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This Issue in Brief

Euphoria on the Rocks: Understanding Crack Addiction.—A certain mystique surrounds crack cocaine and makes supervision of crack addicts a real challenge for even the most seasoned probation officer. Stressing the importance of knowing the facts about this drug, author Edward M. Read focuses on helping the officer understand the drug itself, the dynamics of addiction to it, and how to assess a person's dependence on it.

The Costs and Effects of Intensive Supervision for Drug Offenders.—Authors Joan Petersilia, Susan Turner, and Elizabeth Piper Deschenes report the results of a randomized field experiment testing the effects of an intensive supervision probation/parole project for drug-involved offenders. Among the findings were that intensive supervision apparently did not affect drug use, did not reduce recidivism, and cost more than routine supervision.

A Day in the Life of a Federal Probation Officer—Revisited.—Six United States probation officers update an article published in *Federal Probation* more than 20 years ago by describing what might come up in a typical workday. The authors—E. Jane Pierson, Thomas L. Densmore, John M. Shevlin, Omar Madruga, Jay F. Meyer, and Terry D. Childers—all of whom serve in specialist positions—offer commentaries about their work that range from philosophical to highly creative.

Personality Types of Probation Officers.—Are there personality characteristics common to probation officers? Authors Richard D. Sluder and Robert A. Shearer address the question, reporting findings from a study of 202 probation officers using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The authors discuss the patterns of MBTI personality characteristics among the officers studied, reviewing the strengths and potential weaknesses of the personality types.

When Do Probation and Parole Officers Enjoy the Same Immunity as Judges?—Authors Mark Jones and Rolando V. del Carmen examine the types of defenses a probation or parole officer enjoys in civil liability suits, focusing on the concepts of absolute, quasi-judicial, and qualified immunity. The authors

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What Works in Prison Management: Effects of Administrative Change in New Zealand

By Greg Newbold
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Introduction

As THE 1980's have progressed into the 1990's, the prisons of America have entered a period of deepening crisis. Between 1980 and 1990, the United States prison and jail population increased by around 130 percent, to about 1.2 million (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1992, pp. vii-x). Population rises continued into the 1990's so that by current projections, the number of Americans behind bars is expected to increase another 30 percent by 1995 (Miah, 1992). Already operating at between 18 percent and 29 percent above capacity, with more than 80 percent of them at least half a century old (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1992, pp. x, xii), American prisons are likely soon to be facing another type of crisis: that of disorder and rebellion.

Studies of prison riots have shown repeatedly that overcrowding and archaic facilities can be potent ingredients of mutiny, especially under certain forms of authority (Committee on Riots, 1953; MacCormick, 1954; Martin, 1955, pp. 217-228; Leeke, 1970). But just as surely as some factors aggravate tensions, so can others reduce stress and give hope of ongoing stability. One particularly important factor is management (DiIulio, 1987; Farmer, 1988; Fox, 1956, pp. 307-317; Irwin, 1980, pp. 241-246; Jacobs, 1977; Schrag, 1960, p. 46; Select Committee on Crime, 1973, p. 3). In all prisons, the power relations of the inmate social structure and those of formal authority are closely linked (Cloward, 1968; Colvin, 1982, p. 450; McCleery, 1960; 1961). To varying degrees, these two structures can oppose or they can accommodate one another. Irrespective of living conditions, some patterns of administrative authority aggravate the inmate substructure and cause it to become restive; others encourage compromise by providing advantages for cooperation. The purpose of this article is to add to the understanding of stable prison government by examining the relationship between administrative action and the reaction of inmate subculture. By using the case example of the maximum security prison of New Zealand, some of the very tangible factors which produce different types of responses from inmate substructure can be identified.

Prison Management and Cultural Change

Mt Eden Prison

The story of the maximum security prisons of New Zealand begins in 1882, when plans commissioned from the Colonial Architect in London arrived in the Pacific colony. Built at Mt Eden in the northern city of Auckland, New Zealand's first maximum security facility followed the classical 19th century model and thus conformed to the old "radial" structure made famous by places like Cherry Hill in Pittsburgh and Pentonville in London.

Up until the 1950's, Mt Eden prison was run along the spartan lines of its Victorian creators. Facilities for inmates were few. Long hours of lockup were broken by relatively short periods of hard labor. A rigidly authoritarian relationship between inmates and keepers was maintained, and there was little communication between them (Newbold, 1989b, pp. 22-25). After 1950, however, largely as a result of local pressure for reform and a worldwide move toward "scientific penology," conditions in prisons and the philosophy behind them changed rapidly.

In 1951, a new, liberal-minded superintendent, Horace Haywood, was appointed to Mt Eden, and there was a marked improvement in conditions and facilities. Hours of lockup were reduced, and ration scales were revised. A comprehensive welfare program began. Movies were shown; education, hobbies, and pastimes were actively encouraged. Sports teams were organized and were soon allowed regularly to compete against sides beyond the walls. It was these recreation groups and the great trust vested in them which exemplified the new philosophy and created the peculiar form of social organization with which the 1950's became associated.

Popular adage among prison employees holds that there are two ways of running a prison: with the inmates or without them. In the prewar period, power at Mt Eden was retained exclusively by formal authority. Then, inmates had few rights or privileges. The reconstruction of the 1950's caused that situation to change. Organizing reform programs gave greater responsibility to staff, but it also made more work for them. Previous manning levels became inadequate, and government reluctance to authorize extra personnel meant that routine duties got neglected. Adding to these problems was a sudden incline in musters. At Mt Eden, built ideally for 300, daily average numbers jumped sharply, increasing by about 80 percent between 1951 and 1957. That year the maximum muster peaked at over 450. It was clear that more personnel were needed, and as the government con-

tinued to dither over the question of staff increases, Haywood was left with few options.

Cooptation of selected prisoners for administrative purposes is a common method of compensating for management weakened by inadequate personnel. The Nazi concentration camps (Kogon, 1958, pp. 259-260; Le Chene, 1971, pp. 38-60), the Soviet labor camps (Cressey & Krassowski, 1957-8), and some of the larger American prisons (Hartung & Floch, 1956-7; MacCormick, 1954; Martin, 1955, pp. 26-29; Sykes, 1974, pp. 122-129; Walker, 1980, p. 216; Wheeler, 1976) are all good examples.

At Mt Eden a burgeoning population, obsolete architecture, and inadequate staffing created the conditions which also favored such measures. In 1952, a prisoners council was set up to assist administration, and it soon became dominated by a few inmates. From this position, convict bosses emerged, resulting in a hegemonic style of leadership similar to that detailed by McCleery (1960, 1961, 1968) at the Oahu, Hawaii, prison in the 1940's. In both cases, unofficial recognition was granted to leaders whose power and influence could be useful to management. Like Oahu, Mt Eden produced an elite, consisting of long-termers and seasoned criminals, which took over the distribution of privileges and resources. Such leaders were able, thereby, not only to improve their own lifestyles, but also to control those of the rank and file.

Because these privileges could only continue as long as the institution ran smoothly, the elite quickly sprouted an interest in keeping order. This the administration recognized and buttressed the status of leaders by rewarding them with even greater power and privilege. A network of informants was also established, within which several acquired a direct route to the superintendent. In accessing the prison's head, informants were then able to monitor the flow of information and influence policy to an extent that even staff could not (Newbold, 1989b, pp. 73-77).

The effect of the new style of management was enormous. Before long the inmate group became a hierarchy of "haves" and "have-nots," with the elite acting in its own, mercenary interests. Unity among the men was preempted, and their ability to coordinate was weakened because leaders, safeguarding their positions, repressed any threat to their power. But while they were a conservative force, leaders were also opportunists who acted without particular regard for the future. It was here that the great vulnerability of the system lay, because prisoners' allegiances were seldom as pure as the superintendent would have liked. The stability of the early 1950's was therefore precarious. Powerful individuals serviced their own ends and soon placed the entire system in jeopardy. It was not long before the new order was faced with serious crisis.

In 1955, the notorious and brutal sex-killer, Edward Horton, walked out of an outside bowling excursion, unnoticed by his prison officer escort, and disappeared. In spite of a massive manhunt, he was at large for 3 days. Then in 1958 it was discovered that a number of trusted prisoners had been escaping from their communal cell overnight, committing serious crimes in Auckland city, and returning with their booty before daylight. Their movements also had gone unnoticed by prison guards.

These events generated huge publicity, and the result of the inevitable government shakeups was a progressive tightening of security and curtailment of inmate privileges between 1955 and 1959. The group which was most affected by these changes was the inmate elite, whose entitlements were severely cut. The erosion of its advantage brought resentment from this echelon and a general weakening of its conservative commitments. This had a destabilizing effect, manifested in a spate of assaults on staff, strikes, and sensational escapes in 1959 and 1960. In 1961 there were more escapes, and in August that year, arson attacks destroyed two workshops. Between 1958 and 1963, the prison's average annual escape rate doubled, and the dramatic nature of some abscondings drew further pressure for government action. The old superintendent was transferred, and a rising hardliner, Eddie Buckley, was put in his place,

But Buckley's attention to security and strict discipline only caused tension to worsen. The nadir was reached in 1965. In February that year, three of the country's most well-known criminals smuggled a sawed-off shotgun into the security block where they were isolated, took an officer hostage at gunpoint, and escaped in a prison truck. Then, just 5 months later, after an escape attempt by two remand men armed with a pistol had failed, the prison erupted into a full-scale riot. During the next 3 days, the prison was completely gutted by fire and was subsequently abandoned as a maximum security facility.

Of the 293 prisoners who were at Mt Eden at the time of the riot a few were released, but the majority were dispersed to other institutions about the country. The most recalcitrant went to a specially constructed security block at Waikeria borstal, 90 miles south of Auckland.

Never again have security prisoners been involved in the administrative business of their institutions, and never since has a status hierarchy among them been recognized. For the last 27 years, the principle of egalitarianism among security inmates has underlain all treatment, and formal control has remained in the hands of the authorities. The cases of the Waikeria borstal and its replacement, Paremoremo prison, illustrate the impact which different styles of autocracy can have.

Waikeria Borstal

For the 50 men held at Waikeria, and for the 12 more who were transferred to a special security unit opened at Mt Eden in March 1966, the larger part of the time was spent locked alone in cells without plumbing. There was no work for most and almost nothing in the way of recreation. Exercised morning and afternoon in small, steel mesh cages, the men were under armed guard 24 hours a day.

The impact of these changes is fundamental to understanding the culture which developed when the new maximum security prison opened in 1969, 4 years later. The severe conditions at Waikeria allowed for little flexibility, and inmate cooperation had nothing to offer. Drawn together in their poverty, inmates turned to each other. The mercenary hierarchy of Mt Eden disappeared. A new collective conscience dissolved the remaining power of the old leaders, and those known to have collaborated in the past were now ostracized and attacked. Familiarity between staff and inmates ceased, and tension between them was continuous. Of the transformation he witnessed, one officer who had been seconded from Mt Eden in 1965 said:

> Oh Jesus, tough down there, boy. That was really crucial, that one was. I think that was about as tough a situation as I've handled anywhere. Tension! Tension between inmates and staff. You know, there were chaps down there that I knew, that I used to talk freely to and that, and it was as if I didn't know them. I couldn't break them. Couldn't break them.
>
> Believe me, we were glad to get into that bloody hotel at the end of the day. I used to see officers come in at lunchtime, you know, and they just couldn't eat their lunch. Tensed up inside—well, you never knew what was going to bloody happen there from one minute to another. You don't know. Never knew what the bloody hell was going on.

At Waikeria's East Wing, the social code of prisoners (viz. Newbold, 1989a; Sykes & Messinger, 1960) took on new significance. The community was small and tight, and in cutting itself off from officialdom it bred its own security. From shared oppression came an esprit de corps which provided group commitment and collective reinforcement of definitions. At Waikeria for the first time, inmates formed a cohesive unit which supported its own members, legitimized its needs and values, and uniformly rejected officialdom. This powerful ideology of inmate chauvinism became refined and entrenched as the men anticipated completion of a new maximum security prison being built at Paremoremo, 20 miles north of Auckland.

Paremoremo Prison

Paremoremo Prison was modeled on that of Marion, Illinois, which had opened in 1963 to replace Alcatraz. Structural work had begun on the Paremoremo site soon after the 1965 riot, and by the time it was opened early in 1969, Paremoremo was—and still is—one of the most sophisticated security installations in the world.

Paremoremo began receiving prisoners in March 1969 and for several years was maintained below its effective working capacity of 200. The new prison's superintendent, Eddie Buckley, blamed the failure of Mt Eden on inadequate security and discipline and sought to emulate the regime which had proven effective at Waikeria. He therefore resolved to keep his new institution on a short rein. Privileges, routine, and information would be tightly controlled. Discipline would be strict. Rebellion would be dealt with summarily.

From the beginning, there was trouble at Paremoremo. The first prisoners, embittered by years of deprivation, began almost immediately to struggle against the new regime. Buckley's response was to crush opposition, but use of force only intensified inmate commitment. Violence was met with counterviolence, and levels of tension rose. In a spiral of escalating conflict a state of near siege emerged. By March 1970, within 12 months of its opening, fires, sabotage, and fighting between inmates and staff had become almost daily occurrences. In the cellblocks, the prisoners formed de facto committees devoted to coordinating resistance. The workshops also had committees, which defined low work quotas for themselves and arranged strikes and sabotage when these were opposed. Because the inmate population was so small and its moral unity so intense, the prisoners' social code became doctrinaire. "We had to stick together and we did so to the limit," one lifer has written. "If one man was provoked, persecuted, or unjustly treated, we would all back him up. Everyone was that man at some time or another. He could never be let down" (D. Wickliffe, cited in Bungay and Edwards, 1983, p. 105).

By this means, both staff and inmates grew wedded to a creed of vendetta, in which any offense by one side was seen by the other to require a most vigorous response. On one occasion in 1969, for example, the refusal of two inmates to cease talking to others while working culminated in a staff baton charge and injuries on both sides. In another instance in 1971, an inmate named Saifiti broke the jaw of a popular officer named Savage, just because Savage had been late in unlocking Saifiti to change his library books. Of this incident, two other inmates commented:

> Rangi: Savage was a good guy, boy. He's a f_____ good screw. But even though you know a screw's a good f_____ screw, you couldn't sorta favor him. Because he represented the screws and *that* was *it*, man. After they started putting in those double doors [and tightening security], you know, you had to suppress your own thing and look at it from the guys' point of view and f___ your own. And so even though some of us thought Sai was being a bit out of hand breaking his jaw, you still had to back him up because of that.

Roberts: Oh yeah, you would. It wouldn't matter. But he was a bloody good screw. Just *any* screw, you know, you upset some of the guys, they're going to let you have it.

This perpetual conflict at Paremoremo soon became deeply embarrassing to government, After the failure of Mt Eden, Paremoremo had been heralded as an expensive-but-necessary solution to the country's maximum security woes. Now, with even more publicity than that which had dogged the old institution, the new one was facing similar problems. Once again, it was decided that administration was at fault. Buckley was sidelined, and a new superintendent, with progressive attitudes and a growing reputation as a troubleshooter, was put in his place.

The officer who replaced Buckley was Jack Hobson, formerly a gunner in the Royal Navy and then a sergeant in the New Zealand Army. Hobson had joined the prison service shortly after the war and, rising quickly through the ranks, had been promoted to superintendent in 1961.

Almost as soon as he arrived at Paremoremo in May 1973, Hobson began liberalizing its regime. Routine was relaxed, and wide-ranging freedoms were extended. Hobson unlocked the segregation unit, which had been the seat of much of the trouble, and entered it alone to speak with the men. He then ordered most of them transferred to the standard blocks. Education and recreation were promoted, sporting and cultural groups were invited to visit, and the prison engaged with conspicuous success in Auckland's competitive debating program. Apart from those under segregation, the range of restrictions and liberties, punishments and privileges, was the same for each individual. Thus, a fine but easily understood balance was soon struck between freedom, custody, and discipline.

The egalitarian ethic of prisoners fared well under the new regime. The men remained devoutly unstratified, vigorously opposing attempts by any among them to lead or dominate. Hobson supported this equality, but kept the place under his firm control. Accepting full responsibility for the running of the prison, he gave both inmates and staff free and direct access to him. In disputes between them, Hobson operated as an independent judge, making clearly understood decisions without delay.

Very soon, Jack Hobson, often known affectionately as "Uncle Jack," won the respect and trust of the majority of inmates. Tension in the cellblocks dropped. A clear line remained between captors and captives, but ongoing combat and opposition was replaced by something in the nature of an armed truce. Prisons are never peaceful places, but by and large a steady equilibrium was maintained. The 12 years of Hobson's reign were easily the most tranquil in the institution's 20-year history and left an indelible stamp on subsequent policy. His alchemy of relaxed treatment with clearly described boundaries has continued to prove an effective formula for peaceful prison management. Subsequent administrators have continued in the Hobson tradition, with the result that assaults on staff are now about a quarter of their 1971 rate, and Paremoremo has not had a single incident of serious collective rebellion in the past 20 years.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Many lessons can be learned from the administrative history of the New Zealand maximum security prisons. Among the most useful are those which indicate a relationship between managerial action and the response of a prison's substructure. In 1942, Norman Polansky identified atomization and cohesive opposition as the two possible reactions to prison autocracy. In New Zealand, the experience of three prisons over a 30-year timespan reveals cohesive opposition as the only response to administrative absolutism. This inmate reaction appeared at the Mt Eden facility in the late 1950's, when the prison moved from its failed experiment with cooptative pluralism to one of authoritarian management. Cohesive opposition continued in the austere regimes of Waikeria and Paremoremo. Only when prison officials adopted a more conciliatory posture did the violent antagonism which accompanied inmate cohesion begin to break down. In the end, although the integrity of the convict group and its ethical code remained, a spirit of mutual cooperation at Paremoremo guided interaction between the keepers and the kept. This has proven an enduring solution to the dilemmas of Paremoremo's management.

The New Zealand experience has shown, in the case of secure institutions, that a rise in the level of administrative oppression causes inmate self-commitment to deepen. Conversely, when the external threat is removed, a reduction in tension allows defenses to relax. Relationships with staff then soften, and although a strong subgroup identity may remain, a desire for stability fosters a mood of tolerance. A productive symbiosis can then develop.

The importance of these principles is not that they necessarily service a prison's effectiveness in any therapeutic sense, but that peaceful interface between management and inmates makes a prison a simpler place to operate and live in. As prisons in the United States (and New Zealand) continue to fill, there is growing pressure upon prison authorities to abandon expensive accommodative penology in favor of a cheap authoritarian expedient. But the tension, violence, and destruction of equipment which are a byproduct of repressive strategies indicate that, when the long-

term costs and savings are balanced against one another, getting tough with inmates may not be any cheaper at all.

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