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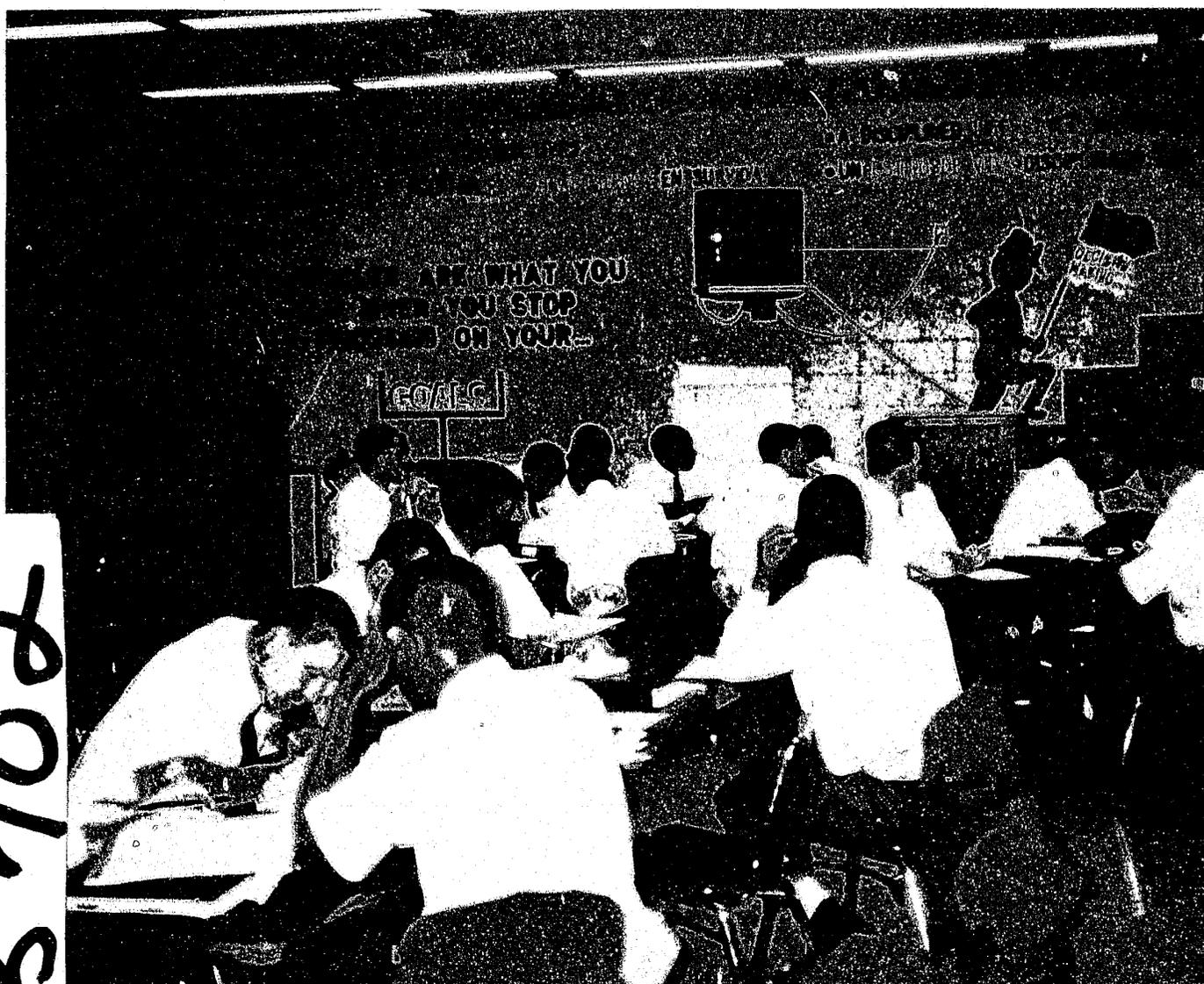
DOCS TODAY

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NYS Shock Stresses Treatment



Inmates participate in a decision-making class at Lakeview Shock Incarceration Correctional Facility.

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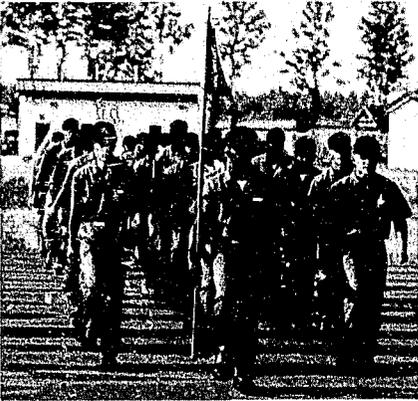
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New York State Shock Program Is Largest in Nation

New York State operates the largest Shock Incarceration Program in the nation with an annual maximum capacity of 3,000 individuals — involving two six-month cycles of 1,500 inmates, plus 250 beds dedicated to orientation and screening.

Enabling legislation passed in July 1987 specifically stated:

“Certain young inmates will benefit from a special six-month program of intensive incarceration. Such incarceration should be provided to carefully selected inmates committed to the State Department of Correctional Services who are in need of substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation. An alternative form of incarceration stressing a highly structured and regimented routine, which will include extensive discipline, considerable physical work and exercise and intensive drug rehabilitation therapy, is needed to build character, instill a sense of maturity and responsibility and promote a positive self-image for these offenders so that they will be able to return to society as law-abiding citizens.”

The goals of New York’s Shock program are twofold — to reduce the demand for bed space and to treat and release specially selected state prisoners earlier than their court mandated minimum periods of incarceration without compromising the community protection rights of the citizenry.

In order for Shock to reduce the demand on prison bed space, the program had to target offenders who would definitely be incarcerated. Thus, in New York the only inmates in the program are those who were sentenced to serve time in a state prison.

In addition, the length of their imprisonment in Shock had to be substantially less than the prison term which they would have served otherwise.

Any long term reductions in bed space demand are dependent upon inmates successfully completing the program and keeping their rates of return to DOCS custody consistent with the overall return rate for the Department.

New York has responded to these issues by:

- Limiting judicial involvement in the decision making process of who goes to Shock, thus assuring that participants would have gone to prison anyway;
- Creating the program as a back end based operation which is not

an alternative to probation but rather a program for incarcerated felons;

- Creating a treatment oriented program which emphasizes the development of skills designed to lead inmates to successful parole outcomes;
- Creating a strong intensive parole supervision program for Shock graduates that enlists the aid of independent service providers.

Shock Incarceration is the only systemic way in which New York State inmates can be released to parole supervision prior to their Parole Eligibility (PE) dates. Thus, not only do Shock inmates spend less time incarcerated, but the length of the program allows a bed to be occupied twice a year for a six month period.

Even though the cost of providing care and custody for inmates is higher at Shock facilities on a daily basis, the number of days spent under custody by a released inmate graduate is substantially less than if that inmate had to serve a full sentence at a Minimum or Medium Security facility.

In fact, for every 100 inmates who graduate from Shock, there is a savings of \$1.24 million because the Department has housed them for less time.

Separate from the operating costs are the bed savings, which translate into the capi-

tal construction costs avoided as a result of not having to house Shock graduates.

Eligibility Criteria

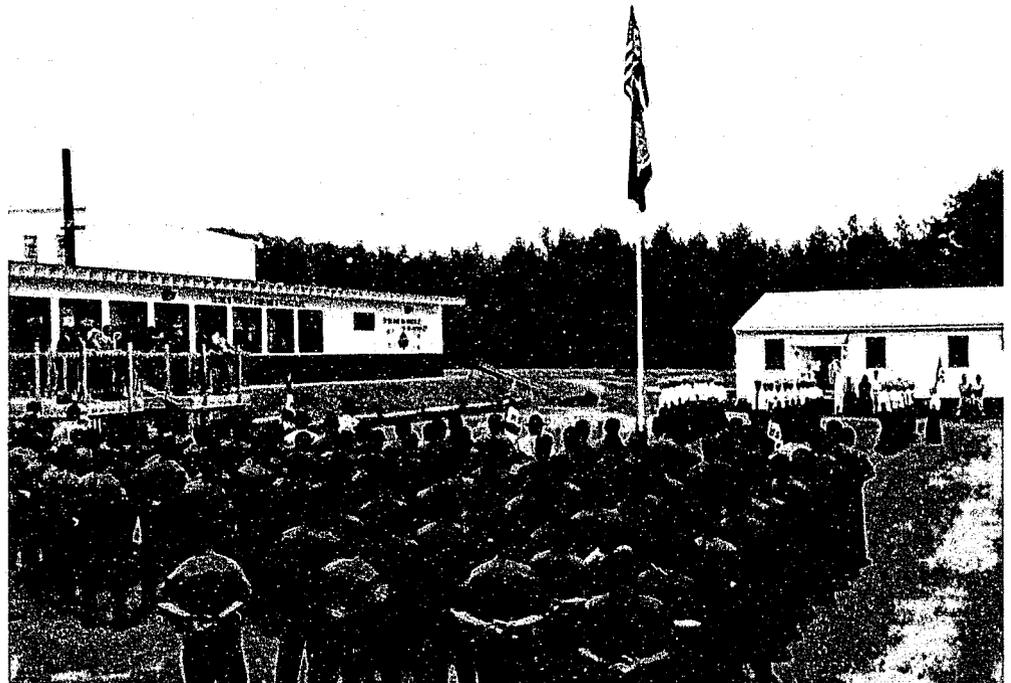
The substantial growth of the Shock program in New York was the result of changes which were made in the eligibility criteria by the Legislature. These changes have expanded the pool of Shock eligible inmates by raising the upper age limit for inclusion.

At first in 1987, an eligible inmate could be up to, but not including, 24 years of age at admission. On April 24, 1988, the Legislature raised the age limit by two years.

Another Legislative amendment on July 23, 1989, included 26 through 29 year old inmates. The inmates who were in this new age group had to meet some additional “tests” in order to qualify for Shock eligibility.

These criteria made it mandatory that these inmates (a) have their anticipated participation in Shock be reviewed by their sentencing judges who must not object to their participation and anticipated early release, (b) have not been convicted of a Shock ineligible offense, and (c) spend at least one year incarcerated (including jail time, time in reception, and time in Shock) prior to receiving a certificate of earned eligibility and release to parole supervision.

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Other inmates stand at rest as a graduating platoon at Monterey performs its final drill in front of the reviewing stand.

Shock ...

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On April 10 this year, the upper age limit was raised to 35 and the requirements for judge's consent and additional time were eliminated.

Other restrictions limit the program to non-violent felony offenders with a minimum sentence of more than one but less than three years.

These inmates must also receive both physical and psychological clearance to participate in the program. Inmates are not considered eligible to participate if, prior to their present sentence, they have ever been convicted of a felony upon which an indeterminate sentence was imposed.

In addition to the legislatively mandated criteria for exclusion, the law provides for the Department to establish various suitability criteria which further restrict program participation. These suitability criteria impose restrictions based on the medical, psychiatric, security classification, or criminal histories of otherwise legally eligible inmates.

Additionally, those inmates whose outstanding warrants, disciplinary records, or whose alien status has made them a security risk would also be screened from participation.

After screening for suitability, inmates then have to volunteer for the program.

Since Shock inmates are to be released prior to serving their judicially mandated minimum sentences, efforts have been made by both the Legislature and Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) to carefully restrict the eligibility criteria. The purpose of these restrictions has been to ensure that those inmates who could benefit the most from this program would be allowed to participate, while those inmates who posed a risk to society would be excluded.

Origins of Shock Incarceration

The common wisdom about Shock Incarceration programs nationally is that they began in 1983 in Georgia and Oklahoma.

In fact, there is some historical precedent for Shock Incarceration that was part of New York's Elmira Reformatory in 1888.

When Elmira was established in 1876, it was designed to house younger inmates who were convicted of first felonies and were given an indeterminate sentence.

Zebulon Brockway, its first superintendent, instituted a program stressing educa-

tion and industry. By building part of the institution and making several products, inmates were to learn marketable, honest skills.

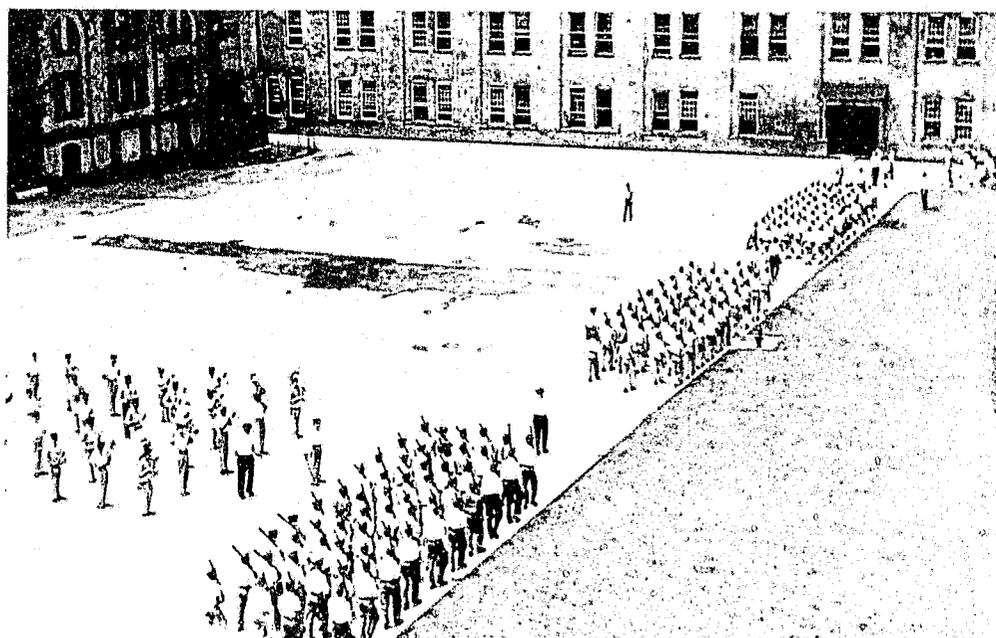
When the "Yates Law" of 1888 prohibited productive labor in all prisons of the state, Supt. Brockway substituted a program of military training to provide the activity he considered essential for physical and mental health. He believed that the military discipline used at Elmira provided inmates with tools to help them reform.

This belief in the reformatory ability of military discipline still exists. The one programmatic feature that all Shock programs nationally have in common is military discipline and training.

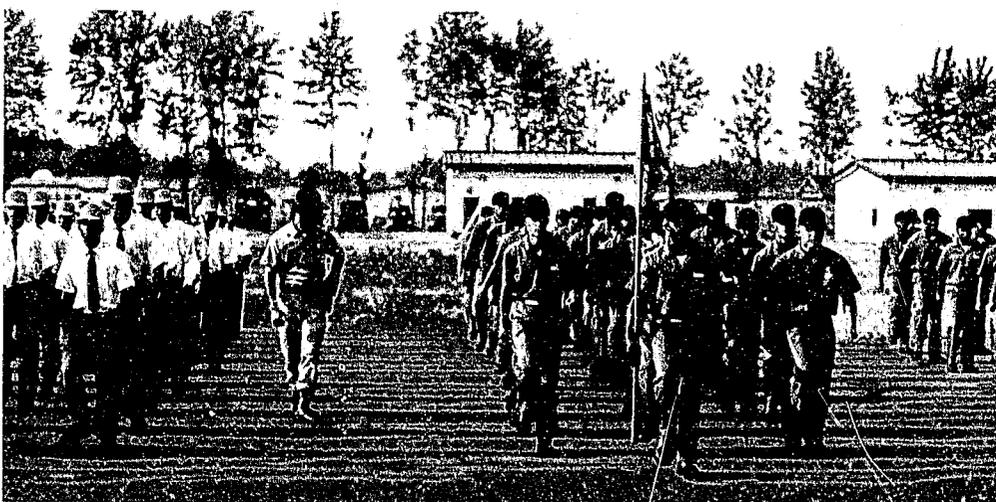
New York's Shock Incarceration facilities offer a six-month discipline and treatment-oriented program, where eligible inmates are provided the opportunity to develop life skills which are commonly viewed as being important for successful reintegration into society.

The program includes rigorous physical activity, intensive regimentation and discipline, instruction in military bearing, courtesy, drills, physical exercise, Network Community Living Skills, a structured work program, intensified substance abuse and alcohol counseling, and structured educational programming covering materials up to the high school equivalence level.

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Military drill is part of the program, above, at the Elmira Reformatory from 1888 well into the 20th Century, and, below, today in New York State's Shock Incarceration Correctional Facilities.



Shock ...

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Inmates participate in structured activities that are designed to prepare them for successful return to society.

In contrast to other states, the Shock Incarceration Program run by DOCS is designed to be a treatment-oriented program. For every 500 hours of physical training plus drill and ceremony that has led to the media calling it a "boot camp", Shock in New York also includes 546 hours of the therapeutic approach to treating addiction, based on the Network and the ASAT (Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment) programs.

It also includes at least 260 mandatory hours of academic education, and 650 hours of hard labor, where inmates work on facility projects, provide community service work, and work on projects in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Conservation.

When Shock Incarceration was being developed in New York, Commissioner Coughlin directed that the Network Program be an integral part of this initiative.

"Network," he said, "has been operating in New York State Correctional Facilities since 1979 and has strengthened our resolve to identify and deal with the special needs of our staff and inmates. It has proven successful in providing an opportunity for positive growth and change. That's what Shock is all about — bridging the external discipline of the military model with an internalized system of positive values."

Network was designed to establish, within correctional facilities, living/learning units to be supervised and operated by specially trained correction officers and supervisors.

An underlying basis for the Network philosophy is the theoretical model of the causes of delinquency known as "control theory."

The assumption made by control theorists is that people who are incarcerated are individuals whose bond to society has been weakened or broken, and exposure to a program such as Shock can help restore this bond.

The Shock program emphasizes the need for individuals to strengthen their indirect controls, their internalized controls, and their controls over opportunities for conventional activities by emphasizing their responsibility for choices and the consequences of their behavior.

Under the Network design, peer confrontation groups are used to deal with the negative attitudes of participants. The strength of peer groups is in the lack of authority-based coercive feedback to inmates. These peer groups provide clear perspectives on the consequences of dysfunctional behavior, while suggesting positive alternatives to that behavior. Yet, this only works in the context of a caring community.

Learning experiences also are used in Shock Incarceration to remind both the individuals who receive them and the community as a whole of the need to

change bad habits to useful ones. These experiences may consist of physical tasks or a process which serves as a reminder of the consequences associated with a certain behavior and provides a strategy for creating desirable outcomes.

In a sense, New York's Shock Incarceration Program consists of numerous programs that have been used individually in the past and have provided some successes. In fact, multi-treatment programs like New York's Shock Incarceration Program have been viewed as the most successful means of achieving positive changes in inmate behavior.

Within this Network therapeutic community model of the Department's SICFs (Shock Incarceration Correctional Facilities), an emphasis has been placed on substance abuse treatment because of the documented drug or alcohol abuse histories of the majority of program participants.

Parole and After-care

Shock in New York State is a two part program involving both institutional treatment and intensive parole supervision for graduates. This intensive parole supervision and after-care treatment for Shock graduates is still another key distinction which makes the New York program unique.

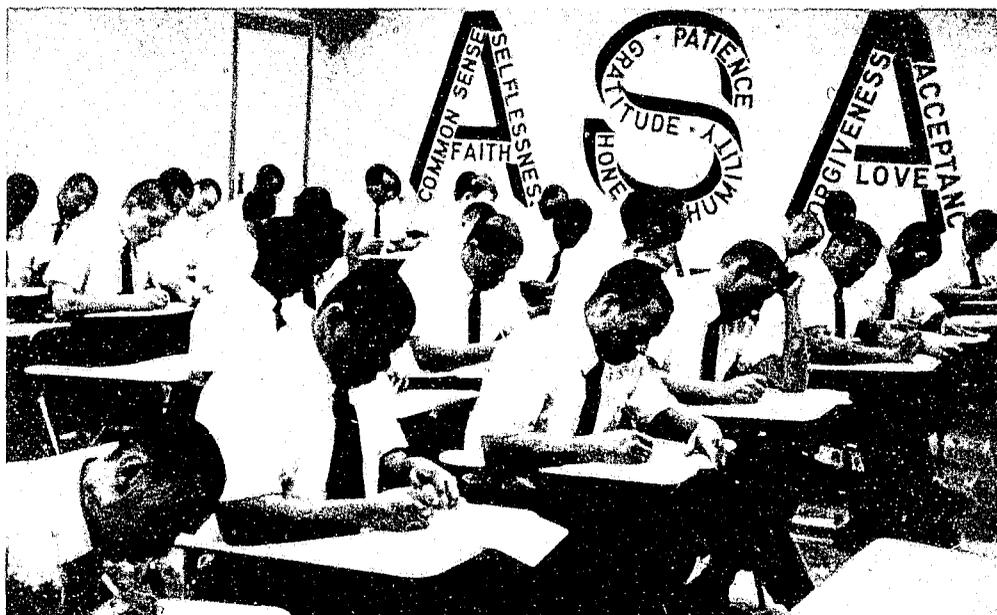
With the most intensive supervision caseloads in the State, parole officers working in Shock have used community service providers to help in job placement, relapse prevention, and educational achievement for these inmates. During the first six months after an inmate graduates, parole staff continue to help maintain the decision-making and conflict resolution counseling which was begun at the facilities.

Staff Training

Staff training is one of the most important ways in which program integrity is ensured.

All staff who work in a Shock Incarceration facility in New York State are required to attend a comprehensive, highly structured, rigorous four and one-half week training program, similar to the Shock program for offenders.

The goal of the training is to familiarize all correctional employees with the concepts, goals and structure of the Shock program. Group unity and teamwork are also emphasized.



Inmates in an ASAT class work diligently at their desks.