to the G. IV and, where necessary, were brought to the Governor. Parallel with this, the Local Branch of the POA were given a considerable amount of facility time to allow them to start on the difficult task of preparing their own position and negotiating with senior management. Management also identified one G. V and one PO to work centrally on co-ordinating arrangements, reporting direct to senior management and holding regular meetings with the Local Branch. This enabled quite a lot of work to be cleared with the Local Branch of the POA at the working level. A series of meetings were held between senior management and the POA and after each meeting the Governor wrote to the POA, setting out the agreements reached so far. This series of letters formed a crucial part of the Fresh Start working agreement signed at the beginning of July 1987.

One of the interesting new arrangements under Group Working was setting up a link between External duties and Night duties. One group of staff, including Principal and Senior Officers, rotated between External and Night duties. Although our experience of this link is short, it reduces disruption to the residential groups and is reasonably well accepted by staff with experience of working it.

Fresh Start Grade Integration was introduced at the beginning of June 1987 and Group Working on 5 July 1987. As the first large establishment to go on to group working

there was a considerable anxiety at all levels about how we would manage, particularly as we were left significantly short of complement and were into the summer leave period. But from the beginning a very considerable determination, right across the staff, led to successful implementation of Fresh Start. Probably the worst problems so far experienced was a period in September and October when a very high level of sickness absence occurred. Whatever the reasons for this, it was necessary for management to remind staff of the importance of not abusing sick leave. There has been some reduction in sick leave during the rest of the year.

The main advantage of group working has been continuity of work. This has led to an increased commitment by the staff to getting work done satisfactorily. Staff have undoubtedly enjoyed working in smaller teams with a clear group identity. Group Managers and Senior Officers have found their jobs more worthwhile and demanding; Officers too have benefited from a better share of the more interesting and demanding work. Staff have shown considerable flexibility as a consequence of experiencing real team working. The effects of Fresh Start working on Group Managers has been particularly interesting. Most Principal Officers have had a great deal to do and are now carrying much more responsibility than hitherto. Not surprisingly, it has taken time for some of them to come to terms with this increased responsibility, and the standard of performance in the task has varied. Group Managers have come under a good deal of pressure from within their groups and are experiencing an important and far-reaching change of role. I believe we are only some way into this change, the full consequences of which have yet to become apparent.

Regime Improvement

One major achievement of Group Working has been some improvement in the regime for prisoners. This has been particularly clearly brought about by the re-introduction of regular staff into the residential areas of Wings and Landings. They have coped admirably with the problems inmates raise, previously inadequately addressed, as well as improving the important routine matters of bathing, censoring and exercise. But the overall level of inmate activities has also

seen a steady improvement. For example, workshop hours have increased; teachers now have their inmates for almost the whole of their class periods and some increase has been effected in PE hours and Library opening time. We are also moving slowly but steadily forward with arrangements for introducing some inmate association. Perhaps most importantly we have avoided the wholesale shutting down of regime activities that characterised Strange-ways, in common with many other local prisons, in the past.

Looking Ahead

As I write, we are all starting to learn to use a computer system to handle inmate data (LIDS). Despite technical problems, the key factor in introducing LIDS was the very positive staff approach to change. I believe Fresh Start has released a dynamic within the operational Prison Service; it has enabled us all to develop a framework within which our work can be better handled so that we can develop our part of the Prison Service for the better.

The basic problems of overcrowding, poor conditions and difficult prisoners remain. But at least we are now organising to face these problems professionally and to address the criticism that we are not fully utilising existing resources. This failure fully to use existing resources has been a legitimate criticism in the past, when Prison Service Headquarters has argued with the Treasury for additional resources. When Fresh Start is completely implemented, such criticisms should be much less frequent. I believe, however, that we have several years work ahead to get the Fresh Start initiative properly established. The new attitudes, structures and methods of working need time to become integrated and developed. Then there are the changes necessary to cope with the reduction, and eventual ending, of the contracted hours allowance. The possibility of further grade integration has to be fully explored and difficult decisions taken in this area. These are formidable tasks requiring further commitment from all staff and management.

Facing these tasks will make considerable demands on Headquarters; the following issues need to be faced. First the Service needs a greater continuity of policy. The speed with which senior civil servants move in

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TRAINING FOR GOVERNING

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Background

Training for governors has been around for four decades. But only in the last five years has training for governing been regarded as a pivotal aim and activity of central training. For 40 years, the standard entry point to the governor grades was the Wakefield Staff Course. For many, the staff course has been supplemented by one or more general development courses, often associated with promotion and/or courses designed to develop specific skills such as hostage incident management and handling industrial dispute. All of this may be termed 'training for governors'. In 1983, with the introduction of the command course, an attempt was made comprehensively to prepare governors for governing, that is for taking charge of a prison department establishment as governing governor. This was followed in 1984 by the introduction of senior command studies for class II governors. Before 1983 hundreds of governors had taken charge of prisons without specific training for doing so. Before this time, it tended to be assumed that the innate qualities and abilities of those selected for their staff course, the further training undertaken, along with, say, 12 or more years of experience in three or four establishments provided a sufficient base from which to move into the governing role. Why

then was training for governing introduced?

Perhaps the most evident justification for its introduction was that the role of the governing governor was becoming increasingly complex. In his introduction to the formal programme for the first command course, the then Commandant of the College wrote 'The course has been designed to fit newly appointed governors for their enlarged and challenging roles, whilst retaining traditional liberal and humane values which remain the core elements of the profession' (Driscoll, 1982). At that time some of the role-enlarging elements were identified as human rights, natural justice, financial control, escalating social and industrial problems, increased legislation and government intervention. Somehow, training for the expanding remit of governors was to try to encompass the effects of inevitable change within a general management approach while continuing to have regard to long-standing human values.

Two other factors may be referred to as important triggers of the introduction of training for governing. First, there was central government's forceful thrust to bring about tight financial control and accountability. Generations of governors had been conditioned into thinking that, while a conscientious effort to minimise

waste and extravagance was necessary, occasional over-spending was unavoidable, could readily be justified by reference to the need to maintain security and control and, in any event, could be reasonably accommodated through the supplementary vote procedure. A sea of change of attitudes and approach was needed if governors were to accept genuine accountability for budgets, to take financial control and to integrate a financial dimension into the general management of their establishments.

Secondly, there was a growing determination within the Prison Department, in keeping with the tougher stance adopted by central government, that management should be empowered to manage and should not be capable of being diverted from reasonable objectives by collective staff strength. The May Inquiry had been set up in November 1978 as a result of industrial unrest. The Committee's subsequent Report (1979) stressed the importance of industrial relations training for governors, not merely as a means of preparing them for fire-fighting but, more importantly, as a means of managing their staffs in such a way as to prevent 'the root causes of industrial unrest from developing'. In another section of the Report, May stated, 'what we would like to see is the unambiguous re-assertion of leadership from the centre both at headquarters

and also by governors at establishments'. The hope must have been, not only that training would enhance the quality of governing, but also that the service as a whole would hear the message that central government and Service management together were in earnest about their intention to exercise control and to manage effectively and efficiently.

There were other factors which contributed to the decision to introduce training for governing—the views and influence of a number of key people, comparable forms of training in other services, the perceived need to develop a comprehensive training strategy—but it is by no means certain that these alone would have been sufficient to launch such major change. The impetus for this change, as for many others, is to be found fundamentally in the central political determination that collective staff strength should be contained, that managements should manage and that financial control should be established and maintained.

Taking Stock

Since 1983, almost 100 class III governors have attended the command course and approaching 50 class II governors have undertaken or are in the process of undertaking senior command studies. What has this experience amounted to and can any general conclusions be drawn?

Perhaps the first point to make is that training for governing is here to stay. It would surely be inconceivable, and perceived as retrograde, to turn back the clock to the time when initial training and experience comprised the only common preparation for governing. However critical governors might have been (as many of them have) of the particular courses which they attended, almost without exception they have supported the principle of training for governing.

The time is ripe to ask what can be learned from the experience of training for governing thus far and how can future training be shaped to meet individual and organisational needs more effectively?

Examining the experience of training for governing is greatly enhanced by the fact that both the command course and senior command studies have been (or, in the latter case, are being) systematically evaluated. (Williamson, 1986 and Farrow, 1987). In the absence of written evaluative studies, experience is easily

lost and mistakes repeated. Continuing or periodic evaluation is essential if training is to develop positively and effectively.

It is interesting to note the different styles adopted from the outset by the command course and senior command studies. The command course took the form of a continuous residential course stretching over almost three months and comprising a range of knowledge and skills which, from a needs analysis, had been judged relevant to the governing of a small or medium establishment. In contrast, senior command studies comprise a series of modules and attachments along with individual projects and consultation. The command course focused essentially on many of the tasks which class III governing governors are expected to perform whereas senior command studies are designed as preparation for further promotion and postings to class I establishments or headquarters.

Despite the evident differences in the two training modes, reactions of those who have experienced them or who have worked closely with them tend to point in a similar direction.

First, both 'courses' are perceived as competing with the work-place for the time of the governors concerned. The command course was judged by most class III governors as too long and inconveniently scheduled (close to a change of post) and senior command studies are judged by some class II governors as over-demanding in terms of total time commitment.

Secondly, there is the related question of quantity. The command course 'resolved' this problem by compressing substantial amounts of varied material into pre-determined time boundaries. Courses were experienced by participants as tightly-packed and lacking sufficient time for reflection, assimilation and discussion. Senior command studies provide more opportunities for discussion and for sharing experience but offer more modules and subjects than most class II governors have been able to accommodate in their demanding schedules with the result that some planned events simply do not take place.

Thirdly, each course raises, in different ways, the important question of the ownership of learning. The command course, despite several attempts to individualise at least parts of the course, remained stubbornly rooted within a tutor-centred, didactic training mode. Senior command

studies set out to develop agreed, individualised programmes of learning along with individual consultative support. In neither case have participants felt that they had a sufficient share in the ownership of their own learning. While senior command studies comes closer to achieving this aim than has the command course, it tends to be the more individualised activities of senior command studies which are squeezed out by competing demands.

In making these points it is all too easy to give an impression that the two courses were entirely misconceived. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many governors who have participated in them have spoken of the benefit derived from them and some have seen them, potentially at least, as extremely valuable. But what has also been commonly suggested or implied is that more effective and efficient ways of learning should be found which take greater account of individual needs, experience and circumstances.

A Broader Perspective

In a recent report from the National Economic Development Office (1987) Professor Charles Handy compares management training in five countries—Japan, USA, West Germany, France and Britain. He says, in relation to management training, 'There is, in the majority of large corporations in these countries (Japan, USA, West Germany and France) a formal policy for continuing education and development; it is written down, often expressed diagrammatically, systematised and circulated'. Whereas, in Britain, a 'formal written statement about the aims, direction and content of management development was unusual even in those organisations which had an organised approach to management development' (International Management Centre for Buckingham, Report for the MSC, 1987).

Handy's report goes on to suggest that there is widespread agreement that 'the real basis for continuing learning in management is experience at work' but considerable difference in the ways in which experience is provided and related to learning. 'In Japan both parts (ie experience and learning) are heavily formalised; in the USA it is more opportunistic and individualist' but in Britain it is still 'often a process of "accidental development" in which experience, job trans-

fers and education sometimes happen to dovetail'.

Some governors might recognise the 'accidental development' syndrome in their own experience. This is not to suggest, however, that all would welcome the 'heavily formalised' approach of the Japanese. But there may be steps which could be taken which would be consistent with British prison service culture and which, at the same time, might move preparation for governing beyond happenstance.

An Alternative Approach

Pursuing the broader perspective further, the tasks facing prison service training seem to be, on the one hand, to devise and implement a soundly-based, coherent and comprehensive plan for training and, on the other, to enable Service managers, as they progress to higher levels of responsibility, to take increasing ownership of their own learning. In practice, this would probably mean that the central training organisation would continue to provide approved, formal training both for new entrants and for many experienced staff as they change posts or take on different responsibilities. But for governors and other managers the central training organisation would become increasingly the facilitator of individualised continuing learning programmes. What is envisaged is that compulsory training would be provided for new staff and for experienced staff taking on those new tasks and responsibilities for which training was available. As governors and other managers move into higher posts, so the compulsory element of training would decline and the expectation that they would take increasing responsibility for their own professional development would grow. As individual members of staff progressed to higher levels of responsibility so their 'learner role' would move from 'trainee' (recipient of what others decide was needed) to 'professional' (having a high degree of control over what and how they learned).

For this to occur there would be, at the highest levels and throughout the system, commitment to continuing staff development. It would require that learning and experience be perceived as two sides of the same coin, each having no meaningful existence without the other. The means of learning would need to be defined in the broadest possible way, encompassing professional discussion, meetings,

seminars, supervision, consultancy, reading, self-teaching, conferences, external courses, exchange visits and placements, central courses or other training opportunities and, possibly, many others. The vision for the future might be one of a career-long, seamless interweaving of experience and learning in which formal training would be an important but not dominating thread. There would be a carefully fostered understanding that the job of running a prison required continuing personal and professional development as well as, and as part of, attention to daily managerial work. The test of the appropriateness of such a change would be the extent, in practice, to which governors gave attention to their own professional development.

It would be inappropriate to attempt to elaborate in fine detail the implications of the kind of approach suggested. However, to be practicable, a clear policy and a broad developmental programme would be needed. These would need to provide scope for individual career and development planning arising from a partnership of interest between each individual and the organisation represented by line managers, and personnel and training staff. Individual records of career plans, experience and training would be needed to minimise inappropriate duplication of experience and to aid rational and collaborative decision-making.

Within this approach, the central training organisation would continue to make an important contribution. However, it would need to become much more responsive to individual and establishment needs. Closer communication between the College and other outstations would be needed so that each could understand the other more readily and both could operate on a common awareness of the subtly changing world of prison practice. Part of such communication could be in the form of the College's researching managerial experience and practice in a constant endeavour to deepen and extend understanding and retain immediacy and relevance of training content and method. A further development would be that the College could establish some form of learning resource centre incorporating the library, self-teaching facilities and academic, training and research consultancy. In this way, training could become more individualised and have more immediate relevance to current

work. As confidence in the training policy and programme grew, the question would arise as to the extent to which individual attention to personal professional development could contribute to judgements relating to readiness for promotion. In any event, the question of whether or not governors had undertaken particularly important elements of training would probably influence promotion considerations.

Summary

A principle on which prison service training has been built is that the central training organisation can hold and teach the knowledge and skills required by practitioners. It is a model of provision and receipt. Learners see little opportunity to influence the content, methods and timing of their own learning. Control over what is provided, and how, rests largely with the central training organisation. Such a model may be effective and entirely appropriate for training new staff. It becomes decreasingly effective and appropriate as staff gain experience and attain higher positions. Senior staff are expected to exercise greater responsibility in their work and they need to take greater responsibility for their own professional development. Thus the concept of training itself needs to be broadened to incorporate more diverse ways of enabling higher management development needs to be met. The central training organisation has a part to play in this process but it must extend its own vision and broaden its concepts if it is to be an acceptable and credible vehicle for encouraging and enabling individual professional development and effective governing. ■

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The Housewife's Choice

Ray Mitchell

Governor, H.M.Y.C.C. Castington. Formerly Governor of H.M. Prison, Drake Hall.

I am sure many prison officers wives were delighted with the introduction of Fresh Start. Husbands working an average 39 or 48 hours with the certainty that the latter would reduce year by year, instead of the 55-60 hours or more they had been working; increased predictability of time off duty; rest days almost guaranteed; and a good, regular income against which to balance the family budget. For a small part of the Prison Service, however, Fresh Start meant a more direct change for women—the female prisons and Youth Custody Centres.

As Governor of HM Prison and Youth Custody Centre, Drake Hall I soon realised that Fresh Start could have been individually tailored for that establishment. The majority of the staff were married with family responsibilities and the single ones, moreover, had homes to run with no one doing the cooking, washing, ironing, cleaning and shopping whilst they got on with earning the money. Overtime averaged 9 hours per week because the Manpower Team which fixed the authorised staffing level did not understand that the majority of female uniformed staff preferred time off to income enhanced through overtime. Most staff were overtime optants and limited alerts were used, with management and staff collusion, as a device for equalising the burden of overtime.

I should make it clear at this stage that I am the Prison Service's biggest fan of female prison officers. Drake Hall may, or may not, be typical but I found the staff there hardworking and extremely caring. They were generally helpful and positive in their response to new initiatives, which I must admit had not been my previous experience of most male staff. The only problem was the rigidity of the Task List which, through a loyalty to their union, sometimes created inefficiency which, I believe, was recognised by most and welcomed by few.

What benefits, therefore, did Fresh Start bring? First, those staff who wished could opt for the 39 hour week and approximately 25% did so. The remainder, having seen the proposed

shift systems, decided they could work their domestic requirements around them when contracted to work the additional 9 hours. Secondly, the Management Structure agreed presented Principal Officers with an opportunity to demonstrate their managerial ability and they responded magnificently. I had been advised when taking command of Drake Hall that female Principal Officers didn't have the experience or ability of their male counterparts. I reflected on this when I sat at conferences and listened to Governors of male establishments recounting the problems some of their male Principal Officers were having in adjusting to group management. It was the Principal Officers at Drake Hall who grasped the initiative and moved into their new role with enthusiasm. That is not to say it was easy: the workload was heavy and the strain sometimes showed but they were fortunate in having the support from above and below in the form of an excellent intermediate manager (who was an ex Chief Officer) and an able and supportive group of Senior Officers.

In the build-up to Fresh Start there was a considerable amount of apprehension but it was the Principal and Senior Officers who made flexibility a 'buzz' word in the establishment. The review was carried out locally, with Regional Office staff acting as consultants and advisers, and every avenue was explored in the pursuit of a functional line management structure, realistic but taut staffing levels, and shift systems which provided for the operation of an enhanced regime with a reduced authorised staffing level. The team which worked on the review consisted of representatives of all grades plus a POA Committee member. The decision to include a representative of the POA from the very beginning was criticised by some of my colleagues but I believe the innate reasonableness of people is usually augmented by involvement in discussion and understanding of all facets of a problem. The Task List was openly and critically analysed, systems which were steeped in the history and

tradition of the establishment were reviewed without constraint, and the appropriateness of staffing levels for each job was addressed without restraint. Discourse was long and often lively but by the time the review and implementation documents were ready to be written, it was agreed (with some POA reservations) that, whilst it was tight, we could successfully implement Fresh Start with less staff than our previous authorised staffing level. The number of staff supervising some work parties had been reduced, can-teening had been re-organised and re-scheduled to a half week task, and Unit staffing levels had been increased to allow for the enhancement of the Personal Officer role and the introduction of Shared Working.

Having completed the review, the staff did not sit back and wait but quickly started to institute dummy runs of Fresh Start working. Work schedules were produced and all the varieties of the 'What if' question were tested out. With, as I remember, only one dedicated exception, staff waited with impatience for our starting date. Although it was hard work, the actual implementation went successfully and smoothly. Of course there were problems and these were brought to my attention but solutions were normally quickly discovered by the Principal Officers and Senior Officers who were relishing their new roles. Flexibility really did come into its own during these early days. Spar Forms caused headaches but, such was the growth in confidence, that even this imposition was not allowed to dampen the spirits.

I have now moved on from Drake Hall but I carry with me an unshakable admiration for the Drake Hall staff who restored my faith in the ability of prison staff to not only cope with change but respond positively to it. I imagine Henry Ford when inspecting the first cars to come off his production line found many imperfect versions of his Model T. Perhaps one had emerged exactly as he had envisaged it. Drake Hall was that perfect Model T and those who envisaged Fresh Start should give themselves a boost by visiting it. ■

VOX POPULI

Martin Mogg

Governor II, P6 Division in H.Q. Formerly Governor of H.M.Y.C.C. Northallerton.

On 1 November 1987, HM Youth Custody Centre, Northallerton in North Yorkshire, began its 'Fresh Start'. Accommodating some 185 YC trainees, the majority serving over 18 month sentences, the Centre is located in a traditional Victorian prison. At the commencement of 'Fresh Start' three working groups were brought into operation, all fully complemented. During the first three months of its new 'life' comments from the trainees and staff included:

Trainees

'Fresh Start has meant longer visits.'

'We only get visits three days a week now, but we can get two hours if our visitors get here on time.'

'We get the same officers on the wing every day now. In some ways this is better, we get to know them, and the Group Officer system works now, on the other hand, they get to know what's going on, we don't get away with as much.'

'There seem to be fewer nickings, the officers are more consistent, we know what's expected of us.'

'I was here two years ago, it doesn't seem as strict now, the officers are more friendly.'

'We get evening classes on a Thursday now, as well as the other days, also I can go to the library more often. If that's due to Fresh Start it must be better.'

'The officers get more time off, I think, and much more money, I can't see its made any difference to us.'

Trainees, Parents and Friends

'We like the longer visits, only being able to come on Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday makes no difference to us, there's more room in the visiting area.'

'My son hasn't even mentioned it, so it cannot have made much difference to him.'

'Everything seems much the same. It still seems an awful long way to come from the other side of the country.'

'I hate coming to this place, it's just the same, no difference.'

The Officers

'I like the time off, but I worry about getting my contracted hours used up.'

'Under the Vee Scheme, I did not work as many evening duties, I could get other people to do them for me.'

'It seems to be working too well, this honeymoon period must end soon.'

'I like working in a small group, there is great rivalry between the groups here. We have separate bases and compete to get the best facilities.'

'One of our group came in from being sick half-way through the morning, he had felt better and knew that one of us would have had to do an extra evening duty to cover him. That would never have happened before Fresh Start.'

'It is more predictable, and will be smashing once the contracted hours have gone.'

'I've never done so many different jobs in one day. Time just flies by.'

'I've certainly lost money through Fresh Start but I am getting to like the time off.'

'Why am I smiling? I finish at lunch-time for four days off, and on this regular salary, it can't be bad.'

'Look this is what Fresh Start has done for me.' (Officer shopping with his wife on a Thursday morning).

'We get more time on inmate casework, that's what most of us have been after for some time.'

'I feel that my status in the community will go up, particularly now that I am salaried.'

'I have found the financial management difficult, but it is more predictable, you know how much you are going to get, even when you are coming back from leave. We all tend to forget the 'flat weeks' under the old system, some of us couldn't afford to take leave.'

'I like the group concept, in our group we have all learned to do each other's jobs, I have even been trained to do the Group Manager's paperwork, that means I understand what is going on.'

Intermediate Managers

'When I lost my old office and uniform I felt as though I had been castrated. I can see lots of things wrong in the establishment, but it is no longer my area of management, I find that frustrating.'

'I felt I had been shunted into a siding, just out of the way, but I find my new job is challenging and interesting. It has given me more insight into what we should be doing.'

'I have never worked so hard in my life, Some days I just don't know which way to turn next.'

'I like being involved in areas which previously were not my province. I think I often bring fresh eyes to what is happening.'

'The management structure as laid out in the charts has meant many changes, there have been mistakes made and accountability is still being resisted by some. It will come right eventually.'

The Group Managers

'Under the old system we worked very long hours and were paid accordingly. Fresh Start has meant a considerable

cut in pay, but we now get the time off and have a real job to do.'

'I thought it would never work, and a lot could still go wrong, but if the group work together, it's a good system.'

'I have worked hard at getting my group to work together. They see themselves as the best and they probably are.'

'It has been difficult to forget the old systems and the task list. Some officers still don't seem to realise that their absence for sick or casual leave means inconvenience to the other officers in the group. A few are still very selfish.'

'I think that the Grade 7s have a real management job to do in my group. That's an improvement on the old system.'

'The recording of hours and the SPAR form system is very time-consuming. I hope it will be simplified; I do not get enough time to go out and about.'

The Governor

'The most difficult thing has been to let go, to really delegate, to lose some of the power.'

'I do now have the time to plan, to work

on those things stuffed in the top right hand drawer.'

'Right down the line staff are managing—in the proper sense of that word. The latent talent has been there all along. We must find further ways of bringing it out.'

'I think the planning and preparation for the introduction of Fresh Start here has paid off. We've got most things right, it's our own attitude and thinking that is lagging behind.'

And the Others

'I think I feel very much one of the others, left rather out on a limb, not really involved in what has happened and more out of touch now than prior to Fresh Start.'

'Everyone else seems to have benefited. All we've got is more time with the trainees, we feel bitter and left out.'

'We've just been used by management. The discipline officers have been bought off. All we've got is more work, worse conditions and no improvements at all.'

'I've found Fresh Start a real challenge, I've lost some areas of responsibility and gained others. I was involved in

the planning and feel part of the team. It would be nice to be given the same financial rewards as well.'

'Under Fresh Start I feel part of the team, I can see where my bit of the operation fits in. For me it has meant more job satisfaction and more involvement.'

'Of course we are worried. Some jobs have gone from our department, people won't be replaced.'

'I only hope that Fresh Start will mean that silly disputes will no longer affect the operation of my department.'

'There have been so many changes. Staff are still uncertain of the future. We feel less involved and less consulted.'

'It's a big con. The prison officers and governors have been bought off. We'll end up with nothing.'

These comments are of course selective. I have tried to give a balanced representation of the views of all groups. Phrases and swear-words have been modified to protect the innocent, or not so innocent. If any member of the staff at Northallerton has a further comment he or she would wish to make to complete the picture, I am sure the Editor would like to hear from them. ■

STRANGeways – continued from page 12

and out of Prison Department Headquarters may be good for their career prospects but contributes to a lack of credibility in Headquarters. Political changes are a necessary part of our democratic system but Management changes are controllable. The moves at the top of the Personnel Directorate in the Spring of 1987 illustrate the point. The May Committee recommendations of 5 to 7 years duration for the Director General post should apply to other senior Prison Department jobs since it would improve the chances of difficult issues being seen through to a conclusion.

Second, we need the staff in post to maintain reasonable manning levels. For at least 20 years there has been a serious unresolved issue over providing sufficient staff to cover sick, leave and training absences. This issue has not been properly addressed under Fresh Start and I believe the clear failure to provide adequate resources for covering absences is now seriously delaying progress. For example, I am unable to carry out staff training as required by the Prison Board because my present resources will barely cover sickness absences.

Third, the change taking place

across the Service is so huge that it needs special managing. Thrusting the work onto existing structures has meant that it has been addressed inadequately and, moreover, that other important work has been neglected. Large organisations involved in such radical change have generally created an extra and special structure to handle the necessary work. There is a link here with my first point; moves of senior personnel and lack of a special structure will, at the best, slow down Fresh Start and, at the worst, could wreck it entirely.

Fourth, briefing and training for Fresh Start at Senior Governor level has been entirely inadequate. Most Governors have had a 3-day seminar and some part-day conferences. Achievement and criticism of Governors in delivering Fresh Start should be seen against that background and the amount and quality of training for Governors to take on and progress Fresh Start must be considerably improved.

Finally, structures above establishment level, at both Region and Headquarters, need to change to take proper account of Fresh Start. We now have Grade Integration starting

to establish itself within establishments but what about the Headquarters and Regional structure? That, too, is a large and difficult task but if Fresh Start is a real Prison Service initiative it needs to involve the top. The 1970 reorganisation of Headquarters was meant to open the way for Prison Service professionals to compete for the Director General post; eighteen years on, this remains the exclusive preserve of others.

Conclusion

The staff and management of Strangeways Prison have played their part in taking Fresh Start into one of the largest prisons in the country. I have no doubt that we will continue to work to get the best out of the opportunity Fresh Start has offered us. But if the Service, including Strangeways, is to benefit fully from the window of opportunity for change presently on offer, I believe that Headquarters also have very much more to do. The issues listed above for Headquarters attention need to be addressed. If that were to happen, I believe the Prison Service under the Fresh Start initiative could look with confidence to an exciting and encouraging future. ■

BUT DOES IT WORK ?

Tony Hazel

Governor V, North Regional Office Manpower Section.

In my opinion there are two key questions in respect of Fresh Start. Firstly, is it the appropriate solution to the perceived ills of the Prison Service; and secondly, what is wrong with Fresh Start as it stands?

I will not dwell on the first issue because while I harbour many doubts and feel that the baby may have been thrown out with the bath-water I cannot state with real conviction that it won't work. I believe the Service will make it work.

As to the second question I am not reassured by Bulletin 14 that all is well. The fact that there is a need for reassurance is a classical sign of unease. The major areas of concern I have are outlined below.

Staffing/Complementing

The biggest single criticism I have of PA consultants is their identification of a potential 15 to 20% efficiency saving within the Prison Service. The evidence they produced was ill-founded and did not seem to take into account any weekend or night working. This particular recommendation has been used relentlessly as a stick to beat over the head of the staff of the Service.

What is even more frustrating is no-one of sufficient authority within the Service was prepared or was able to challenge.

The insistence of P6 Division that Fresh Start could be introduced without a significant increase to the staff in post figure—despite the advice of many manpower personnel—has caused much disharmony. Soon after review teams set out on clinical, objective assessments the shackles of EFFICIENCY RATIO appeared. This fuelled suspicion from staff and management alike and disheartened Regional staff and some Headquarters personnel. Yet it could have come as no surprise for only the foolish or the ill-informed could have believed that

increases that the teams were identifying and that many of us knew were inevitable. Eventually the news spread across the Service and it led to disruption. Unfortunately I believe that industrial unrest will prevail across the Service for some years because of the confusing position relating to complementing. The efficiency target was hopelessly wrong this year and has to be met in future years. At the same time contracted hours are being reduced annually and staff are contracting out in greater numbers than anticipated. I know of few people that understand the problem let alone have the solution.

Other issues affecting complementing are the lack of flexibility and the 20% wastage quota.

Flexibility was the cornerstone of Fresh Start because that was the only response to thorny if predictable problems such as bed-watches, high externals, specialist cover, illness and the like. In practice the flexibility does not match the requirement and this is providing many problems particularly on weekend days

The issue of 20% wastage has been questionable for many years. I won't bore people with tedious technical arguments, save to make two comments (a) 20% wastage is insufficient and (b) in my view Fresh Start does not provide 20%—it is nearer 18%.

Staff Attitudes

The material package offered by Fresh Start is better than could have possibly been expected, therefore one would expect a happy, satisfied and contented staff. In practice I have never known more distrust or resentment. Many staff are convinced that Fresh Start does not provide what it was alleged to offer ie greater job satisfaction, greater continuity etc. I believe that many staff are bewildered, angry and feel let down. In view of the

that is sad. Despite the Bulletins that are now viewed with suspicion I think current attitudes prevail because of a breakdown in communications. A lot of training has been expended on Grades VI and above but the concepts and philosophies of Fresh Start are not filtering down.

Further issues that have had a demoralising effect on staff are as follows; the long shift on weekend days, unfavourable shift patterns, staff shortages, reduced manning levels. While one could argue that all those elements should have been expected under Fresh Start they were not clear to staff when they voted.

Spar

A clumsy, complex system that is incompatible with recording conditioned and contract hours in certain shift systems. It is also time consuming for group managers and does not supply the information required by Regional Offices.

Conclusions

The staffing anomalies are going to cloud and confuse the basic concepts of Fresh Start for some time to come. I believe this summer will bring major problems at weekends. Prisoners may yet become a consideration of Fresh Start!

Unless staff are very quickly made aware of the real Fresh Start and unless Grade VI's are made to feel less isolated and unless the unfortunate drafting in Bulletin 8 re contract hours is resolved then goodwill and enthusiasm will erode. Fresh Start can't survive without those two elements.

On a happier note Fresh Start has allowed me to take Voluntary Early Retirement and despite what is written above I am leaving with no bitterness, just a little frustration. I've enjoyed the Service, met a lot of good people, enjoyed a good lifestyle but leave a little sad that management has still not

The Dog Show

G. Heywood

Chaplain, H.M. Prison, Leyhill.

(I am indebted to the Revd. Michael Stark for the inspiration for this article and I should also add that any similarity to persons, organisations etc. is intentional).

It may have been the rich fare and intoxicating speeches at the Torquay conference that brought it on, but the other night I had a dream. Some might call it a nightmare. Perhaps because I wear a dog-collar, in my dream I dreamt I was a dog who, without any by your leave, had been entered in a dog show. A very grand and revolutionary affair it was with the imposing title of 'Fresh Start'.

The promoters were an organisation with the title P.D. and it was understood and widely proclaimed to be a show that would enhance the doggie world and unite and unify all breeds.

It didn't seem very well organised because they kept changing the rules, and the show secretary was puffing here, there, and everywhere issuing bulletins to keep the organisers aware of all the changes.

If as they said, the show was meant to unify all breeds of dog it seemed strange to me that there were two separate and distinct classes, one for what they call the unified and the other the non-unified breeds. It also seemed odd that the unified dogs were fed twice as much as the others. We thought that very unfair as we were all working dogs and especially as those classed as non-unified were very highly trained and experienced dogs and had lots of certificates to prove it.

Most of those in the unified class were clearly guard dogs and they belonged to a pack called the Peeohay. One could see that the promoters treated this pack with great respect for when the promoters wanted this pack to do something of which they did not approve there was a great deal of barking and growling and the promoters had to give them extra tit-bits in case they got bitten.

Among them were some older and much more experienced dogs who looked a little lost because they had been separated from those they had always been associated with. One of them when he was addressed as 'Chief' growled back — 'Don't call me that, my name is Geefor.'

A group of dogs in the non-unified class previously known as Ayos had also been given a new title which sounded like Humms. They had the responsible job of watching over the entry fees and prizes. Considering how experienced they were and the responsibility they carried they too were undernourished compared with those dogs in the unified class. We all thought it all seemed very unprincipled and didn't comply with the accepted rules for dog shows. On the whole those dogs in the non-unified class were quiet well behaved breeds, they didn't bark as much as the others which was why the promoters didn't seem as concerned about them as they were about those in the unified class.

I found myself in a section marked 'Specialists' (if I was special why didn't I get treated as such?) and much against my will I'd been locked in a kennel marked — INM. ACTS. With me were other dogs. One was obviously a farm dog, another was an industrious dog who had his eye on a very intelligent and well educated little thing who was much more interested in a gymnastic dog who was so excited he kept turning somersaults and flexing his muscles. I thought he was called Pie or maybe it was Pei, anyway he had a whistle round his neck and I wondered what it was for.

'What on earth was I doing in a kennel with this lot?' I asked myself. We had little in common and we didn't do the same kind of work. It was all very confusing especially as the promoters kept insisting on something called 'clear lines of accountability.' It wasn't at all clear to me or it seemed to any of the other dogs because some were chasing their tails in their confusion.

I was about to do the same when along came a friendly looking chap whom everyone addressed as Ardee. He patted me and said 'You're a nice sheepdog'. So that's what I am I thought and I licked his hand and wagged my tail. But although he seemed to like me he wouldn't let me out of my kennel.

I had just made friends with a dog called Psycho in the next kennel when along came the Show Security Officer. I could see he didn't like me — 'I know your breed' he said 'a doberman pinscher, I'll have to keep my eye on you, you should be on a leash, can't have you running around.' 'Me a doberman, just when I thought I was a sheepdog.' Now I was confused. I did know that my breed had always been allowed to roam freely for over 200 years. But I knew it was no use my trying to point this out, or that I was one of the three original breeds called Guv, Chap and Mo who had been around long before they introduced these other breeds into the show.

How was I to convince the promoters and everyone else that they had got it wrong? I'd tried wagging my tail, I'd tried being friendly. Perhaps if I howled, or bit someone, or cocked my leg on someone in authority they would listen to me.

I had just about given up when I spotted my master. Perhaps he can convince them I thought. Its true a lot didn't recognise him though he is quite well known. He's called God and I try to serve him faithfully. 'Don't worry old chap,' he said 'You are my dog — you are not the breed they think you are but a St Bernard. Your job is to save people and you have a little barrel around your neck full of my Spirit You should not be on any kind of a leash or in any kind of kennel. If you were you would not be able to do the work you were bred and trained for.'

He left me to try and have a word with the promoters. I don't know whether or not they listened to him, because it was then that I woke up. ■

What have they done to deserve this ?

Ted Bloor

Ted Bloor is the Head of Management Support Services at HM Prison, Durham and is the Chairman of the Prison Department Outstations' Branch of the National Union of Civil and Public Servants (formerly the Society of Civil and Public Servants).

WANTED

Enthusiastic and energetic men and women to undertake an exciting role in the management of prison establishments as Head of Management Support Services.

The successful applicants will be those demonstrating competence in the traditional accounting, supply and administration skills whilst being able to expand the role of personnel management and to promote and implement new areas in policy development and monitoring.

The Management Service function is central to the operation of the establishment and is the major liaison point between HQ, Regional Offices and the local establishment as well as between other functions within the establishment. As its Head you will need to have a wide understanding of prison operations and policies and with other Heads of functions will report direct to the Governor and be part of a senior management team providing information and advice to ensure the establishment's efficient operation.

Unfortunately, our policy does not allow payment of a salary comparable with other function Heads, and career prospects are considerably more limited.

We are confident, however, that the challenge of the job is sufficient to attract applications from those with Administration Officer experience, and look forward to receiving them.

Can you imagine ICI or Ford deciding that their personnel managers or accountants should be paid only two-thirds or less of the salaries of their counterparts on the production floor, that company buyers should be less regarded than workshop foremen. If they placed an advertisement like the one above would they be inundated with applications and would the morale and commitment of those appointed be sufficiently high to provide the service required? I doubt it, and yet, this seems to be seen as a reasonable approach by the Prison Service management.

The Executive Staff, headed by the erstwhile Administration Officer now entitled the Head of Management Support Services (HMSS), manage the department which provides for personnel services, including the calculation and payment of locally

paid salaries to Prison Officer and other grades, the supply, storage and distribution of all clothing, furniture, foodstuffs and other stores items, the supply of plant, tools and materials for prison workshops and farms, and the despatch of finished goods or crops, the processing of prisoners' documentation and records including the calculation of discharge dates and the maintenance of court calendars, the calculation and monitoring of the establishment's budget together with the maintenance of accounting records and the authorisation of expenditure and the provision of financial information and guidance to the Governor. Perhaps not a very glamorous role, but one which is essential to the running of the establishment and one which is neither less nor more important than the operational business of the establishment

since the latter cannot operate without the former and there would be no need for the former without the latter.

The History

For a good many years the Executive grades employed in the Prison Service have been dissatisfied with the way in which they seem less regarded, and are certainly less rewarded, than their colleagues in the senior Prison Officer and Governor grades. In my own experience this has been increasing over the past decade and whereas the differences used to be explained by the long hours worked and amount of contact with prisoners by operational grades; these reasons no longer adequately explain the wide disparity in the treatment between them and administrative grades.

When the Department first prop-

osed the Management Review, which later became the Fresh Start initiative, the Society of Civil and Public Servants, representing the Executive grades, put forward a bold and forward looking suggestion that the Governor grades, senior Prison Officer grades and the Executive grades should be merged to create a new Prison Manager grade. The advantages were many — the traditional rivalries and demarcation between the old grades would disappear, the simmering discontent of the Executive grades over differences in salaries and career prospects would be removed, future governing Governors would have experience and understanding of all the aspects of an establishment, and the Department would have a more versatile management team. Much, if not all, the additional cost would be offset by the saving of posts which would be achieved by that greater versatility and the removal of demarcation lines. There would be a clear opportunity for any member of the Prison Service, of whatever discipline, to reach the very top of the career structure given the necessary ability and desire and there would be clear accountability from top to bottom. Of course there would be transitional difficulties. Former administrators may not take easily to the demands of operational activities, other grades may find difficulty with the concepts of financial management or the efficient deployment of manpower. None-the-less these difficulties could be overcome and would diminish with time. New managers would not be conditioned to concern themselves with only narrow aspects of prison management and eventually each would have the breadth and knowledge of the whole to become better able to manage the whole. No longer would Governors be expected to be personally responsible for the financial management of their establishments but not provided with the necessary training or experience to properly understand it. No longer would one manager make a decision without understanding and having regard for the effect of that decision on his colleagues in other disciplines within the establishment.

The Present

Regretfully, this vision of the future was not to be. The Fresh Start plans of the Department when issued in July 1986 had nothing to offer the Executive staff, indeed they merited only

the briefest mention in the document. Their ideas have been adopted in part, with the merger of the Chief Officer grades into Governor grades with all Prison Officer and Governor grades becoming unified grades VIII to I with a clear avenue of promotion from the bottom to the top, but they themselves were not to be included in the Prison Service's brave new world. Never have I known such unbridled anger from my colleagues and the Department's managers were subjected to a barrage of protest and criticism from a normally docile group of staff. Whether the reason for the Executive grades' omission was political or financial is a matter for conjecture, but in order to pacify them the Department promised a Fresh Start Phase II, which would be implemented twelve months after what would now be called Fresh Start Phase I. It was argued that to change everyone's job or status overnight would be too disruptive, but that the Department was fully committed to a constructive review of the Executive grades in Phase II and in the meantime their co-operation and commitment to the implementation of Phase I was essential for its success. Such co-operation and commitment would surely not go unnoticed.

Alas, it now seems that, if not unnoticed, it is to go unrewarded. After months of deliberation the Department rejected the claim for the inclusion of the Executive grades into the unified structure but suggested the following ideas for consideration.

- i. That the HMSS post should become an opportunity post open to unified or non-unified grades of appropriate rank. The successful applicant would retain his/her ranking, salary and conditions of service.

What did this offer the Executive grades except the opportunity to lose their posts to other grades? How could it be justified to pay such disparate salaries to staff fulfilling exactly the same role and performing exactly the same duties? What would happen to those who were not successful in retaining the jobs they had?

Clearly this suggestion was unacceptable and, given more than a cursory examination, showed itself to provide no solution to the Department's difficulties.

- ii. That, subject to suitability and selection, existing Heads of MSS should be taken into the unified grades at an appropriate level but that thereafter the HMSS post would remain the sole preserve of the unified grades.

There was an acceptance of the logic that dictates that exclusion of the HMSS from the unified management grades is a nonsense but the proposal begged many questions.

What were the criteria for suitability and selection? What would happen to those not deemed to be suitable nor selected? How could there be justification for the acceptance of one staff member, who happened to be filling a HMSS post, into the unified structure whilst his/her counterpart of equal rank and experience who happened to work to a more senior HMSS would not? What of the career prospects for those who were not fortunate enough to be unified? Where would the future HMSS, taken from the unified grades, gain the necessary knowledge and experience to enable them to fill that role?

The details had not been worked out, admitted the Department, and it acknowledged that there were inherent problems in the suggestion.

The reality is that it is untenable and unworkable.

- iii. That the creation of a new departmental grade for administration staff could provide some recognition for those not included in the unified structure. It must be recognised, however, that such a move would not necessarily have the Department's backing and that the Treasury is very reluctant to create departmental grades, and even more reluctant if increased salary is the result.
- iv. That the HMSS post and their Executive support should remain the preserve of Executive grades and that their enhanced role and responsibilities brought about by Fresh Start may result in the upgradings of some, but by no means all, posts.

However, there is a perceived need for the future gov-

continued on page 26

Lessons from the Literature

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&

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In this article, we stand back from the detail of 'A Fresh Start' and place the re-organisation of prison establishments in the context of the 'management of change'.

Most studies of major organisational change have been conducted in the commercial or industrial sphere, but they provide basic lessons about the management of change which can be applied to public sector organisations.

Organisational Change

The style of 'A Fresh Start' may be recognised as one of five basic approaches to planned change (Lovelady, 1984). Organisational change can be brought about by.

1 *Personnel development* — training staff; identifying and promoting key people in the organisation; management skills training;

2 *Organisation development*—getting the 'infrastructure' right; establishing job descriptions and teamworking; piecemeal improvement of systems, management procedures, meetings, and communications;

3 *Collective bargaining*—management and union negotiation to change organisational methods and behaviour, usually through pay and productivity agreements;

4 *Decree*—planned change by order of senior management, by instruction, or by legislation;

5 *Financial reform of ownership*—fundamental change in the control and organisation of the means of production; profit sharing, co-ownership, worker co-operatives, or nationalisation.

These five approaches represent a scale of increasing use of centralised power to create organisational change.

How far down the list does 'A Fresh Start' come? In the experience of most prison staff, the initiative has been based more on decree than on collective bargaining. Nor is the threat of financial reform without relevance. The Prison Service has been aware for some time of the possibility of 'privatisation' which most staff regard as harmful, if not to their continued employment then to their traditional ways of working.

This style of change, employing centralised power to bring about re-organisation, has also to be set in the wider context of the government's general approach to the public sector and its 'financial management initiative'.

Two points follow from this analysis of the approach employed in 'A Fresh Start' for planned change. First, the greater use of centralised power allowed faster and more radical change. Secondly, staff received a concomitant lack of consultation about the proposed changes.

Speed of Change

For most staff, 'A Fresh Start' was heralded out of nowhere in the summer of 1986. Two task groups studying the working practices and the

management structures of prison establishments were set up and had made recommendations by Christmas 1986. With pace unprecedented in such fundamental matters, the Prison Department turned these recommendations into instructions and issued them early in 1987. Traditional modes of consultation were speeded up or avoided.

The re-organisation had, of course, a much longer history. Even without the financial management initiative and the political desire to peg budgets and reduce overtime payments, the management of Prison Service establishments had been addressed in several Home Office reviews (for example 1974 and 1983). Management and structures were also criticised in the May inquiry (1979) which prompted the Accountable Regimes projects (Chaplin, 1986) and the consultative exercise on the review of management structures (1984).

'A Fresh Start' as a specific initiative, however, had a speedy launching. The initial implementation was then accelerated from the proposed 12 month programme, partly because of pressure from staff once they knew the terms and conditions of the initiative.

The foreshortened programme also reduced the possibility of extensive consultation on specific proposals, especially with those grades of staff excluded from unification.

Consultation

The Prison service has not undertaken major change in this way before.

Using Burns and Stalker's analysis (1961), the Department can be characterised as having mechanistic rather than organic systems: it is organised to operate in a stable situation rather than in changing conditions. Its traditional approach to improving procedures has been through committee and working party.

Traditional modes of collective bargaining were likely to progress only so far and the wider consultative review of management structures had reached virtual deadlock (Prison Department 1984). A more business-like style of consultation (essentially, pressure negotiation coupled with service-wide propaganda about broad principles) made more possible the introduction of change because impetus to launch the initiative could be maintained.

Rather than building on individual development or moving forward only through traditional consultation and negotiation, the use of centralised power did allow more radical change and the possibility of re-distributing power. On the other hand, limited consultation always brings the obvious risk of conflict and resistance (Blake and Mouton, 1976).

Requirements for Success

It is probably only in the long term that we will be fully able to assess the success of this style of planned change.

Studies of re-organisation in other enterprises, however, suggest six pre-requisites of successful change (Butler, 1984).

1 *A shared belief in the reasons and goals for change.* Prison staff generally seem to accept the need for change in working practices, pay and allowances, overlap of managerial grades, and clarity of purpose. The overall goal, however, is not universally appreciated.

2 *An overt and committed leadership which understands the process and goals of change.* Much of this has been evident at the top of the organisation although continuity in the management of change was disrupted by the three most prominent designers of 'A Fresh Start' moving on from the Department. Responsibility for implementing the detail of re-organisation has since lain with the Deputy Director General and the Regional Directors.

3 *Tangible advantages for changing longstanding working and managerial practices.* The alterations to their pay and conditions (and the introduction of time off in lieu and rent) have brought tangible advantages for many staff, inducing them to accept unification and other organisational change. A primary aim of 'A Fresh Start' was, after all, to eliminate overtime payments and the associated work culture, as described by Charles Erickson in this edition of the Journal. While the pay and conditions of unified grades have been directly affected, however, there have been no tangible advantages for other staff who are also facing or drawn into radical changes. The disadvantages in terms of pay relativity and the general esteem of these non-unified grades are obvious.

4 *Clear goals and specific objectives for the organisation.* While considerable effort has been put into clarifying tasks and functions, staff do not share a clear vision of its goals, nor the objectives of the re-organisation. As always, the Prison Service demonstrates its practical capability but lacks the common denominator of shared purpose.

5 *Staff training and preparation for change.* Although much effort and money has been spent on training and communicating, many staff have not felt sufficiently prepared to undertake new roles or modified ways of working. This relates to the speed of launching and the foreshortened programme for implementing the re-organisation. More recently, to maintain 'A Fresh Start' despite shortfalls in complements and increases in staff sickness, local and regional training has been minimal. This, in turn, has lessened the opportunity to develop the skills, abilities and confidence of the staff undergoing change.

6 *Clear roles and expectations.* The staff directly affected and those being asked to manage the change in establishments need a clear understanding of what they are being asked to achieve. New roles and working methods evolve in practice and detailed planning (not possible in the timescale for implementing 'A Fresh Start') could have reflected old styles of working as much as a new ethos. Nevertheless it can be asserted that clarity in roles and expectations was lacking—especially for Principal Officers as Grade VI managers and for newly created

positions such as the Head of Inmate Activities. Uncertainty still exists about the eventual scope and responsibilities of doctors, administration officers, specialist managers, and even the governor who was to be 'freed up' to manage the establishment as an entity.

Most staff want to do a good job, and can be encouraged to do more; but motivation needs to be supported through participation. Staff were broadly informed before changes took place but not fully prepared for modification to their roles and working arrangements.

So what is the prognosis for 'A Fresh Start' using these criteria? Observation suggests we are about halfway down the list of these six pre-requisites of successful change.

There is no doubt that a substantial programme of change has been implemented in a short time, despite the perpetual rise in the prison population and the uncertainty of complementing establishments with sufficient staff. 'A Fresh Start' has been launched and its main elements implemented but much has still to be done in modifying and maintaining the 'infrastructure' of establishments—clarifying goals and roles, meeting individual needs.

Much has to be done, too, in examining and resolving outstanding problems of role, aspiration, structure, and accountability of grades not included in the unified structure. This has been promised as a second phase of 'A Fresh Start'.

Although consultation about detailed proposals might have been deeper, new communications techniques have been employed by management. These include 'A Fresh Start' bulletins and videotapes to reach all members of the service: they have been mixed in their appropriateness and timeliness as received by staff but have helped in maintaining a trusting climate for change.

At this stage, studies of the management of change (see Lippitt et al, 1985) suggest we should be reinforcing results and building on the practical strengths of the re-organisation. All staff (including local management) will need encouragement rather than criticism. Emerging 'best practice' should be identified, stabilised and spread to other establishments.

Finally, an essential requirement in the management of successful change is research and evaluation. As in routine management, the controlling

factor in the cycle of planning, organising and implementing is feedback. The recent appraisal of the practical outworking of 'A Fresh Start' is a vital step in a wider evaluation (despite its failure to have planned exact 'before' and 'after' measurements, particularly of the effects of re-organisation on regimes).

Some formal evaluation exercises are being conducted at the Regional tier of the organisation and include continuing comparisons of these effects. No doubt more could be made of locally held records and staff surveys to establish the benefits as well as the disadvantages associated with change.

Sustaining Change

Personal reactions to changes in role and working practices have demonstrated that 'A Fresh Start' can provide a framework to improve job satisfaction, tackle difficulties, and demonstrate positive leadership. For some, particularly managerial grades, 'A Fresh Start' is regarded as an opportunity.

Many other staff are committed to change, have benefited in pay and conditions, but see 'A Fresh Start' as a challenge rather than an opportunity. For others again, because goals and expectations are not yet clear or because they have little investment in terms of years of service, 'A Fresh Start' is a threat: something by which the individual will be judged lacking, which he hopes will not affect him, or which—like earlier initiatives—will eventually go away.

There is an inevitable hierarchical effect. The clarity of change based on decree is greatest for those at the top but dissipates lower in the organisation. This is observed not only in the case of 'A Fresh Start' (where the sense of vision may or may not infuse local implementation) but was a finding in the evaluation of Accountable Regimes (Evans, 1985; Ager, 1986).

These projects at Featherstone and Shepton Mallet prisons, which contained many of the aims and precepts of 'A Fresh Start' (Chaplin, 1986), were essentially driven by the centre and—despite attempts to build in consultation and staff participation—failed to register in the minds or behaviour of staff providing the basic regime activities and services. In a nutshell, their effect was evident at (but not much below) the Principal Officer tier of local management.

This was in contrast to the development of the regime at Leicester

prison (Fisher, 1985) where staff at all levels had been engaged in consultation, participated in the planned changes, and understood their nature and purposes.

There are, to coin a phrase, two avenues to organisational development: the Shower approach and the Bidet approach. These may be described as 'top down' and 'bottom up'. In terms of initial participation and the design of the re-organisation, 'A Fresh Start' and Accountable Regimes may be characterised as 'top down'; and the Leicester developments as 'bottom up', with more marked staff ownership of the changes.

There may be an inevitability about how far down the hierarchy a 'top down' or centrally driven initiative can reach. In re-designing the meeting and management structures at Long Lartin prison, for example, it was evident that the spirit and effects of change again dissipated in the hierarchy by Senior Officer level (Shapland et al, 1972).

Another organisational paradox is that the most radical changes are driven from the centre but would benefit from local ownership. The most successful and long-lasting changes are found to be those in which staff participate and can help resolve difficulties: after all, people tend to solve their own problems best.

On the other hand, change can be idiosyncratic, each establishment adapting the organisational principles to local conditions. This could lead to dilemmas for those needing standardisation to regulate national, mechanistic systems. Accountable Regimes and 'A Fresh Start' show the difficulty of sustaining systematic change and local ownership in a centrally driven re-organisation (Berman, 1980).

The net result is that local management bears the brunt of creating changes: major re-organisation is without doubt 'management intensive'. It is worth observing that the local managers on whom we depend to motivate and sustain other staff are going through the process of change in their own roles and working conditions. Those who are asked to create or maintain teamwork commitment, and initiative for change will themselves require sustenance.

Looking Ahead

It is recognised that a major re-organisation such as 'A Fresh Start'

is not an overnight or one-off change. In terms of the practical implications, let alone the managerial culture and working climate of establishments, we are embarked on a process which will take years to complete.

The Department should be acting to stabilise and spread successful change by identifying 'best practice' and by meeting individuals' training and support needs. It is already committed to a second phase of 'A Fresh Start' (no doubt underway when this edition of the Journal is published) in which grades of staff not absorbed by unification will be examined in more detail.

The guidelines on the management structures, while clarifying how operational accountabilities should flow to the governor within the establishment, failed to examine the arrangements of 'dual accountability' for such staff whose professional lines extend beyond the prison walls. Nor were they intended to inform the structure of the Regional and Headquarters tiers of the organisation which must also be affected by 'A Fresh Start'.

The immediate priorities lie in improving the 'infrastructure' of establishments: in getting into place the necessary details of management accountability charts, job descriptions, contingency plans, staff reporting procedures, management information systems, performance monitoring, meeting and communication structures, and job-specific staff training.

In this respect, organisational life has not changed. These processes and systems were always the underpinning of successful management and organisation and needed constant attention and improvement.

As a study of the most reputable British companies shows (Goldsmith and Clutterbuck, 1984)—mirroring its more well-known American predecessor (Peters and Waterman, 1982)—success is doing a lot of simple, obvious managerial actions but doing them well.

In the longer run, 'A Fresh Start' will succeed or fail on that basis. ■

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WHAT HAVE THEY DONE? — continued from page 22

erning Governors to have knowledge and experience of the MSS function and it is proposed that some 10 or so HMSS posts would be reserved for the unified grades to provide the necessary career development posts for them.

So Phase II turns out to be an empty promise. The Department's commitment was to leave the problems unsolved, and yet there is recognition of the central role of MSS within the establishment and realisation of the necessity for future Governors to have a real understanding of it.

Apart from these suggestions, the Department is considering a once only opportunity for non-unified grades to seek entry into the unified grades at, probably, Grade 5 level. The criteria for selection have not yet been defined and there is no indication of the number of applicants that are expected to be successful. Why is entry likely to be restricted to Grade 5 level? Such a position is not likely to attract those of senior rank and long experience. How many successful applicants will the Department allow? There must be a very modest ceiling on the numbers that can be absorbed without massive disruption. Why must Executive grades be subject to special selection procedures when such were not necessary when the former Chief Officer grades were absorbed at Grade VI and V levels?

This scheme may provide opportunities and solutions for individuals but does nothing to address the overall discontent amongst the Executive grades.

The Future

The role of the MSS function and that

of its head, has changed considerably with the introduction of Fresh Start. The consultative document describing the responsibilities of the HMSS has been circulated throughout the Service and my experience is that it has been well received with little dissent from its content. Heads of MSS are keen to grasp the new tasks which are ascribed to them. There is much to be done in expanding the personnel role to provide a better service to individual members of staff and better information to management. There is the challenge to be faced in widening the traditional audit role to encompass operational assessments, the monitoring of performance against targets and the contracts agreed in accordance with CI55/84. Health & Safety at Work is an area which in most establishments has not received the attention it deserves, and in some cases, that required by statute, and which now falls within the responsibility of the HMSS. Cash limits, budgets and financial matters assume greater and greater importance and many look forward to Governors, in the not too distant future, being allocated a total budget within which to manage their establishments.

There is then much to be done and Governors are recognising the central and crucial role which MSS will play in assisting, or even allowing, them to manage their establishments effectively. Indeed, ironically, many Governors are now saying that such is the importance of the MSS function it is wrong to expect it to be managed by a non-unified grade whose position as the poor relation in the management hierarchy serves to diminish its importance in the perception of those in junior or non-managerial grades.

In general, Heads of MSS are keen to come to grips with their new

role, but are anxious about lack of resources to meet all the new tasks and the lack of training available to them in new areas of responsibility. This keenness is, on occasions, dulled by their damaged morale engendered by the Department's apparent lack of concern for them and also by the daunting task of creating or expanding into those new and important responsibilities without the necessary status in the organisation to properly effect it. After all, is it reasonable that they should embrace the additional tasks and responsibilities for no additional reward and in the knowledge that as contracted hours diminish the most senior SEO Head of MSS will be paid less than a Grade VI Group Manager for the same hours worked. The Director of Personnel, in rejecting the claim for unification, said that each should receive fair recognition and reward in return for their contribution — is that what he meant? His predecessor at the Administration Officers' conference in Scarborough said that the Department could not expect to continue to get their services on the cheap, indeed, it would be immoral to do so — where is that morality now?

The concept of Fresh Start is a good one, the new job and role of the HMSS is a challenging and fulfilling one, but the Department will not achieve its aim of unity of purpose whilst a group of staff, important to its success, is demoralised and alienated.

Through lack of courage or conviction, the Department failed to grasp the opportunity it had to create a truly unified service and until it does so Fresh Start will never be fully effective. There is still time for the Department to re-think — it should concern itself more with saving its new initiative than with saving face. ■

“Change doth unknit the tranquil strength of man”*

Charles Erickson

Head of Custody, H.M. Prison, Long Lartin.

In a programme of change, many people believe that providing you give out enough information and let others know what is going on, things will be alright. In reality, getting people to engage willingly and co-operatively in the process and consequences of change is never quite that easy.

So it is with Fresh Start. The gloss of novelty (which many believe never spread very much further than issues of pay) is now wearing thin and has given way to some traditionally unburnished attitudes of scepticism and distrust. Rather like ‘Murder on the Orient Express’, everyone is charged with a crime: naive consultants, gullible managers at Headquarters, incurious Governors, heartless Manpower Teams and, not least, artless union negotiators. But, while the search for the guilty goes on, it is perhaps worth reflecting and reminding ourselves of life before Fresh Start.

Systems Failures

Systems of attendance both under Scheme V and Functional Group Working failed to provide conditioned attendance at certain periods in the week. This was particularly so in respect of Scheme V which on Friday evenings and at parts of the weekend, provided no conditioned capability of main grade staff; FGW threw up similar shortfalls in respect of Senior Officers. Both systems,

then, were dependent on ‘built in’ overtime in order to cover duties essential to security and control. Over the years negotiations at local level had been characterised by a general failure to halt the growth in task lists, staffing levels, or both. The steady rise in authorised staffing levels (ASL) widened further the gap between what was officially required to cover the work and the number of staff actually in post (SIP). The greater the distance between ASL and SIP the greater the risk to regimes. The only protection on offer was through overtime — and overtime was voluntary.

Efforts to narrow the gap between ASL and SIP through renewed recruitment initiatives yielded little improvement. Across the Service, the task line had risen to such a pitch that hundreds of tasks each day were being left undone. Any potential threat which new recruits might bring to established levels of overtime was easily countered by the immediate resurrection of dropped tasks. In short, regimes were not in the control of Governors, but had become overtime levers in the hands of staff. In many places, local agreement provided for the display of the daily detail sufficiently in advance for staff to opt out of the overtime necessary for its fulfilment in accordance with individual preference for a particular duty. Whilst some might regard such behaviour as inconsistent with

claimed professional status, it is nevertheless a feature of classical trade unionism within which context it can be seen as legitimate.

Management Failures

More was wrong in this area of ‘resource management’ than the space afforded here could begin to address in detail. The low priority of staff training and career development, deficiencies in personnel systems, the growing complexity of disciplinary procedures, the over-specialisation of detailing practice and rules governing allowances, both equally exclusive to general management understanding, were all areas characterised either by serious neglect or lack of control. Any student of industrial relations could have seen the massive discrepancy between working arrangements in our establishments and the realities of the wider industrial relations landscape. We might ourselves have seen that change was on the way because Governors of establishments were being brought increasingly and more directly into accountability for finance, regime delivery and general resource management.

A major recomposition of the economy of interests and the relations of power within establishments was long overdue. It is inevitable but a matter for some regret that this truth becomes increasingly obscured beneath a patina of complaint, criti-

cism and undeserving nostalgic reflection.

In short, our organisational arrangements were just wrong and there is little, if anything, about the old agenda for which to shed a tear.

Structural Failures

Before Fresh Start, lines of accountability were far from clear in many of our establishments. Differing preferences for centralised or de-centralised deployment of middle managers; a profusion of custom-built management models; fudged issues of role and seniority; unsatisfactory arrangements for the writing and counter-signing of staff reports; a proliferation of strained relationships left largely unchecked or unresolved; and little concept of corporate management. These and other deficiencies characterised organisational settings no longer in tune with a political scenario that, by degrees, has established Governors ever more visibly with accountable management. The old structures, if such they can be called, are made redundant not solely by the Fresh Start but, more significantly, by the need to divest the system of outmoded and largely unproductive practices trading, as they did, on relations of power and status not connected to the legitimate demands of the organisation.

That wastage of considerable proportion existed was obscured by a combination of inefficient structural arrangements, organisational rituals, outmoded benevolence and a general disregard for public expenditure which had been evident at all levels of the Service. Such changes were never going to be easy. Concerns of power and status do not readily lend themselves to dispassionate dialogue.

Response Failures

Much is made of man's unwillingness to accept the notion and consequences of change. It is therefore tempting to assume failure rather than look to improve design, development or implementation methods. Equally, a sustained and widespread barrage of controversy in response to change can weaken the confidence of those responsible for putting the package together. Where doubts emerge, they are usually associated with a concentration on issues rather than basic principles. The outcome is often a loss or blurring of a broader vision and a general disregard for the early imperatives of change. In this respect, the

drive to evaluate an exercise before it is yet fully in place is likely to say more about the dynamics of passion than about sound empirical analysis.

Evidence of widespread discontent is said to be available in criticisms over the timescale within which the Fresh Start initiative was assembled and delivered. In organisations of similar size and complexity, such programmes, we are told, would be spread over something like a 5 year period. Critics trading on this belief allege insufficient attention to detail; over-hurried negotiations at national level; limited evidence that the proposed new systems actually worked in practice; poorly organised preparatory training for managers; and so on. A lack of consistency between the four regions in the way their programmes were approached is also implied: the argument and counter-argument over the scheduling or non-scheduling of contract hours; the rights and wrongs of the four day week; judgements about grading in specialist sections; attitudes to civilianisation; not least, insufficiently robust approaches to complementing issues. Such inconsistencies, it is said, have failed to assist the management of change.

Praise re-inspires the brave no less fervently than criticism stirs the innocent, and the Regions' Implementation Teams complain of a conspiracy which changed the rules mid-way through the game; that their guidelines became mousetraps baited for Manpower Teams; that the 10% efficiency objective only emerged when it became clear that the deal struck between the Department and the Treasury was not on firm ground; that many decisions were taken on 'technical' matters without advice from the experts; that in order to complete the programmes within an ever changing timetable, additional teams had to be hurriedly recruited and put into action with limited preparation and technical skills. And so it goes on, to the particular delight of the antagonist and to the general benefit of none.

Looking to Success

It is difficult to know whether the most publicised responses to the new arrangements are representative of a true groundswell of opinion. At the time of writing (January 1988), action by the Prison Officers' Association over the civilianisation issue is 'pending' having secured a substantial majority in favour from those voting.

But even this is not necessarily a predictor of feeling about the Fresh Start package in general.

Undoubtedly, the issue that has caused the greatest uncertainty has been that of meeting agreed complementing levels. If these can be achieved and the anticipated improvements in working arrangements become manifest we shall be more reliably based.

Is it useful at this stage, then, to give meaning to the dissatisfaction being voiced? Many of the criticisms about the process of change hold more than a grain of truth. Many of the difficulties inherent in any programme of change exist and could not have been avoided. Many operational problems have emerged as a result of the new arrangements. Though all of this is true, it has relevance only within a narrowly focused view of what the Fresh Start initiative is all about. It is a view reflected by many-wintered crows who hop around prison establishments and caw about how things used to be.

A more imaginative view is that the Fresh Start is not an end in itself, but a means — a management tool which, at present, handles somewhat less effortlessly than we would like. It is a view broader than working systems and management structures. Rather, it sees the new arrangements as shaping systems, structures and the relations of power in accordance with the realities of changing circumstances and demand. In practical terms, Governors can regard their systems and organisational arrangements as evolutionary so that the imbalances of the past are minimised and the prospects of improved regimes and job enrichment can be realised. As this understanding develops, greater efficiency will be found in order to resource what are the founding principles of the Fresh Start initiative.

The new model does not offer inflexible lines and relationships; but a conceptual arrangement to be applied with purpose and imagination to minimise waste and maximise commitment and versatility. Current criticism should not be allowed to reinforce self-doubt and culprit hunting; there are no villains. The new arrangements bring meaning; the management of meaning, therefore, becomes a critical challenge for today's managers. ■

* MATTHEW ARNOLD

A CHAPLAINCY PERSPECTIVE

Roger Stokes

Chaplain, H.M. Prison, Full Sutton.

Inevitably the main thrust of Fresh Start has been directed at the unified grades. Uniformed and governor grades formed the vast majority of prison staff and were responsible for all that went on in establishments. The problem came in trying to pin down which individual was responsible for what. An organisation that was devised decades ago was not sophisticated enough to cope with the increasing demands made of it. Changes and clarification were needed to form a coherent management structure, and it could only be brought about by going back to first principles. That was the analysis and solution that seemed to have been reached by those responsible for the Prison Service — but what about the view from the man in the field?

No matter how excellent a system may seem in theory, it is the practical application that is all important. It can only be a good system if it works and meets the demands made of it. More than that, it must also take account of the demands it makes of the people involved with it. If those are unacceptable, for whatever reason, then changes need to be made. No system should be regarded as more important than those who work it. Either it will break down or they will. In the Prison Service we also have

another group of people to consider — those in custody. They may have come into conflict with the law, but if imprisonment damages them further, the conflict will be sharper next time round. An even more pressing reason is that if men are pushed too far they are liable to turn against those directing them.

Four Groups

Within the prison system there are four large groups which can be readily identified. Clearly there is the management which is responsible for national and regional policy as well as the running of each establishment. Policy may be directed centrally but its implementation relies on local management. The effectiveness of that implementation depends on the ability and the cooperation of the second group of people — the officers on the wing or unit. It is the uniformed grades who have to make the theory work in practice. Basic human nature means that their cooperation with this can only be obtained if they accept and have confidence in the plan they are asked to operate. The third group may be described as the clients. I have chosen that word as it reminds us of their legitimate claims for respect and

recognition. Any establishment can only function if it has at least the tacit cooperation of those incarcerated in it. Inmate resistance on a large scale will quickly lead to chaos as there are not enough staff to control more than a minority of malcontents. Even if disruption can be contained, there is the definite risk of releasing men who have become embittered and so, more dangerous than they were before.

That leads naturally to the fourth and largest group of people — the customers. Strictly speaking they are not part of the system, but it exists to serve them — the community outside. They too have legitimate expectations of the prison system for which they pay. Are they getting value for money? Is the present system providing the best for them? Rule 1 could be said to be an expression of their requirement that the law-breaker should become an asset to society rather than the liability he has been. As they foot the bill and the management is ultimately responsible to them, their demands need to be considered seriously. They provide the essential counter-balance that prevents the system going into uncontrolled free-fall. It can only work properly and progress if there is mutual co-operation and trust between each interest group. Just as with walk-

ing, a dynamic balance needs to be maintained.

Speed of Implementation

One of the most notable features of Fresh Start has been the speed of its implementation. Green paper in January 1983, Bulletin 1 August 1986 and full implementation April 1988. That is extremely rapid for such a large and complex review as this needed to be. Against that background it is hardly surprising if the proper balance has not always been maintained. It has been rather like a child learning to walk and much of the time there is a tendency to wonder whether all the effort and falls are really worth it. After all crawling was quite an effective way of moving on the flat, and stairs could be scrambled up. The challenge was faced, however, and the new structures are in place even if they still seem unfamiliar and unreliable.

Perhaps that is where part of the problems of implementation lie. Change is threatening as it disturbs the familiar and reliable. It challenges accustomed practices and demands innovation and new methods of working. One consoling fact though is that every old habit was once an innovation. By what standard should the morality or correctness of a new system or procedure be measured? Provided that it does not actually hurt or damage people directly there is no reason why it should not be tried. In time it could itself become familiar through long usage. The question is whether it has neglected the proper claim of any group or individual.

Other Values Neglected

I said at the beginning of this article that the main thrust of Fresh Start had concentrated on the unified grades. That was inevitable but many would say that the desire for efficient management has neglected other values. One argument adduced in support of this is the way that the Chaplaincy has been included in the Inmate Activities functional block. That highlights two specific points. First, there is a tendency to want to apply a common pattern of organisation so that everything is neat and tidy. The reality is that establishments differ in their nature and management structures will have to be adapted to meet specific requirements. Practical operation will show up the problem areas where attention and alteration is needed. Secondly, the majority of a Chaplain's working week is usually spent doing other things than

organising group activities. If they have a parallel in any functional block it is probably in the Residential area.

At a recent conference for Chaplains and Heads of Inmate Activity a lot of time was spent discussing the Chaplaincy's relationship with the management structure. The nature of that relationship and the effect of Fresh Start manning levels on chaplaincy activities clearly varied from establishment to establishment. What was felt more commonly was a feeling of being boxed in by the structures. Is it coincidence that even in the management structure diagrams the lines of responsibility have been transformed into closed boxes? There is an urgent need to open lines of communication from one area to another if the system is not to break down in chaos.

The Chaplain's Role

Traditionally, the Chaplain's role has stretched out into every part of the establishment and this could be even more important in the future. He has so many responsibilities that it can be notoriously difficult to locate him, his pattern varies so much. As he goes round he speaks to representatives of all groups within the prison and this gives him a unique insight into the establishment's spiritual state of health. That does not mean simple religious matters but includes the general morale of the various groups. Such an insight is invaluable as it can be used to identify problem areas affecting groups of people as well as individuals. More than that, the Chaplain can provide some of the treatment, as well as the diagnosis, for at least some of these problems.

Since he does not fit obviously into any group, the Chaplain is never really one of 'them'. He can listen to the grouses and complaints no matter who they come from without having to go on the defensive. That can provide a valuable safety valve for what could otherwise become an explosive situation. He can also ease the channels of communication where this is necessary, for nothing breeds fear more rapidly than the unknown. Clearly there are matters which need to be kept confidential to an individual group, but good communications help to keep an organisation functioning properly. I am not saying that the Chaplain should be a glorified messenger, but because of his wide ranging contacts, he can help to keep the channels of communication open by

spotting blockages as they occur.

The Religious Dimension

So far in this article I have not mentioned the religious contribution the Chaplain makes to an establishment. That is not because I think it is unimportant but because it is too easily compartmentalised. Religious affiliation is one of the labels stuck on a man when he comes into prison — but what does it really mean? Generally speaking there is no real religious faith behind the label especially early in the sentence. I say that because a sincere believer of nearly any religion does not tend to break the law. It is only a short step from acknowledging that to having a derisive attitude towards any religious observations. Certainly the need to provide the facilities for religious observances is another complication in running the regime but it is important.

Much of the prison regime is retrospective at least in origin and it needs to be balanced by something prospective. By that I mean that it looks back to the reason why the man is in prison in the first place — his crime. The facts do have to be faced — but they are in the past and cannot be changed. What is needed now is help and hope for the future and the search for faith is an expression of that hope. It is also a statement of individuality that he is more than a name, number, crime and sentence. Recently, the burgeoning of education in prison (and particularly in training prisons) has helped, but that tends to remain the imparting of skills. An earnest seeking after faith can help a man find his real self and so grow into a more balanced person.

After all the upheaval of Fresh Start the Prison Service now needs to find its real self. It must be more than a steadily growing dustbin for society because otherwise it will become cancerous in its growth. I believe that if the Chaplaincy is used wisely it can be of great value both nationally and in individual establishments in furthering this process. Fresh Start has given the Service a new structure — the question that remains is whether it is going to become a bureaucratic monster or fulfil a useful purpose. The changes have been demanding and what is needed now is a recognition of human values so that there is the trust and co-operation to make it work. I hope and pray that the Chaplaincy's potential contribution to this will be appreciated and used. ■

Perceptions of the Head of Management Support Services Role at HM Prison, Channings Wood

(Category C, Medium and Long-Term Training Prison)

Gerry Keen

In the late fifties, the title of **STEWARD** changed to **ADMINISTRATION OFFICER**. This move was apparently made to bring the nomenclature into the modern age. In no way did it alter the job or change tasks, neither did it increase the status of the job holder within the establishment. The introduction of 'Fresh Start' is a very different matter, not only has the name changed to **HEAD OF MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES** but it has increased tasks in four major areas, and if carried out correctly, should certainly increase the status of the postholder. The new roles are producing management information, financial information, supporting line managers in functions such as personnel management, staff training, health and safety. Also, the Head of MSS provides administrative support in all areas and responsibility under the Governor for co-ordinating the development of the establishment.

At Channings Wood the Governor has totally supported the new role of Head of Management Support Services and it is acknowledged that I am already carrying out all of the increased tasks. Obviously this has meant that some of the more traditional tasks have been passed down to Executive Grades. As Head of MSS I have direct oversight of a Principal Officer (Grade 6) and write his annual report. Together we are developing his personnel role within the establishment. I am totally involved with co-ordinating staff training of all grades; and during the next month take on the added task of arranging training for new entrant Prison Officers. I am Chairman of the

Health and Safety Committee and responsible for co-ordinating Health and Safety matters.

I regularly support the Governor with management and financial information. Since 'Fresh Start' I have been tasked to carry out investigations into incidents and even an allegation by an inmate against staff.

Recently I have co-ordinated the production of the Functions and Targets document 1988-89 and will be responsible for monitoring targets throughout the year. I am responsible for producing the Establishment Review document and briefing the Governor on all Financial matters.

In my opinion all these tasks are at Senior Management level and in all respects comparable with tasks allocated to senior unified grades. I work as part of the Senior Management Team, and see myself as equal to my Grade 4 colleagues.

I am seriously concerned about the level and quality of training being given to carry out the new functions of the role. We do need modular type training in Personnel Management, Presentational Skills and Management of Information Systems. The training should be professional and convey exactly what is required in an establishment. Also a national policy for the job description of the Grade 6 Personnel/Staff Training Officer should be drawn up as soon as possible.

All members of the Management Support Services Group wish to carry out their new tasks in a far more professional manner. I am absolutely certain that the way forward in these areas is the immediate use of new

technology.

On the credit side. I consider the whole ethos of 'Fresh Start' to be excellent, and a positive move for the betterment of the Prison Service. However, it appears that the Department has dealt with a major problem in complete isolation. The failure to unify all grades into a modern Prison Service has left many staff totally disillusioned. Instead of unifying the Prison Service-it has become split into two separate parts-one the unified grades, the other-all other grades. The running of prisons is about people and unless goodwill is abundant they will become more and more difficult to manage.

At the Malvern Conference, Administration Officers expressed their willingness to Mr Caines in accepting the challenge of the new tasks of Management Services. In return the Department undertook to bestow significant benefits upon us. In my opinion, Administration Officers on 'Fresh Start' are carrying out the additional tasks asked of us and we now expect our just reward.

It is pleasing to know that many Governors and other Prison Service staff as well as members of Boards of Visitors support our contention that our proper place is within the unified structure and we can only hope that their views can influence the Department where ours have failed.

I, for one, enjoy the challenge of my new role and this is only tainted by the knowledge that I could be more effective if recognised as an integral and equal member of the management team. ■

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Finlay Graham

Principal Psychologist, H.M. Prison, Frankland.

There are two central elements of Fresh Start.

(1) The division of staff into small working groups managed by Principal Officers, within which staff work fixed and more predictable hours as detailed by their group managers. Reliance on an allegedly inflated level of overtime would be replaced by a more efficient system of attendance, more closely matching the real work requirements of the establishment.

(2) The creation of a management structure which provides clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

The two basic principles of team working and accountable management would probably be accepted as valid by most organisations. My practical experience of Fresh Start has been at Frankland dispersal prison which has a complement of about 250 officers and lies just north of Durham. At Frankland, the achievement of the two basic principles of Fresh Start has not been without difficulty.

Team Working

The first problem lay in the size of the teams. Initially, the Fresh Start consultants envisaged teams of around 20. They were right to set 20 as the target since the aim of creating teams is to provide a manageable staffing unit which brings closer identification and involvement through increased continuity. A body-blow was dealt to this ideal when the proposed staff groups at Frankland contained 40 and more officers. Such large groups are unlikely to generate the feelings of belonging and mutual support upon which real team spirit will thrive.

The second problem lay in the fact that we could not produce groups which would operate independently whilst maintaining fairness in the working conditions for officers across the groups. Specifically, officers attached to a wing group would have

worked many more evening and weekend duties than their colleagues in other groups. The level of this inequity was so marked that it was considered intolerable. The solution was to build in a system of support at weekends and evenings to the wings from other groups. This was another major blow to group continuity: by increasing further the number of officers working in a group, the achievement of a genuine team working atmosphere began to seem remote.

A third problem lies in group management itself. The wings operate to a task-line which requires a Principal officer's presence at evenings and weekends whereas other groups do not have such a requirement. In order to achieve equity, a shift-pattern had to be created to provide continuous PO cover to each wing but not necessarily by its own group manager.

Group working has now been running at Frankland for three months. Throughout, there has been a perceived need to exercise some central control of group detailing. The reason has been the failure of groups to provide sufficient staff to meet their minimum staffing levels. Initially, central control was exercised by a Principal Officer but staffing problems became so all-consuming that a Governor V was added. Both individuals attempted to overcome projected staffing deficiencies. Both showed signs of stress. The task is almost impossible because group detailing and central control are opposite sides of the same coin.

If the Governor insists groups meet their tasklines or minimum staffing levels, then this requires a system of central control. He cannot have group detailing and central control simultaneously. The only way this can be done is for the central agency to directly specify a group manager's detail. Doing so is seen as interference and attacks the very heart of group detailing. Failure to do so is acceptance that group managers will interpret the local agreement differently and will manage differing levels

of effectiveness. Staff quickly latch on to such inter-group differences and these become a source of considerable discontent.

Reluctantly, I am drawn to conclude that team working may well prove to be an unattainable goal in a dispersal prison like Frankland. My own preference would be to develop Senior Officer centred teamwork as the size of the teams would be more conducive to the development of team spirit.

Accountable Management

Whilst agreeing with the second principle, I question the means by which the Fresh Start proposals seek to achieve it. They attempt to provide accountable management by a successive division of accountability into a highly compartmentalised management structure supported by a hierarchy more artificial than real in its subdivision of responsibilities. The Governor, holding ultimate responsibility and accountability, is in practice left isolated from the actual processes managed. To an unnecessary extent, he is reliant solely on his 'top team' for information.

The meeting structure evolving to support management has three main components.

(a) Top Team Meeting

Chaired by the Governor and attended by the Heads of Custody, of Medical Services, Works Services, Management Support Services and (possibly) of Inmate Activities. This would represent the overall policy-making for the establishment. For this purpose, however, such a group is unrepresentative of the management task, excluding as it does the bulk of the Governor grades. In a large establishment the Governor IV Head of Inmate Activities attends such a group whilst the Governor IV Heads of Operations and of Residences are excluded. Such ambiguities make little sense in relation to the delivery of the establishment's management task.

(b) Functional Block Meetings

Chaired by an intermediate manager and attended by group managers. Operational policy would appear the logical agenda for such meetings, but the role of the Head of Custody in relation to the meeting structure is unclear. Logically, he should be chairing a meeting of the Head of Operations, Residences and Services, although in practice this would be fairly artificial—both in content and in levels of management.

(c) Group meetings

Chaired by the group manager and attended by the group's Officers and Senior Officers

I generally question the effectiveness of communication through such a hierarchical and compartmentalised management structure. The dangers of division and consequent suspicion stemming from such a structure appear substantial.

Frankland has for several years now, run a Central Management Group structure in which a single meeting (attended by Governor grades, Chief and Principal Officers, and heads of specialisms) forms the hub of managerial policy-making. This is supported by a daily meeting, attended

by the same people who meet briefly to discuss the immediate, operational issues of the day.

Both are fairly large meetings in terms of the numbers attending but experience has proved them to be easily managed in addition to providing effective communication. The Governor chairs both meetings which, for a relatively small amount of his time, keep him well-informed by a widely representative group in policy and operational matters. Under Fresh Start reorganisation, the Central Management Group structure has been retained at Frankland in order to bring managers together and encourage cooperation rather than competition between groups.

In an attempt to secure potential benefits of a compartmentalised, hierarchical structure (such as managerial ownership and autonomy) a middle management tier has been created. Some of our previous departmental meetings and committees have been transformed: for example, the Regimes Committee becomes the 'Activities and Services functional block meeting'; and the inter-wing meeting becomes the 'Residential functional block meeting'.

Each functional block holds formal, minuted meetings which are chaired by its head and attended by its group managers and Senior Officers. This incorporates SOs into the meeting structure. Each group subsequently holds its own, less formal meetings, led by its manager and attended by as many of its staff as are available. It is hoped that the benefits of the Central Management Group system can be married with the clarity of responsibility and accountability offered by Fresh Start.

In conclusion I agree wholeheartedly with team work and accountable management (the basic principles of Fresh Start) but would question the methods advocated for achieving these. Experience indicates, however, that whatever method is chosen, a great deal of work remains to be done before tangible benefits are perceived. Bulletin 8 was well-received by staff, generated pressure for Fresh Start to be implemented quickly, and opened a window of opportunity for change. Frustration, bitterness and suspicion are rapidly replacing enthusiasm and the window is closing. Further development will be very hard won. ■

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY

CROPWOOD SHORT-TERM FELLOWSHIP AWARDS 1989

The Institute of Criminology is offering Cropwood Short-Term Fellowship awards to practitioners in British services connected with criminal justice, crime-prevention or the treatment of offenders (including juveniles).

Fellows will be attached to the Institute for a period of work or study varying from six weeks to three months, according to the scale of their project. The project may involve a specific piece of research; the completion of an inquiry already begun, and the presentation of results in the

form of an article or longer monograph; the preparation of special lectures; or the intensive study of a topic of practical concern.

Awards will cover living expenses in Cambridge. Fellows will have access to the Institute's Library and other facilities, and will be provided with study accommodation. A member of the Institute's staff will be available for consultation and guidance.

No formal qualifications for candidates are specified, but it is essential that they have experience relevant

to their project. Prospective candidates should submit a well-conceived and detailed proposal as evidence of their capacity to take advantage of the Fellowship, and they should also enclose a curriculum vitae. Further details are available on request and applications should be sent to Bill McWilliams, Director of Studies, Cropwood Programme, at the Institute of Criminology, 7 West Road, Cambridge CB3 9DT, to arrive not later than 31 October, 1988.

A VIEW FROM

The Chairman of the Prison Officers Association at Gloucester

Byron Hughes

Having been a prison officer for twenty two years and a branch official of the Prison Officers' Association since 1974 I have experienced a great deal of change in various ways within the Prison Service.

Much has changed for the better both with regard to attitudes towards treatment and care of inmates and also with regard to the general conditions that prison officers work under. We have consistently moved forward and adapted to changing policies. There has, however, been retained a totally professional attitude towards our work. We can I feel be justifiably proud of what we choose to do for a living.

Regrettably, however, there is one aspect of change which has occurred mainly during the 1980s which mars and contaminates much that has changed for the better. This, in my opinion, is the unfortunate but very real decline in industrial relations between the Home Office Prison Department and the Prison Officers' Association. What was once a tightly knit and well motivated team effort by both management and the POA, and through them the whole staff has now become a very them and us situation, with neither side having any trust or confidence in the other. This was brought about mainly by management on the one hand, having to implement financial restrictions more appropriate to production line industry in a Prison Service under increasing pressure: and the POA on the other,

resisting these initiatives both in defence of what we genuinely believed to be safe manning levels, and also to safeguard an earnings structure that had for far too long, and with managerial blessing, been dependant on high levels of overtime working. Management regrettably, were content to opt out of responsibility to effect change of the system which was obviously unsatisfactory. Therefore, when financial restraints on overtime working were imposed without heed to the need for realistic pay rates, resentment was provoked.

Resentment and total breakdown of industrial relations was to culminate in the very regrettable and acrimonious industrial action of 1986.

Then finally and it seemed not before time out of the ashes of 1986 rose the phoenix called Fresh Start. A fresh start it was claimed that would finally lay to rest the hostility and the problems of the Prison Service.

This so called fresh start was anticipated with mixed reaction. It could be either one of two things. On the one hand it could mean a new beginning with the old conflicts and misunderstandings being discarded, making way for something better and worthwhile. On the other hand sceptics believed it was no more than the code name for a new kind of financial initiative that sought to secure certain strategic financial gains.

Whichever it is, if it is to have any hope of meaningful success then it must be a venture undertaken by all

with a vested interest in the Prison Service. It must also be by consent, with consensus of objective and most importantly, based upon mutual trust.

It was with trepidation and in hope, tempered with some suspicion that the Prison Service moved towards Fresh Start. Optimists blind to betrayal, pessimists warning of it, the Home Office Prison Department reassuring both and pleading for trust and acceptance.

Bulletins were issued in order, so it was believed, that there should be no misunderstanding and that everyone should know exactly what was going to happen and how it would affect them.

The pessimists in our midst were beginning to lose credibility. The Home Office Prison Department would surely not commit to writing these things if they were not true would they? Well it would seem that the majority of prison officers believed because they voted for the acceptance of Fresh Start.

It was at this time, and for the first time for many years in the Prison Service there was a commitment on the part of prison officers to say 'let's shake on it, let's give it a go'.

Any management worthy of the word should have capitalised fully on this situation, thanked God for having got it right at last, and had a united Prison Service into the future. This is what we believed was happening, but of course it could only happen, if in fact the now so controversial Bulletin 8 was what it purported to be; and that

it was a considered and honest foundation stone to build upon representing squarely and honestly the views of management as agreed with the POA. It had to be this because it was what prison officers had voted on, it was what they had placed their trust in and therefore, should have stood as a monument to Fresh Start.

Management of the Prison Service however, were unable to take advantage of the situation. Unable to lead, able only to provoke within months of Fresh Start a ballot by prison officers securing a majority of 3 to 1 in favour of taking industrial action. And why? Because Bulletin 8, the foundation stone was so riddled with inaccuracy, it's promises meaningless and coupled with total confusion and misunderstanding over proposed recruitment plans. Industrial Relations were again back at rock bottom followed once again by the predictable churning out of propaganda passing blame like some sore ridden buck from one side to the other resulting in another round of trench warfare and total loss of what should have been a new found trust. It is, in my opinion, about time that Her Majesty's Home Secretary if he cares at all should know the facts, know that prison officers were willing to commit themselves, that prison officers were willing to start afresh, but also that undeniably they were told lies. What we saw as clear agreements have been reneged on.

We kept our side of the bargain. We accepted changes in working practices, we accepted economy regarding manning levels, we accepted the concept of greater efficiency in return for better pay and time off but we also accepted that what we had been told would be the objectives and rules governing implementation of Fresh Start were honest and well-founded. It was not so.

We were promised a level of recruitment that would ensure success of Fresh Start without having to accept

dangerously low manning levels. Having accepted Fresh Start, proposed recruiting numbers were reduced.

We were promised unification. What we in fact have is an undeniable split between, on the one hand, Grades Five and above, and, on the other, Grades Six and below. With one set of rules and conditions for the one, denied to the other: the gap becoming wider as the so called framework agreement progresses. There also occurred the creation of what seems like a Board of Directors consisting of Grades Five and above, and a shop floor of Grades Six and below, coupled with an absence of a co-ordinating works manager (the old Chief Officer) responsible for liaison between the Board and the shop floor. We were promised a 'Pride in Ownership' of the Service brought about by increased job satisfaction and motivation. We find in fact very little of either. Civilianisation, we are told, will release prison officers to do the work they are best at — face to face work with inmates. We see the ultimate result as being face to face with stress, more and more turned into guards. Regimes are already contracted, workshops are almost a thing of the past. Even further reductions in manning availability brought about by the erosion of contract hours must inevitably cause even further restriction of regimes. This along with the loss of job variety which goes hand in hand with increased civilianisation presents a very bleak prospect to prison officers at ground floor level. The option of Fresh Start being merely a code name for financial restriction becomes an increasing reality.

We were also promised other things, mainly via Bulletin 8, such as ability to arrive at locally agreed working systems for Fresh Start, best reflecting the ability to meet local needs. It was not to be. Instead we have had forced upon us a multiplicity of working systems, which, as time

progresses, will do very little to meet local needs. We were promised an ability to reach local agreements governing implementation, again best suited to local needs and in the mutual interests of both management and staff. No such agreements exist unless they are seen by Regional Directors and Home Office Officials to comply with their interpretation of the rules. Certainly there is no local autonomy. While there is no trust and confidence mutually expressed between the Home Office Prison Department and the POA, there also does not seem to be much between the HOPD and the Governors.

Once again it comes down to Bulletin 8. If it had been properly considered, worked through to remove all ambiguity, and left as a clear statement of agreed principles; then local agreements would have been easily and amicably reached.

At the time of writing, it would appear that it's another fine mess we find ourselves in. However, we must conclude that it is never too late. Although we have now balloted to accept a course of industrial action if it proves inevitable, we sincerely hope that it will not, and that common sense and sanity will eventually prevail. If it does, then let's hope that, finally there will come into being a realisation that there must be mutual trust. There must be a commitment to honour agreements, and management must accept responsibility to ensure that they get all their facts right. They must be certain of their facts before they make offers to the members of the Prison Service, because anything less must result in conflict.

We do, I think, have a history in the Service of rarely getting things right the first time; remember the common working agreement? So let's set our sights on Fresh Start Mk2 and let's hope for all our sakes that we get that right. ■

READERS Write

THE EDITOR
Prison Service Journal

Dear Sir,
Your last issue concentrated upon gender and imprisonment. As a member of a board of visitors with experi-

ence of both male and female parts of the system, I would like to add several points about the meaning of imprisonment to women.

Whenever the Courts are in doubt as to whether to imprison a woman, what criteria do they consider? Is it not often that the middle class, good wife and mother escapes custody; unlike the woman who is poor, single, promiscuous, battered, homeless and over-proportionately black who so positively attracts it? Whereas society continues to accept the sharply esca-

lating male criminal population, female offenders are frequently seen as being women of positively abnormal nature.

Frequently Courts face the dilemma of securing adequate accommodation for those known to be seriously disturbed and/or mentally ill. Though it is accepted that prisons were never intended as depositories for such cases, all too often there is simply no practical alternative. Women still tend to attract custodial sentences for less serious offences than do men. The present female prison population

includes 15% of women with a degree of physical disability and in excess of 20% with some mental defect.

With the enforced separation and consequent disruption to family life, feelings of increased isolation and utter futility are common. Many women in custody are mothers and if any bond existed prior to imprisonment, considerable care must be taken to build upon this and so retain and improve the mother-child relationship. Similarly, those who have experienced only poor maternal ties must be positively helped to foster deeper and more meaningful bonds.

The medical requirements of women prisoners are surely more than those of their male counterparts, if only on account of their biological needs. As a result of depression, and a host of emotional fears and anxieties, 1 in 6 women prisoners self mutilate as opposed to 1 in 100 of the male population.

Women serving sentences within

a mixed prison may be grossly disadvantaged. Whereas some male presence within women's establishments must be maintained, and, indeed, encouraged, it remains a sad fact that almost all of women's prisons are governed by men. Women must support women.

Through-care for women in prison largely remains a myth and feelings of increased isolation are common. Improved behaviour are patterns most noticeable when staff motivate their charges with care and co-operation as opposed to sheer dominance.

Some possible progressive trends must include:—

1. More life skills courses.
2. Increased help from Governors in importing professional people into prison to advise on such things as outside support schemes, housing and legal services.
3. Well run women's clinics must

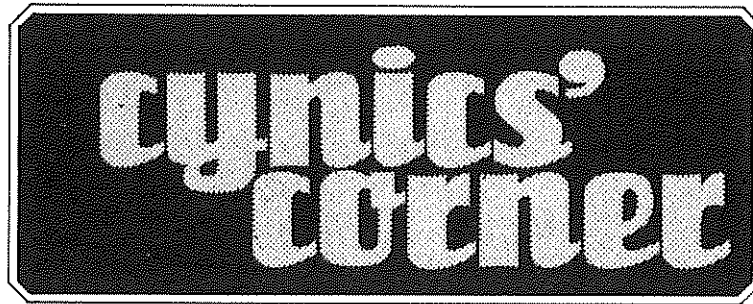
4. be incorporated into the system. Hostel accommodation for the newly released must be made more readily available.
5. Communication by telephone between mothers in prison and their families should be increased. For foreign inmates, the latter point becomes one of urgency due to their often total lack of family visits.

With the limited range of establishments suitable for women, and their continued management within a traditionally male organisation, imprisonment remains an increasingly alarming prospect and one we must all endeavour to improve as well as giving serious thought to minimising its use.

SALLY BROWN.

Chair

*Board of Visitors
HMP Durham*



Bulletin No. 97 should have been published by the time you read this Journal and I thought it was time for a simple guide to Fresh Start—and who better to write it than a simple man. Read on if you wish to join those who are **really** informed.

The Purpose of Fresh Start

1. To save everyone's time by getting rid of those one act farces, which sometimes developed into grand operas, the plot of which consisted of the local POA Committee demanding an additional officer in the bathhouse because an inmate in 1890 had forgotten to switch on the cold water tap and had scalded himself. The underlying theme, which all the audience understood, was based on the equation "additional task equals increased overtime".
2. Related to paragraph 1 above: repair some of the damage done to establishments over the years by Manpower "Management" Teams whose motto appears to have been "The Team that likes to say yes".
3. To find a solution to the problem of Assistant Governors who, if I can remind the reader of a piece of history, had been introduced to Borstals as glorified scout leaders, later placed in prisons because they were the only people who could be trusted to write decent parole reports, but have never been given a spot in the Management Structure because some of them wore sports coats and sandals.
4. To give Principal Officers who, as a result of the activities of the POA and Manpower Teams (see paragraphs 1 and 2 above), had grown in numbers to the point where the PO's team room was needing an extension, a real job to do rather than:
 - (a) Acting as decoration on the end of the Wing and the Centre.

- (b) Recounting the "good old days" to all and sundry.
 - (c) Chatting up the typist.
5. To give Senior Officers, who had been introduced following the Mountbatten Report without anyone really knowing why, a real job to do rather than:
- (a) Hiding away in offices.
 - (b) Doing jobs which could be done equally well by officers.
 - (c) Chatting up the typist.
6. To give prison Governors sufficient pay to make their job attractive to senior administration grades who could then plot a bureaucratic coup d'etat.

Terminology

1. Local Agreements

The method by which the POA attempt, metaphorically speaking, to tie the Governor's hands behind his back to restore all the "advantages" of the overtime system with none of the disadvantages of having to work the hours; or, depending upon your viewpoint, the method by which the Governor attempts to retain sufficient flexibility to run the régime no matter how many staff have gone sick.

2. Minimum Staffing Level

The point at which the Governor starts to reach for the key to the cupboard holding the riot gear because the inmates have been screwed down to the absolute maximum.

3. Working Week

A period of time running from Sunday to Saturday during which staff are expected to attend for an average 39 or 48 hours unless they can get some of them waived, or they get involved in additional hours, shift conversions, time off in lieu, or bank hours (see following paragraphs).

4. Shifts

A system which has caused a boost in the sale of computers and filofax personal organisers.

5. Additional Hours

An indication that there are insufficient staff in post. There is a golf tournament so half the staff have gone sick, or the escort bus has been parked in a lay-by in order to ensure maximum subsistence.

6. Shift Conversion

An indication that half the staff have gone sick, everybody has come back from sick, or the shift system has been badly devised.

7. Time Off In Lieu

A system by which staff can work extra hours in order to oblige the Group Manager to feel so guilty as to agree to pay them back when:

- (a) The golf tournament takes place.
- (b) The home football team are playing an afternoon match.
- (c) The wife is working and the girlfriend is at home.

8. Banked Hours

A system by which staff can work less than a working week in the hope that the Group Manager will:

- (a) Forget them.
- (b) Be too embarrassed to ask for repayment.

Conclusion

You now have the sum total of my accumulated knowledge to date. If you are still unsure about any aspect of Fresh Start I suggest you wait for Bulletin No. 98, which will no doubt explain all.

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Plans are in hand for issues on: —

OVERSEAS ITEMS

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Have you got anything to say on these or any other penal concerns?

Articles, Views, Comments,

Letters are always welcome.

Put pen to paper and write to

Ted Bloor
HM Prison
Old Elvet
Durham DH1 3HU

