EUROPEAN COMMITTEE
ON CRIME PROBLEMS

GROUP
AND COMMUNITY WORK
WITH THE OFFENDERS

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*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 26 September 1973,
at the 224th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers,

Having regard to the need to promote methods of treating offenders both in institutions and at liberty;

Considering that developments in contemporary society affect human relations and increase the complex issues of management and treatment existing in penal institutions, particularly tensions affecting both staff and inmates;

Considering that group and community methods provide appropriate means of handling these problems;

Considering that it is in the interests of member states to establish the broad lines of a common policy for crime prevention and the treatment of offenders,

I.   Recommends that the governments of member states:

1.   Examine the possibility of introducing or developing in their penal establishments various forms of group and community methods, the choice depending on the aims, resources, size and structure of those establishments;

2.   Provide favourable conditions for the application of these methods by taking appropriate steps, in particular:

i. ensuring that penal authorities are advised on the use of these methods by qualified specialists;

ii. ensuring that staff of all ranks acquire as part of their normal training an understanding of group and institution processes;

iii. ensuring that staff involved in the application of group methods receive special training;

iv. ensuring that the application of these methods is:
— supervised by competent staff;
— frequently assessed as to its effects;

3. Examine also the possibility of introducing group work:

— as part of semi-custodial treatment (hostels, half-way houses);

— as part of non-custodial treatment (probation and similar measures including after-care);

4. Secure wide dissemination of the Council of Europe report on group and community work with the offenders in their appropriate services;

II. Invites the governments of member states to report to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe every five years informing him of the action being taken by them on the recommendations contained in this resolution.

REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE
ON CRIME PROBLEMS
ON GROUP AND COMMUNITY WORK
WITH THE OFFENDERS
(DRAWN UP BY ITS SUB-COMMITTEE No. XIV)

I. Introduction

A. *General considerations*

This report is concerned with existing knowledge about group work with offenders. It distinguishes the various kinds of group activity which have been tried in a range of settings, both custodial and non-custodial. It gives an account of the staff, training and organisation required to undertake this work. Group methods have been used more extensively in penal institutions than in non-custodial settings where their introduction has been comparatively recent. This is reflected in this report, which gives correspondingly more attention to the uses of group and community methods within institutions.

The interest in the use of group methods within institutions stems from the transitional state of those institutions. A system in which prisoners spend much of their time in close confinement, and in which rules are strictly applied, is giving way to a system in which inmates spend an increased amount of time in association both at work and at leisure. This shift has produced problems for staff and prisoners alike.

An institution where staff and prisoners have meaningful social relationships with each other, and where the environment is potentially enriching instead of one of deprivation, helps to preserve each inmate's self-respect, and so assists in preparing him for his eventual release. Furthermore, some of the alleged conflict between security and treatment may also be resolved in this way. Traditionally security has generally been conceived in mechanical terms, i.e. in terms of bars, locks and keys, and more recently by closed circuit TV and other electronic devices. Increasingly, however, there is a realisation that social and psychological factors have a crucial part to play in the task of security.

We must also take account of the increasing demand for dialogue and consultation which has led to an appreciation that new forms of management are needed. Inevitably prisons themselves have been affected by these changes. For example, staff as well as prisoners are increasingly challenging existing systems, and in some instances have been able to count on support from sectors of the general public. It is against this background of external and internal influences promoting change in penal systems that group methods can be seen as potentially useful.

Penal institutions, as all organisations, contain two major types of group. Some groups are official, clearly defined and relatively permanent; thus we refer to the *staff* and the *inmates*

as clearly distinct groups. Yet within each of these main groups, and sometimes crossing the boundaries between them, there exist many similar groups, unofficial, with ill-defined boundaries, and relatively transient, which nevertheless effectively influence events within the life of the institution. In connection with the latter it is clear that such groups exist as soon as contacts are made between people. The issue therefore is not whether or not to introduce groups into an establishment, but whether, having recognised their inevitable existence, a decision is made to make use of them consciously and constructively.

This is to view groups as social phenomena. However, much of the literature on group work within institutions refers to the first kind of group, and assumes an explicitly therapeutic purpose, i.e. one of bringing about specified changes in individuals. This is partly because rather more attention has been given in the past to group counselling than to other types of group work. There is quite an extensive literature on the subject. Less has been written about other forms of group work, and this has encouraged a tendency to confuse them, and to apply a generic connotation to group counselling. It should be made clear that the concern of this report is with group work as a whole and that group counselling is but one form of group work. Moreover we have certain reservations about the strictly therapeutic efficacy of group counselling and of group work generally (using the term "therapeutic" in a restricted clinical sense), as will become apparent in the section on *evaluation*. We feel that in practice the most useful functions of group work lie in what from the strictly therapeutic point of view may be seen as a by-product, namely the respects in which group work may improve relationships, and in the areas of organisation. We also feel that this may explain why interest in group activities is sustained, even though there is so far little hard evidence of their long-term therapeutic efficacy.

B. *Historical perspective*

Such theory as there has been seems to have been derived from a number of sources. During the second world war, pioneer work was undertaken in the development of group psychotherapy, a notable example being the work undertaken at the Belmont Hospital (from the Henderson Hospital) by Dr Maxwell Jones. At the same time sociologists, especially in the United States of America, were beginning to describe the inmate culture of prisons, psychiatric hospitals and other psychiatric institutions and to emphasise the informal structures of institutions stressing the strong feelings aroused in inmates against the staff and vice

versa.[1,2] Also in the United States the development of individual counselling spread to such areas as marriage guidance, pastoral counselling, education, vocational guidance and so on. This work owed much to the thinking of Carl Rogers.[3]

It is important to note that from the first group counselling had little theoretical basis but was essentially a pragmatic attempt to involve custodial staff with inmates in an effort to break down the barriers between the two groups. There was also a hope that this activity might result in improved behaviour whilst on parole and final discharge. As time has passed theory has developed.

It was in California that group counselling of offenders was introduced in the early 1950s, Dr Norman Fenton[4] being a prime mover in its introduction. In Europe some countries have introduced group counselling and had varied experiences. At the present time the situation appears to be that in a number of member countries there exist a variety of types of group for inmates, which are not exclusively counselling groups but which have a therapeutic and/or educational aim.

This recognition extends to the design of new institutions where it is acknowledged that a small group numbering between ten and sixteen is an ideal unit for intensive treatment. Living units have been built based on the principle of small numbers. This coincides with the fact that small numbers of inmates are also easier to control so that there is an identity of interest between the controlling element which may be necessary in penal establishments and the therapeutic/educational interest.

C. *Council of Europe activities in the field of group work with the offenders*

The ECCP has been actively interested in group methods since 1967. In that year a small group of research workers was asked to report on group counselling.[5] A seminar in group counselling was held in 1969 at Wakefield in the United Kingdom;

1. Clemmer, D., *The Prison Community*, Rinehart, Holt & Co., New York, 1958. ·
2. Sykes, *The Society of Captives*, Princeton, USA, 1958.
3. Rogers, C., *Client Centred Therapy*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1951.
4. Fenton, N., *Group Counselling - A preface to its use in correctional and welfare agencies*, Institute for the Study of Crime and Delinquency, 1961.
5. *Group counselling in certain European countries*, Council of Europe, 1967.

a questionnaire on the application of group counselling was sent to all member states in 1969 and the results of the replies have been circulated. A co-ordinated fellowship study was asked to consider the development of inmate participation in decision-making processes. A seminar held in Schwechat (Austria) in 1970 on "means for the rehabilitation of inmates" examined also group techniques. In 1970 Sub-Committee No. XIV of the ECCP [1] was mandated to pool experience and to make available knowledge on setting up group counselling regimes and other group and community methods, to comment on the orientation and training problems involved, on the provision of staff support by psychological experts and especially on the implications for middle and higher management.

Specific forms of group activity which have been tried are reviewed in this report. The choice of any particular group activity must depend on objectives as well as on an assessment of feasibility which is itself dependent upon the resources which may be available. Nevertheless, in the developing situation to which reference has already been made, it is essential that all prison staff, but especially senior staff, should have some understanding of group processes as a means of furthering the general understanding of the formal and informal life of the institution and in particular the relationships which exist within and between staff and inmates. This is, of course, quite distinct from the acquisition of skills in handling groups for educational or therapeutic purposes.

D. *Plan of the report*

The report consists of:

I. The present introduction
II. Preliminary guide
III. Analysis of techniques and national experiences
IV. Community work
V. The application of group work in non-custodial settings
VI. Training
VII. Evaluation

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1. The sub-committee was composed of: Mr R. Taylor (United Kingdom), Chairman, Mr O. Wilfert (Austria), Mr W. Feldman (Denmark), Mr B. Paludan-Muller (Denmark), observer, Mr A. Mathé (France), Mr G. Picca (France), Mr P. Allewijn (Netherlands), Mr G. Marnell (Sweden), Mr P. Nokes (United Kingdom).

II. **Preliminary guide**

A. *Activity groups*

General description

A method of working with a group, principally relying on non-verbal communication.

In the activity group the group members occupy themselves with various activities, manual work, hobbies, games, art, depending on the ability of the group leader and the interests of the group members. A distinction may be made between the conscious therapeutic use of activity groups and activities in groups where there is no declared therapeutic aim.

Size

Two to ten members, but also larger groups, at times divided into smaller sub-groups, may be adequate.

Composition

Adolescents, insecure and sensitive persons and people of low intelligence may profit from activity groups, but other selections are possible.

Duration and frequency

This will depend on the local situation. Activity groups may meet several hours a day, but less frequent meetings, for instance once or twice a week, can also be used.

Leadership

Activity group leaders do not need to be trained group workers but they should be able to practise the actual activities. Training and support will be necessary where there is a therapeutic aim.

Items for discussion

Although the activity group is mainly of a more non-verbal character, all kinds of items which may come up in the group can be discussed. The group may at times turn into a usual counselling or conversation group.

Examples

As mentioned, institutions with young offenders may be very suitable, but the method can be used in all kinds of institutions as well as in a more ambulant setting.

B. *Discussion groups*

General description

Discussion groups provide a means by which members of the group can become better informed about subjects which may be of importance to them. They serve the dual function of providing information and the opportunity to examine its implications. Essentially an educational technique, traditionally associated with teaching and learning, nevertheless a discussion group is able to promote greater awareness. This method is primarily concerned with external events rather than with personal preoccupations.

Size of group

A minimum of about six and a maximum of fifteen.

Composition

A wide range of intellectual ability should be avoided. Groups might also be composed of people who share a common interest, or who may have some other common identity such as belonging to the same town, or having been convicted of similar crimes. Discussion groups can be used for a wide range of offenders.

Duration

Such groups should meet at regular intervals, in order that relationships develop to the point where useful work is undertaken.

Leadership

There are skills in the effective leadership of a discussion group. These are to ensure that all the members are able to participate and that they are able to follow the discussion. It is possible to use prison personnel but untrained members of staff will require some preparatory training to enable them to undertake this work.

Content

Discussion groups can be used in at least three ways.

1. Traditionally, problems are presented and the discussion group is invited to consider a number of possible points of view.

2. Following a lecture, talk or formal presentation of information (using video tape, film or tape recordings).

3. The group is invited to select a topic or topics for discussion and can be asked to draw up a programme of subjects. This may be possible once a discussion group has become established.

The choice of subject will be determined by the purpose of the group. Subjects can include social issues, general political and economic matters, and matters related to release and after-care.

References

Whilst this is probably the most widely adopted formal method of group work, there have been few written accounts of this method of work.

C. *Closed living groups*

General description

The aim is to provide an institution which is so organised that there is a series of "closed" groups whose members live, work and take part in sport and recreational activities together. Their whole day is in effect spent in each other's company. The group has the services of leaders who will be assigned to the group for as long as it continues. What happens within the group is subject for evaluation by the group and its leaders.

It is considered that by these means the inmates will learn to adapt to others and that their experiences will help their social development by self-realisation. Such an aim makes demands on the inmates. Each must be able to "give and take", to think of others as well as of himself; to accept the decisions of the group.

The living group may have a programme of all kinds of activities such as labour, sport, cultural and educational activities. The activities, however, are not an aim in themselves but a means to the functioning of the group.

Discussions evaluating what was going on during the day are important for the living group. In addition to these group

meetings, evaluation discussions (e.g. once a week) with the entire institutional community are very useful. It is important that as far as possible the whole staff takes part in these "plenary" meetings.

Of course, the description given above only gives a certain model; there are naturally a lot of variations possible on the same theme.

Size of groups

As a minimum the group should have about six members and as a maximum about fifteen. It is important to work with "closed" groups.

Composition

Inmates should be motivated for this kind of group work. Therefore, a short period of introduction is important to make clear to the inmates the aims of the living groups and to explain the rules of the "game".

Furthermore, there are a number of indications of unsuitability for participating in a closed living group such as markedly low mental ability, mental disturbance etc.

Duration

This system of living groups has to be regarded as a particularly appropriate form of group work for inmates serving short-term sentences from one month up to about six months.

Leadership

Leadership of a living group is demanding. Training in the methods of group work and of human relationships is an important condition. Furthermore continuous training under supervision is necessary. Some form of permanent "supervision" is advisable because guiding a living group is a very stressful job.

Discussion

Discussion forms only a small part of the whole of the activities of the living groups. Items for discussions during the regular evaluation meetings include the events of the day and the conflicts between members of the group or with the leader of the group. It is important that the group members have a

clear idea of their own behaviour. Other items for discussion are the events of daily life in society and the inmates' own feeling towards those events.

The "depths" of the discussion can be decided by the group itself. Depending on its composition the group may tend to move in the direction of a quasi-therapeutic group and examine the motivation of the group.

The experienced leader of the living group will instinctively feel which contribution he can best render to the group, or in other words, help the group in determining what it can use to best advantage.

Suitable institutions to apply

As already stated, the system of living groups seems to be most appropriate to institutions with inmates serving short sentences. The results of working with living groups may be better in medium security and semi-open institutions than in closed institutions.

Furthermore it is likely that the system of living groups is more suitable for institutions with young inmates than for older ones.

Material and staff requirements

"Living groups" in general require special buildings, smaller sections, pavilion accommodation. The structure of the building should provide enough facilities to give the living groups the sense that the whole institution is built up out of the groups and not divided into groups.

The staff required for the application of the system of living groups will be high, because each group will have its own leaders.

Example:

de Corridor, the Netherlands.

D. Group counselling

General description

This method of working with a small group provides an opportunity for social learning where each member of the group is able to express feelings and is encouraged to give help as well

as receive help from other members of the group. This is considered helpful since the knowledge gained from members of the group is often more acceptable than advice given by those in authority. Through this process it is possible to modify perceptions and attitudes.

Size of group

A minimum of six and a maximum of ten.

Composition

In principle all inmates may take part. In practice selection will depend on the local situation and on the counsellor.

Groups may be "open" or "closed". An "open" group is one which takes new members when other members leave. Such a group can have an indefinite life although the membership may change. A "closed" group is one where the membership remains constant as long as the group is in being. In institutions where there is a rapid change of inmate population (e.g. short-term detention) a group's life is likely to be limited and an "open" group may be more feasible. In longer term situations a "closed" group is likely to be more effective.

Duration

Groups should meet for a minimum of one day per week for between an hour and a half and two hours and for at least fifteen sessions. For those serving short-term sentences, more frequent sessions may be necessary. Effective relationships are unlikely to develop sufficient degree of depth, if there were to be fewer sessions. There is no optimum period for the life of a group but "closed" groups should be reviewed after a year.

Leadership

A group counsellor need not be a professionally trained social worker but should have satisfactorily completed the training required for this work.

Furthermore, a capacity to be able to separate "what is being said by members of the group" from "what is happening within the group" is of prime importance. Clearly a group counsellor should be able to work effectively with people and be able to feel and to convey understanding to the group.

Where prison officers have been group counsellors, many have proved to be very effective, given training and supervision.

Basic training courses last from four to ten days followed by continuous supervision. The training is carried out by psychologists or social workers who are trained group workers or by others who have had suitable training in group methods.

Further developmental training for group counsellors is essential if they are to maintain and develop this work.

Content

There is no formal agenda. A counselling group should be free to work on the feelings within the group as well as with subjects which any member may raise. Ideally no subject is forbidden. However, practice varies and some staff sensitivities may be allayed if some subjects are discouraged.

The subject matter for a counselling group is the present situation confronting the members of the group. For many this will inevitably be concerned with the coming to terms with their sentence, an examination of their criminality, their life in custody and preparation for their eventual release.

Examples

Various establishments, in particular in Austria, Denmark, the United Kingdom.

E. Group psychotherapy

General description

Group psychotherapy differs from all other forms of group work in that it is concerned with the analysis of unconscious mental processes, and of emotional and instinctive drives. Attention is focused not only on the personal history of the subject, but also on the relationship between his past and present life, and on the interpersonal processes set in motion by the dynamics of the group itself.

Size of group

A minimum of five and a maximum of ten.

Composition

Psychotherapeutic groups should be homogeneous in some respects such as age and level of intellectual ability and also, in a prison setting, in respect of the nature of the offence committed.

Duration

Groups should last for a minimum of six months and a maximum of eighteen months. The length of sessions is normally an hour and a half and two hours. The frequency of sessions varies and may be as often as two or three sessions per week. It is undesirable that there be less than one session each week. In respect of frequency and duration it is absolutely essential that dates and times should be fixed in advance and strictly adhered to.

Leadership

Psychiatrist or psychologist.

Content

Agendas are to be avoided at all costs, since they offer too many possibilities of avoiding personal matters. Totally free discussion, based on the free association of ideas, is essential if a sufficient depth is to be achieved.

References

It is difficult to observe these groups in action. Visitors disturb group processes, and in any case can learn little or nothing in short visits. On the other hand it might, in some cases, be possible for an observer to attend if he was prepared to do so for the entire period of the group's existence.

Examples

Melun (France).

F. *Counselling by inmates*

Description

The use of inmates as counsellors is implicit in the very nature of group activity; the fact that interaction is multi-directional, that inmates are used as a resource and help *each other*, already blurs traditional distinctions between the staff members and the inmates. However these implications have become entirely explicit in at least three recent developments:

1. Self-help groups, where all initiatives come from the inmates, and staff members are used as resources, if at all (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous, Recidivists Anonymous).

2. Adult resocialisation programmes, where initiatives come from the staff, but selected inmates are trained and employed as counsellors, (e.g. the Asklepion Programme at the US Penitentiary, Marion, Illinois, the Robert F. Kennedy Youth Center etc.).

3. The Henderson Hospital.

Size of group

Since these experiments vary in nature there is no firm rule, though on general grounds one might expect a range of between six and twelve, with perhaps a tendency towards smaller groups in the case of adult resocialisation programmes.

Composition

The obvious criterion for self-help groups is the sharing of common problems; alcoholism or the need to make realistic plans for release. Adult resocialisation programmes raise special considerations, for which the relevant authorities should be considered.

Duration

Self-help groups appear to have no terminal period since they are expected to provide continuous support, rather than to bring about irreversible change. Adult resocialisation programmes, likewise, may continue throughout the duration of a sentence, the "patient" proceeding in due course to become an employed "therapist".

Leadership

Self-help groups generate their own leadership, though staff members may be involved as advisers. Adult resocialisation programmes have inmate leaders carefully selected and trained by staff members.

Items for discussion

This depends on the nature of the group.

References

Recidivists Anonymous: Central Service Office, 15 Blandford Road, London W. 5.

Alcoholics Anonymous: Central Service Office, 11 Redcliffe Gardens, London S.W.10.

Dr M. Groder, The Asklepion, Federal Penitentiary, Marion, Illinois.

III. Analysis of techniques and national experience

A. *Activity groups*

These are groups where the participants occupy themselves in various forms of activity including manual work, hobbies, games, sport, the choice depending on the facilities which may be available, the participants' own interest and need, together with the leader's ability, the rationale being that behaviour in activity provides the basis for discussion and learning about that behaviour.

In these groups, the participants' form of expression will of course be partly non-verbal. However, important facets of the personality of the participants will emerge in the course of these activities including relationships between group members as well as between members and leader. It is postulated that group processes observed in small group behaviour will be evident in an activity group and the skill of the leader lies in his ability to enable the group to gain some understanding and awareness of self.

The activity satisfies the members' need to do something more "useful" instead of simply talking the time away, and the persons who are not so good at verbal expression feel more secure in expressing and asserting themselves in this way rather than verbally. Activity supports and helps the group members through difficult situations in the group, for if they are busy doing something with their hands, this may give the necessary feeling of security and safety.

The leader need not be an expert in the activity chosen, just as the leader of a discussion group need not be all-knowing. Of course it is advantageous if the leader is interested in the activity, but sometimes it can be disadvantageous if he is perceived as being too clever. His expertise can expose the limitations of the clients, who may give up the activity. However, if the leader

succeeds in appealing to their need for help, his lack of skill in the activity may encourage the group members. The rise of self-confidence among the members of the group will also increase the group's solidarity.

Activity groups may be one of the most appropriate forms of group work for adolescents, insecure and sensitive personalities and persons of limited intelligence.

B. *Discussion groups*

The discussion group method is probably the most widely adopted form of group work used with offenders. Group discussion provides the setting where group members can come together to consider and discuss subjects which arouse their interest and may have importance for them. Essentially the processes of group discussion include the presentation of relevant information, i.e. "the facts", an examination of the concepts underlying the subject and an expression of the opinion and attitudes of the members of the group. Members do require some verbal facility and, as with other group methods, interpersonal relationships inevitably play a part, but the focus will be the subject under discussion. Group discussion, then, is primarily an educational process.

The group discussion may be adapted in a number of ways. Indeed, versatility of the method accounts for its widespread use. It makes minimum demands on equipment and space although discussion will be facilitated by the comfort of chairs and a circular arrangement of seating. It can be used for different groups of offenders and by those representing such diverse disciplines as teachers, social workers, including probation officers, clergymen and doctors.

Group discussion has been used with long-serving prisoners with the aim of providing intellectual stimulus and of arousing interest. The experience can help to sustain inmates particularly in the middle period of the sentence and its entertainment value should not be discounted. A discussion group can also play an important part in preparation for release, as part of a pre-release programme. To give another example, it may be offered to young people as part of a programme of preparation for adult life as a way of giving help with difficulties at this difficult transitional stage. Adaptation to the new situations which face people either in the course of development in the successive stages of life or in the particular circumstances of the moment can be seen as subjects for discussion, as well as general social issues.

Organisation

Groups may be arranged in such a way that:

1. A discussion follows an "input", i.e. the formal presentation of material for discussion. Thus, discussion might follow a talk given by an "informed" person who need not be the group leader but could be a visitor; alternatively the input could be provided by a film or tape recording or by a member of the group who has prepared an introduction for the discussion, or

2. The group leader develops a theme which will be pursued at each meeting. He may provide the impetus to start the discussion at each session but the amount of new detail may be less than in 1 above.

It will be seen that the arrangements for group discussion are the responsibility of the leader. How this is carried out will depend on local circumstances. It may be necessary for the leader to plan the course of discussion and this can include such preparatory details as listing all the items which should be considered by the group. In this sense, the leader exercises full control. Or he may wish to share some of the responsibility for the programme with the group. In effect there is considerable latitude in the degree of control which a leader may exercise.

Leadership

The role of the leader will be determined to some extent by the particular aims of the discussion group. Thus all leaders will expect to take an initiative to bring the members together and probably to prepare the programme. He will also have to consider the effect of his own method of working with the group. Generally he will aim to facilitate discussion, to clarify and, where he is able, to inform. He will endeavour to help members to participate in the discussion and where possible enable the members to draw upon their own experience.

Leadership of a discussion group is a skilled task, but one which can be acquired. It is one which does not require especial professional expertise, and some prison officers as well as inmates have been successful discussion group leaders. We have noted that whilst discussion groups start from the premise that their focus is educational, discussion groups which have become well established do become concerned with personal relationships, even where every endeavour is made to the contrary. This is to raise the question whether discussion groups can be restricted to formal discussion of topics which have been carefully selected or whether

they will inevitably perform some personal remedial function, sometimes in a very sophisticated way.

Group discussion will normally be arranged as a series. It is useful to pre-determine the number of sessions which will be held. These can range from one upwards, but if members are to work together, at least six meetings should be held. Ideally, the groups should be closed and for "volunteers".

Group discussions meet with less opposition from staff, possibly because it is a method which many have experienced themselves, possibly because it is perceived as a didactic method where control is in the hands of the leader. It is a method which is less surrounded by "mystique" than counselling and is less personally threatening. At its best it can be a very effective way of establishing effective relationships between members and between the leader and members of the discussion group.

C. Closed living groups

A group unit is only one of the many forms of group work conceivable in penal establishments.

In describing the group unit here, the model is based on the "Corridor", a corrective training camp for young men serving short sentences in the Netherlands. A group of not more than ten young men, under the guidance of four group leaders, are required to live and work together and to carry out a programme of activities for several weeks in the course of which they will deal with a number of situations, each of which is designed to make a special demand on the group. These young prisoners have chosen to serve their sentences in this way, prompted by motives of which they themselves are scarcely aware and which are widely divergent.

When admitted to the camp they are given, in addition to the necessary information, the rules of the "game": if they run away they will not be taken back, for transfer to another group is impossible. The aim of the group unit is to make the unit function as well as possible, which can of course be interpreted in various ways, especially in this setting. One of the most obvious ways for the young prisoners will be to get through their "time" as pleasantly as possible. But even so simple an aim as this makes certain demands on each member of the unit after a time. Each must be able to give and take, to think of others besides himself, to stick to what has been agreed.

The group unit is not merely a group-oriented form of group work whose only aim is to steer the group processes in a con-

structive way. Even if the members of the unit are determined to make something of the unit, and even if the point of departure for the daily evaluation discussion is to find out to what extent they have succeeded, the unit is also the medium through which each member is working towards his own resocialisation. Seen from this angle, the group unit is a form of individual-oriented group work stimulating social learning processes in individual members; the group being the medium within which this is done.

The group unit in penal establishments is a particularly appropriate form of group work for a large proportion of young prisoners serving short-term sentences, for the following reasons:

1. The evaluation of what has happened in the unit and what each member has contributed removes, after some time, the casual, uncommitted character that group discussions often have in a penal setting. Instead of randomly discussing historical "there and then" subjects, current "here and now" responsibilities can be tackled. Individual members can no longer just withdraw from their responsibilities. One of the duties of the group leader is, then, to make the members keep their word, or in other words, relate what they say to what they do.

2. The "depth" of this type of group work can be decided by the group itself. Depending on its composition, the unit may tend to move in the direction of the semi-therapeutic group and seek to find out what is "behind" their actions, or it may stay closer to the surface. The experienced group leader will instinctively feel which contributions he can best render functional to the group, and so guide the group in determining what it can use to the best advantage.

The setting of the group unit in the penal establishment

The group unit is not suitable for participation by those of markedly low mental ability, or who are mentally disturbed. Furthermore, the institution's culture must be such that the group unit fits into the overall philosophy.

If the stress proves too much for some members of the group resulting in violent reaction, adequate and expert professional guidance must be provided; repression must not be regarded as the inevitable solution.

Although the young prisoners take part in discussions on group programmes and in the arrangement of some of the camp affairs (visits, activities on public holidays etc.), this is not a model of self-government by the prisoners. Sanctions are applied by

the prison director, although always in consultation with the group leaders and sometimes also with the young man to whom they are to be applied or with his group.

The institution's director leads an evaluation discussion once a week with all the inmate population and the group leaders.

D. *Group counselling*

1. The aim of group counselling is to provide an opportunity to improve social learning where each member of the group is able to express feelings and is encouraged to give help as well as receive help from other members of the group. The definition of counselling is complex but it has been described (de Berker) thus: "a small group of inmates, not more than ten and preferably six or eight, meet a member of staff regularly once a week for about an hour and a half. They should feel free to discuss whatever topic, personal or impersonal, that comes to their mind. The staff member should feel free to tolerate such discussion which may be alien to the existing concepts of how inmates should engage in discussion in the presence of a prison officer in a formal meeting."

In group counselling, the aim is that inmates learn to know and understand each other and to work through their problems, particularly those about which they feel strongly. It is postulated that the inmate, through sharing his feelings and attitudes with others, may gain some understanding of his behaviour. The inarticulate may learn to verbalise their feelings more effectively. The goal has been described by Fenton as the development of latent strengths within the offender through healthy and constructive relationships rather than effecting personality change.

2. *Organisation and arrangements*

The size of the group should be within the range of six to ten. Technically a group larger than this becomes difficult to handle. The composition of a group will depend upon local requirements as well as upon the competence of the counsellors. No offender need be excluded on the grounds of personality or of offence committed.

The length of time which a counselling group continues will vary. Common experience is with 15 to 50 group sessions but there may be exceptions. Well-established groups have a well-known reluctance to terminate their affairs and it may be preferable to set an upper limit with possibilities for renewal.

There are two views and practices regarding membership. One is that a group should be "closed" so that members are selected and remain with the group as long as it is in being. The membership does not change and new members are not admitted. The alternative is an "open" group whereby the membership changes but the group continues indefinitely. In short-stay institutions, since the group's life would be limited, this latter method is preferable. However open groups offer less personal security and are usually less intense.

In the longer term institution, where a group may continue for a much longer period, a greater choice is available since either open or closed groups can be arranged. However, in long stay institutions such questions as the realistic length of a group's life, and at what stage of the sentence counselling should be introduced, depend on the purpose of the counselling group.

It is usual for a counselling group to meet regularly for a period of one and a half hours but it is important that the group should have a fixed period of time for its sessions and that the time limit should be observed. A group will gain confidence if it has certainty that the time limits will be strictly observed: it is not unusual for a member of a group to raise a difficult issue in the last few moments of the life of a group. If the time limits are not observed, then a tendency to raise such issues will lapse. It is often in the knowledge that the group will disperse that such issues are raised and they are raised in a sense of giving notice of matters which might be dealt with at another time and possibly in another place. Strict adherence to time can give confidence to group members and it removes the responsibility of ending the session from the group leader.

It is equally important that the place where a group meets should as far as possible be the same for each session. Territory can become important in the life of a group. It is usual for the seating to be arranged in a circle, for this facilitates communication and allows each member to see the others without difficulty. It is undesirable for the group leader, for example, to sit behind a table since this will emphasise his authority and present an effective barrier between himself and the members of the group.

3. The role of the counsellor

The role of the staff member is to facilitate the work of the group. He should allow members of the group to interact freely with one another rather than become heavily dependent upon the counsellor for a lead. His approach should be to discover the

needs of the group, and for this reason it is unhelpful to begin with a syllabus. In the early sessions the group will display some curiosity and anxiety centred on its expectations. The group will also test the counsellor's reactions and specifically ask questions about what the group has met to do and what it is going to do.

The skill of the group counsellor lies in detecting the unspoken feelings, seeing behind the unspoken words and understanding some of the reactions of members of the group. Skill also lies in distinguishing between the legitimate and helpful discussion of personal matters and the too stressful concentration on the problems of a particular individual. A feature of group counselling is the emphasis on current issues in the immediate present rather than over-preoccupation with past events.

A counsellor may be pressed by members of the group to give personal opinions. He should endeavour to assist the group to seek its own answers and to work out its solutions rather than do the group's work.

4. The authority of the counsellor

The counsellor should be clear about the nature of his own authority which is threefold:

1. It derives from the fact that he is representing the authority of the institution or social work agency.

2. It derives from his skills and experience as a group counsellor.

3. It is vested in him by members of the group who accept that he has some expertise and that he is a person whose authority they can accept.

If the counsellor is clear about the nature of his own authority, he is likely to convey some of this confidence to members of the group.

Group activity

Group counsellors have observed different stages of group activity which may occur during the course of a number of sessions:

— where the group may discuss any topic but where the topic is normally "safe", that is to say, it may be discussing football or a TV performance or some issue which does not affect the relationships within the group or the life within the institution to any marked degree;

— where members may express their feelings and allude to personal experiences, often relating to their relationships with other people including their own families. Here the staff member does not take an active part in the discussion;

— where members describe their experiences and their feelings, seeking help from the group, and where the counsellor offers advice. This is a form of individual or "paternalistic" counselling within a group;

— where inmates may discuss feelings and experiences as above, but the counsellor encourages the group to work on the matters presented to it rather than taking it as an issue for him to work upon alone. When the group counsellor is able to facilitate the work of a group in this way it can be said to be a counselling group.

It is likely that many counselling groups will work at each of these stages at different times. This is not to say that counselling groups will inevitably stay at the last stage. Regression is to be expected. These stages are not progressive and are not descriptive of the progress of a group.

5. Whilst there is some similarity in the various stages which groups experience, these do vary, and for this reason no attempt is made in this report to set out in any detail the progress of a group. There are two features of group counselling which do deserve some comment since they have implications for administrators. These concern confidentiality and the nature of authority and permissiveness.

Confidentiality

As a group develops it is likely to become concerned with the confidentiality of the group. This may be expressed in terms of "How can we trust the staff member?", "What can we say in front of him because he may talk to other members of the staff and to the administration?" The concern may also be expressed in terms of confidences which are shared within the group but then divulged to other inmates. Testing confidentiality within the group is a normal process but it is an issue for which the staff should be prepared. Inevitably, this will test the role conflict of the group counsellor and in institutions will present some difficult issues for those in charge. It is not likely to be dealt with by such measures as issuing statements proscribing issues from discussion, since the group will either be held up because it is unable to discuss these issues or will find some subtle means of doing so. There is no simple resolution to this kind of conflict

and the problems of confidentiality are not likely to be resolved simply.

Authority and permissiveness

The term "permissiveness" has often been used in connection with group counselling. This is to give the impression that in a counselling session anything may be said, with the implication that the staff member abdicates his responsibility and authority. It is most important that the group worker retains a significant role in relation to the group and it is equally important that he should have a tolerant attitude when in the group. An extract from some notes to group counsellors, prepared by a prison governor in the UK, emphasises this point in the following way:

"A tolerant attitude means that you do not permit what is said by the group to upset or disturb you. If you do feel upset or disturbed you do not show it in a condemning way: you do not defend authority or what you think is right but allow the group to express themselves freely. This does not mean that you may not express what you think is right but that if you do, you express it as your opinion and not one which the group must accept. If you behave in this way, the group may learn by experience and not by your telling them that you will accept them as they are and that you are not trying to enforce your standards upon them."

6. Theoretical basis of group counselling

There are a number of theoretical concepts however which have had an important influence upon group counselling. Some of these were referred to in the introduction.

Dr Norman Fenton, who played a considerable part in the introduction of group counselling into the Californian Department of Corrections, has written extensively and has produced three handbooks which have had fairly widespread use. His publications have been concerned with methodology and technique rather than with theory. Fenton was influenced by Carl Rogers. It should be emphasised that Rogers's approach was essentially that of counselling individuals, but his concepts had been adapted for group use. Stated simply, the hypotheses of Rogers include the following:

1. That the individual has within himself the capacity, latent if not evident, to understand those aspects of himself and of his life which are causing him dissatisfaction.

2. This capacity will be released and therapy (or personal growth) will be facilitated when the counsellor can create a psychological climate which is characterised by:

a. a genuine acceptance of the client as a person of unconditional worth;

b. a sensitivity in understanding the existing feelings and communications of the client as they seem to the client without any effort to diagnose or alter those feelings;

c. a continuing attempt to convey something of this empathic understanding to the client.

3. It is hypothesised that in such an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding the client will reorganise himself at both the conscious and the deeper levels of his personality in such a way as to be able to deal with life more effectively, more intelligently and in a more socialised way. More specifically it is suggested that the client will change in his perception of himself and will become more understanding both of himself and of others, more accepting of himself and others, more creative and adaptive, more mature in his behaviour, less defensive and more tolerant of frustration.

A difficulty with these hypotheses for prison personnel lies in the emphasis on permissiveness and in the notion put forward by Rogers that the client or prisoner should be regarded by the worker as a person of inestimable worth. Whilst many prison workers may recognise this they may find the emotional acceptance of this statement extremely difficult. Fenton in effect makes the point that the Rogerian principles may be used as a guideline to encourage staff to become involved with and to express empathy with the inmate.

7. Staff training

In a recent publication, *A Handbook for the Use of Group Counselling in Correction Institutions*, Fenton suggests that a suitable training for counsellors or their supervisors would be "sensitivity" training (that is, "T-group" training).

This method should be taken into consideration—among other things—in the training of counsellors.

E. Group psychotherapy

"Group psychotherapy" is a term that embraces a variety of techniques and approaches, ranging from the psychoanalytic

method of Foulkes and others,[1] through the technique of "psychodrama" as practised by J. L. Moreno,[2] to the more didactic methods of such therapists as Glasser.[3] Notwithstanding these differences, however, the objective is in all cases to obtain access to unconscious mental processes, and to instinctive and emotional drives. It is in this respect that group psychotherapy differs from all other forms of group work, with the possible exception of "contact" groups, qq.v., and groups centering on some form of dramatic and artistic activity.

The introduction of group psychotherapy into penal establishments is fairly recent, although some pioneering work was undertaken in the United States, the United Kingdom and Denmark during the 1950s. Group psychotherapy was introduced into the French penal system in 1962.

Needless to say there was, from the very beginning, some doubt as to whether methods applied in the treatment of the mentally ill were appropriate when dealing with offenders, and also whether such methods, if introduced, needed to be modified to suit the special conditions of the prison environment and the position of detainees.

Nevertheless, as it became evident that the exemplary value of a penalty had lost much of the weight attributed to it in former times, new techniques were felt to be necessary that might assist in understanding an offender's personality, in the development of a sense of personal responsibility, and so in helping him to regain his place in society. In these circumstances, then, group psychotherapy made its appearance in certain penal systems.

It differs, as has been said, from other forms of group work in its focus on unconscious mental processes. One of its aims is to free the individual from his unconscious fantasies, and so to develop a realistic appreciation of his past activities, of his present position and of his future. But since this is to be achieved within a group (and not in a private interview), a second set of aims has to do with group processes themselves.

The therapeutic process, within a group, has two aspects. One is concerned with the individual's personal development through interaction with other members; the other with the dynamics of the group itself as members react to tension, conflict and crises. Thus the therapeutic aim is threefold: to analyse

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1. Foulkes and Anthony, *Group Psychotherapy.*
2. Moreno, J. L., *Who shall survive,* a more contemporary reference.
3. Glasser, *Reality Therapy.*

and if possible resolve conflicts; to help the inmate to develop a realistic self-image; and also to reassure him of the value of verbal expression, to convince him of the possibility of normalising his behaviour and attitudes to others, and so to bring him round to expressing himself spontaneously.

The selection of members of a group

Group psychotherapy is a continuous, if slow, process which works by way of the group through the medium of each member; its efficiency depends on how its structure forms and develops. Three categories of people are involved in the selection of members of a group: the prison administration, the psychotherapist, who will interview each candidate, and the inmate himself, who voluntarily agrees or refuses to be a member. The principle of voluntary membership is generally adhered to.

No category of offender is necessarily unsuitable for group psychotherapy, though "con men" may present special difficulties. However, recent experience suggests that groups should be homogeneous in respect of level of intellectual ability, type of offence and age. Views differ on the matter of age, but commonly subjects are aged between 17 and 35. In some cases very much older people may be admitted for group psychotherapy, though this is unusual.

The conduct of a group

The method of free association is fundamental to group psychotherapy. The expectations and anxieties of group members may often lead to requests for topics for discussion, but these must be avoided since they generally represent an attempt to avoid personal matters and so delay the development of the group to the point where it is operating at that degree of depth that is the characteristic contribution of this kind of group.

Results

Results may be assessed according to subjective criteria (self-awareness, understanding of others, tolerance of aggression on the part of others), or objective criteria (good behaviour during the period of imprisonment, reconviction). Yet the Gluecks suggest that the number of offences against disciplinary rules in prison that the number of offences against disciplinary rules in prison bears no necessary relationship to the behaviour of the individual following release. On the other hand the absence of anti-social behaviour punishable by law is no guarantee that the detainee's

difficulties have been cleared up and his condition improved. For these reasons, then, it appears that the efficacy of this method can only be assessed in terms of non-behavioural criteria such as those mentioned above.

Conditions in the institution

Psychotherapeutic treatment must be considered in the context of the prison as a whole; it cannot be isolated from the main current of prison life. It is in fact taking place in an environment which, far from being of a therapeutic nature, is more likely to present opposition to therapeutic effort, chiefly because it is directed at a group of men little inclined to regard authority benevolently. Since the psychotherapist cannot be present without the agreement of the prison administration, he is surrounded in the eyes of inmates with all the fantasies attached to the actions of authority.

Nevertheless he is part of the authority structure and to attempt to deny this is to neglect part of his task. It is true that prison administrations will often allow such groups to function provided they are not disturbed thereby, but the result is that the group isolates itself from the rest of the institutional life. If, on the other hand, such experiments are to be worthwhile, they are bound to involve the entire penal institution, and this will take place however little it was envisaged or intended. French experiments show that such an outcome does not undermine but rather facilitates the working of the institution. The psychotherapist becomes not an instructer, nor an informer, nor even an arbitrator, but a mediator of a whole system of interactions within the entire prison complex. If he functions in this way the administration accepts the group because its conduct has enabled it to integrate itself into the institution. In its final phase, then, group psychotherapy does in fact become "institutionalised", but the institution too will have been modified in a desirable direction, and this is a worthwhile objective.

Conclusion

The therapist acts at several levels within an institution if he is to assist the offender to control his behaviour. Since this behaviour is the outcome of an interaction between the individual and his environment, it is necessary to act not only on the person undergoing treatment, on the image he has of his environment, as an individual and as a member of the group, but also on the external environment itself. The detainee's psychology, which has often been reduced to regressive, infantile attitudes and agressive behaviour, must be helped to evolve in other directions.

The aim then of group psychotherapy among offenders is to enable something to be done to fight psychic inaction, the degrading atmosphere of the system, the feeling amongst detainees that they are marking time in an unfruitful way during imprisonment. Stress is no longer laid only on the sentence, although it is always present and must remain so.

While prison and its alienating relationships have to be accepted as a necessity, every effort must be made so as not to link the person and the environment in an inescapable system of social alienation. The organisation of group psychotherapy in prison is therefore designed to provide a sufficiently structured atmosphere in a necessarily closed hierarchical society by analysing aggressive and deviant behaviour within the group. It is also designed to confer an aura of reality within the institution on social behaviour with a view to achieving harmonious relationships.

F. Counselling by inmates

The practice of group counselling in a penal setting generally presumes at least some degree of role differentiation between the counsellor, who is a member of the staff of the institution, and the inmate, who is not. This role differentiation has two aspects:

1. Authority and accountability: the counsellor is presumed to be in charge of the proceedings and is accountable for the outcome, while the inmate is seen as the object of the proceedings, and is not accountable in this way.

2. Expertise: the counsellor is presumed to be in possession of skills, or at least knowledge and insights, that the inmate is presumed to be without. Typically these skills are acquired in the course of training.

Role differentiation, in these two respects, appears for obvious reasons appropriate to a situation where captors have to deal with captives. On the other hand, the very nature of group counselling, i.e. the fact that communication is in principle multi-directional, the fact that inmates are encouraged to help *each other*, has opposite implications, tending to blur the distinction between counsellor and inmate. Nevertheless penal institutions tend (again for obvious reasons) to limit this aspect of counselling, and to retain overall authority and control in respect of:

a. the initiation of group counselling programmes: these decisions are taken by staff members and not by inmates;

b. overall direction and organisation: this again is generally kept in the hands of staff members;

c. decisions about the suitability or otherwise of particular inmates for this form of treatment;

d. assessments as to whether any particular inmate has benefited or not.

The practice of using inmates as counsellors would appear, then, to contain elements of paradox. In fact the practice follows naturally from the fact that in group work of any kind inmates do, inevitably, "counsel" each other, and that not all initiatives come from the paid official who is in charge of the proceedings. Furthermore, a certain degree of role-reversal is implicit in any attempt to involve inmates in any process of decision-making. The implications are therefore less startling than might be supposed at first sight. Traditional authority relationships are undermined, but this too is not new. But having said this, it is still the case that experiments in the use of inmates as counsellors vary greatly in respect of the degree to which the inmate-counsellor operates autonomously.

These experiments seem to fall into three broad categories, with some degree of interpenetration. Proceeding from those where the inmate-counsellor enjoys the greatest autonomy to those where he enjoys least, they are as follows:

1. self-help groups (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous, Recidivists Anonymous);

2. mutual-aid groups held under the supervision of trained staff (e.g. the Henderson Hospital);

3. adult resocialisation programmes (e.g. Synanon and the Asklepion training programme at the United States Penitentiary, Marion, Illinois).

"Autonomy" here is to be understood in terms of the four considerations already mentioned. The extent to which an experiment can function independently of the professional staff of an institution seems to depend in part on what it aims to do. Self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous appear to offer advice and mutual support on the basis of shared experience. To the extent that these function solely within the institution, the entire range of decisions mentioned may be felt to be entirely a matter for the group members themselves. Since all initiatives are taken by inmates there is clearly nothing to prevent such a group being formed in any prison where inmates meet regularly in association. Issues of authority are involved, however, to the extent that such groups become affiliated to parent organisations outside the institution, are initiated with the assistance of sympathetic outsiders and, as in the case of Recidivists Anonymous,

precipitate requests for leave of absence to work on projects outside the prison (see below). Where, on the other hand, the objective is specifically one of resocialisation, initiatives inevitably come from the staff. Here the inmate-counsellor operates as a quasi-staff-member. The Asklepion training programme even offers professional certification by the International Transactional Analysis Association, but this seems to be associated with a very firm control of events by staff members, and a high degree of commitment to staff values by those inmates who are so certificated.

This raises the parallel issue of the nature of the skills employed by inmates in these experiments. Authority relationships may be expressed via the possession of or claims to relevant expertise. The strictly counselling function in self-help groups seems to rest entirely on "knowledge-by-acquaintance", i.e. the fact that helper and helped have had significant life-experiences in common, and counselling may be only part of their activities in common, and counselling may be only part of their activities in any case (Recidivists Anonymous appear to be at least as interested in community action). No specialised psychodynamic skills seem to be claimed by those responsible for these groups. On the other hand a high degree of specialised knowledge is employed in adult resocialisation programmes, obtained in the course of a carefully designed training programme, and this is associated with a quite clear intention to bring about major behavioural changes.

Self-help groups

"Recidivists Anonymous" will be chosen as an example of these groups, since this is a variety of self-help group peculiar to the prison setting, and one that has parallels in a number of European countries. Founded in 1961, as a result of an initiative from an inmate in Wandsworth prison (United Kingdom), this organisation stresses the virtues of self-help in a sense reminiscent of the nineteenth century protestant ethic. (There seems, indeed, to have been a religious component in the initial stages of Recidivists Anonymous.) Emphasis seems to be placed on self-reliance and on setting a good example: "The members of Recidivists Anonymous believe that rehabilitation is 90 % self-help and only 10 % aid. They also believe by successfully rehabilitating themselves they will act as an example to other prisoners." [1]

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1. Moriarty, D. V., "Recidivists Anonymous", *Prison Service Journal*, January 1972.

The strictly counselling function seems, in fact, to be subordinate to mutual assistance in a practical sense; indeed a remark of one sympathetic staff member seems to indicate a desire to avoid those explorations of personality and motivation with which groups in prison are generally associated. "When a group is concerned only with prison conditions it has an 'inner purpose' and becomes self-centred and introspective. When it becomes concerned with the lives of its members after release, and with the lot of other ex-prisoners and their families, it gains an 'outer purpose' and in that way, by helping others, enriches itself." [1]

This emphasis on the world outside prison, and with preparations for release, leads to an emphasis that is political rather than psychotherapeutic, and defines the nature of staff involvement. Typically the initiatives come from the inmates to the staff, taking the form of requests for permission to work outside the prison at weekends, and so on. Voluntary work for old people's homes has been undertaken, and links made with other voluntary organisations. Other outside links take the form of a parent organisation organised with the help of ex-prisoners under the guidance of people "of impeccable character".

Clearly these groups have considerable impetus, and the advantage of clearly defined and achievable aims. "Counselling" as such seems not to be stressed, if we are to interpret the term as referring to essentially verbal interactions in a closed setting. Nevertheless there is a well-defined ethic and therapeutic procedure that is clearly brought to bear on those inmates who join these groups: a belief in the therapeutic value of altruism, of self-reliance, of activity and of community involvement.

The Henderson Hospital

The use of inmates as counsellors is implicit in the very nature of group counselling and group psychotherapy, where the knowledge and experience of group members is drawn on by the staff member in charge. One of the first organisations to note this, and to exploit it, was the Belmont Hospital Social Rehabilitation Unit, now the Henderson Hospital. Here the appreciation that inmates are as likely to be influenced by inmates as by staff members led to an essentially democratic ethic (expressed in the abandonment by staff members of uniforms and titles), and to the delegation to the community meeting of all matters relating to admission and discharge. It has been noted, however,

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1. *ibid.*

that this ethic must be ultimately inconsistent with the fact that staff are legally responsible for events, and the patients not, and at the Henderson Hospital this has occasionally placed staff members in a position where they have had to behave in a manner inconsistent with their expressed beliefs.[1] Nevertheless, patients at the Henderson Hospital do take an active part in what is essentially a reciprocal process, and at the time that this experiment was initiated, in 1952, this was something new in psychiatry. It is from the Henderson Hospital that the British, Dutch, Danish and Austrian prison services have taken some of their ideas, expressed notably at Grendon Underwood psychiatric prison in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, the applicability of this model must be limited, since in a penal setting not even staff members can normally take a decision to discharge an inmate. Perhaps even more difficult to adapt to prison purposes would be the Henderson view that not only are the patients the therapists but, since everyone has problems, the staff are there for treatment too, and the patients as likely to help them as the reverse. Though this is inevitably true in certain limited areas (such as the induction of new staff members, who may receive practical information from inmates), as an overall policy it fails to come to terms with the issue of accountability, and with the fact that the initiative to establish the Henderson Hospital was taken by staff members, and not by patients.

It is noteworthy that the staff at this hospital have always tended to speak as though they had no special skills (and it is certainly true that they consistently avoid the use of abstruse terminology), while such skills as they acknowledge they freely share with the patients. The inmate's status as counsellor comes, then, to rest on two kinds of knowledge:

a. knowledge by acquaintance: it is stressed that inmates are better able to help one another since they have often shared the same experiences and common problems;

b. a certain amount of psychoanalytic and group dynamics insight gained from staff members, and in effect amounting to a form of in-service group dynamics training.

In this latter respect, as in the fact that the Henderson Hospital focuses its efforts on change in the inmate rather than in his circumstances, the inmate-counsellor functions in a manner markedly different from his colleague in self-help groups. The Henderson Hospital occupies, in these respects, a position mid-

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1. Rapoport, R. N., *Community as Doctor*, Tavistock, 1960.

way between the self-help group and the adult resocialisation programme.

Synanon

The Synanon Therapeutic Community at Marion, Illinois, founded in 1969, represents a use of the inmate as counsellor at the opposite pole from the practice of self-help groups. Although importance is again attached to knowledge-by-acquaintance, this is supplemented by the concepts of transactional analysis,[1] which supplied the main theoretical underpinning of the organisation. Inevitably, since this is specialist information, not generally available, and initially confined to members of staff, this means that the staff retain overall direction.

"Transactional analysis was developed specifically to take some of the mystique out of psychotherapy and allow the patient to become a knowledgeable participant in his own treatment."[2]

Nevertheless, the technique *is* consistently referred to as a form of psychotherapy, and no possibility is entertained that the inmate might come to these insights without the aid of specialists. But the inmate may himself become a specialist. Synanon goes further than the Henderson Hospital in supplying a formal training programme; "The residents themselves serve as instructors whenever possible and everyone is called upon periodically to lecture on various subjects... A complete training programme is also provided for those men who indicate an interest in being trained to a professional level in transactional analysis and counselling. The training is continuous and eventually leads to professional certification by the International Transactional Analysis Association."[3]

Goffman has noted the respects in which therapeutic communities function as forms of higher education for those who would otherwise never attain this level,[4] and one wonders whether, by admitting inmates to professional status, Synanon thereby effectively solves at least some of the fundamental issues of control and resocialisation that all penal administrators face. What is certain is that the professionally trained inmate, or ex-inmate, provides a most potent agent of resocialisation, since not only has he personal acquaintance with the situation of his patients

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1. Berne, E., *Games People Play*, André Deutsch, 1966.
2. Windes, Ken, "Synanon and transactional analysis: a potent mixture for corrections" (cyclostyled).
3. *ibid.*
4. Goffman, E., *Asylums*, Penguin Books.

but he has also been equipped with a high degree of skill in breaking down defences. The Synanon method is essentially one of frontal attack on the inmate's personal fictions: "The first thing a man is made to realise when entering Asklepion is that he is a 'loser' and will continue to be a loser until he breaks his old patterns and begins developing new ways of adapting to the world. This is said to him, not by a caseworker or some other 'square' but by men who are wearing the same colour clothes as he. Any arguments on the subject are beaten down in the 'game' by men who have previously attempted to use the same rationalisations and know where they are coming from." [1]

The technique has been ably analysed, and championed by Cressey,[2] who does not attempt to disguise its authoritarian implications. The aim is personality or at least behavioural change, and this is an effective way to do it. No more, it is implied, needs to be said. The method has also been tried in the treatment of drug addicts. In the treatment of criminality, however, it rests on theoretical foundations (behaviourist and symbolic-interactionist) that are far removed from the traditions of group counselling and, as such, may be unfamiliar and even of group counselling and, as such, may be unfamiliar and even unacceptable to European administrators. It certainly offers an extreme example of the use of inmates as counsellors.

IV. Community work

The therapeutic community model

Undoubtedly the most familiar model, in discussions of this theme, is that offered by the Henderson Hospital in the United Kingdom. This prototype aroused the interest of various administrations in Europe. The organisation of Grendon Underwood psychiatric prison reflects many of the ideas first generated at the Henderson Hospital. It is this model that is implied in virtually the entire discussion by Fenton, Reimer and Wilmer in their introduction and guide to the "correctional community".[3] The general principles have been outlined by Dr Maxwell Jones, the

1. *ibid.*
2. Cressey, D., "Social Psychological Foundations for Using Criminals in the Rehabilitation of Criminals", *The Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, Vol. 2, No. 2, July 1965.
3. Fenton, N., Reimer, E. G., Wilmer, H. A., *The Correctional Community, an Introduction and Guide*, University of California Press, 1967.

first Director of the Henderson Hospital, and his colleagues.[1, 2] Broadly speaking, the "community", in these discussions, is seen as a network of interacting groups (therapeutic groups, ward groups, workshop groups and a daily group at which the entire community meets) within which the life of the community takes place, and which accordingly feed each other with matters to be discussed. Emphasis is on verbal interaction as the vehicle of "treatment".

The idea of community

The ramifications of this idea have been very fully worked out by Professor R. A. Nisbet in a long and careful analysis of the "unit ideas" of the sociological tradition.[3] Although his theme is the history of ideas about the nature of society as a whole, his remarks are directly applicable to the management of residential organisations, since they indicate how we habitually view such organisations in two quite different and indeed contradictory ways.

Thus the idea of "community", as it developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is to be contrasted with that of "mass society". Nisbet shows how the theme is characteristically associated with a distaste for the impersonalities of modern industrial and political society, with a desire for emotional as well as contractual relations between men, and with regrets for the supposed intimacies of earlier forms of society. The idea is manifested most explicitly in the establishment of small-scale residential "communities", utopian in inspiration, where people gather together with the aim of living a satisfying and enriching life rather than of achieving any externally defined organisational goals. (Such utopian communities have been perhaps more familiar in the United Kingdom than on the continent of Europe,[4] but have attracted a renewed interest in recent years, and are now quite widespread in the United Kingdom and the USA.)

In connection with these residential communities, and in the study of small social groupings generally, it is usual to distinguish

1. Jones, Maxwell, *Social Psychiatry*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952.
2. Rapoport, R. N., *Community as Doctor*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952.
3. Nisbet, R. A., *The Sociological Tradition*, Heinemann, 1967.
4. *Community in Britain: A Survey of Community Thought and Activity compiled mainly from Addresses given at the Bath and London Conferences in 1937*, Community Service Committee, Cotswold Bruderhof Press, 1938.

between "community" (*Gemeinschaft*) and "association" (*Gesell-schaft*).[1,2] Communities from this point of view are ends in themselves, whereas associations are means towards an externally defined end. Villages are perhaps the best example of pure "communities", whereas factories are generally cited as examples of "associations". The distinction is not absolute, since associations where people spend any considerable amount of time together invariably acquire community characteristics. This is a complicating factor in the analysis and indeed in the management of places like long-stay hospitals, prisons and even factories—all ostensibly existing in order to bring about externally defined objectives, and therefore in principle "associations" but which, because of their "community" aspects, can never be entirely efficient as mere utilitarian structures. Obviously this varies from case to case, but the tendency for an "association" to acquire the characteristics of a "community" certainly increases in proportion with the length of time its members spend in contact with one another, and this is therefore obviously a question of practical importance in the running of prisons.

There can be little doubt that the idea of *Gemeinschaft* underlies much present-day thinking about community life, including life within a therapeutic community. For notwithstanding the claim that this development is new, the therapeutic community movement is a manifestation, under medical or quasi-medical auspices, of a preoccupation with community living that is quite long standing. It is as well to recognise these elements in the intellectual ancestry of all community experiments, since they help to identify the source of problems that arise in harnessing communities to essentially external objectives of treatment or rehabilitation, or indeed to any policy of personal change. For officially the therapeutic community of the Henderson variety is not intended to serve the purpose of merely leading the good life, but quite other and indeed opposite purposes. The idea is utilitarian in intent, a means to an end. Far from being offered as a way of life, sufficient in itself, it is intended as a means of bringing about change in individuals. The ideas of "community" and of "association" do not mix, and any attempt to pursue both ideas simultaneously leads to ambiguity and confusion. These ambiguities are revealed in attitudes to time, to commitment, and to the content of community activities.

1. Tonnies, E., *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, Leipzig, 1887.
2. MacIver, R. M., *Society*, Macmillan, 1937.

Time, commitment and the community

Community implies permanency: one does not discharge persons from a way of life. The commitment of a monk to his monastery, for example, or of a Utopian to his Utopia, is life-long. The idea of retirement is alien to this view of time. So for that matter is the idea of having strict working hours, of having a commitment limited to the hours between 9 and 5, which is a consideration that has influenced the development of several professions in the United Kingdom, including the prison service. Equally the idea of "treatment", and of the successful completion of a course of treatment, is alien to this view of time, and also involves different views about commitment. In the paradigm case of surgery the aim is to get the patient out of hospital as quickly as possible, and the degree of commitment to the organisation expected of him correspondingly slight.[1] But this can hardly be said of "treatment" programme in custodial settings. It is therefore easy to see how in such settings the simultaneous use of a community model *and* a treatment model can confuse staff and inmates alike. Thus, in the British approved school system, appeals for loyalty on the part of a young offender may be accompanied by the simultaneous and contradictory message that "the better you behave the sooner you will be out".

This contradiction may also lead to some degree of ambivalence about the actual content of community activities. The distinction between community (*Gemeinschaft*) and association (*Gesellschaft*) rests in part on the significance that is attached to activities, and especially to work. *Gesellschaft* is defined by the presence of a common task, externally defined, and in principle all activity is organised towards the achievement of this task: all activity tends to be seen as instrumental, a means to an end. Classical factory organisation illustrates this way of looking at the organisation, a way that is equally applicable to short-term treatment agencies, such as acute general hospitals or surgical wards. In the *Gemeinschaft*, on the other hand, activity has also an expressive function: it is not merely a means to an end but an end in itself. The central part played by ritual in the ecclesiastical tradition is only an extreme example of this tendency, which is equally apparent in such phenomena as school orchestras and football teams. It would be false to argue that these exist only as means towards some precisely envisaged educational goal, external to the activity itself. This is not why we have them.

1. Nokes, P. L., *The Professional Task in Welfare Practice*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967.

School organisation in Britain has been from the first very much influenced by the idea of community, since pupils are necessarily present for a considerable number of years. And since they are, and since communities are therefore not merely means to an end but ways of testifying to the existence of shared values, effort is given to the material expression of these values.

This has certain practical consequences. The first has to do with appearances. Schools tend, on this account, to be more colourful and better decorated than hospitals—and certainly than prisons. Enriching and elaborating the environment in order to make people "feel at home" expresses only half the idea: the point is that wherever people spend a substantial amount of time together they *are* at home. In a *Gesellschaft*, on the other hand, they are not, and a good deal of effort may be exerted to prevent them becoming so, since this is what we imply by the term "institutionalisation". The defect in this idea is that institutionalisation is really quite unavoidable in the case of long-stay inmates: the real issues concern the quality of life they are institutionalised to. Where the organisation is seen by its management primarily as a means to an end, there is always a feeling that the environment ought not to be made too attractive or too comfortable, since the institutional experience is felt to be only temporary, a mere episode in the life of the individual. But this view that the proper focus is on life after the completion of the sentence becomes very unrealistic when the institutional experience is to last for more than a very few months. The utilitarian, instrumental view of organisations, therefore, tends to be associated with the idea that an activity is justified only to the extent that it assists in the furtherance of organisational goals, which are seen as external to the organisation itself. In psychiatric hospitals such activities as "art therapy" and "music therapy" often suffer because of this, indeed the use of the term "therapy" is tactically dangerous for these reasons, since if an activity cannot be shown to further the organisational goals it is felt to have no justification. Needless to say the end result is a reduction in cultural content, which in turn undermines the idea of community.

The *diagnostic* value of such an arrangement is indisputable, since symptomatology is "acted out" in the presence of those who will later discuss it, and is virtually impossible to conceal by virtue of the fact of living together. On the other hand the *therapeutic* rationale of the Henderson model has never been made entirely explicit, though a variety of mechanisms have been suggested. These range from mutual instruction and support, catharsis, cognitive reorientation via the achievement of "insight" to such

quasi-Freudian interpretations as "transference to the group and to the community". In connection with this latter hypothesis, however, it is unclear that what is being referred to is anything other than the entirely familiar process of acculturation and socialisation to a subculture via the act of personal commitment. In fact from the sociological point of view there is little to distinguish the "treatment" process at the Henderson Hospital from the familiar social phenomena of mutual instruction and help, public confession, and the process by which neophytes seek and in due course gain admission to any exclusive group and gain benefit from the ensuing experience of "belonging". (It is worth noting that psychotherapy too may, from one point of view, be seen as largely a process of socialisation.[1])

This being the case, the question arises of the effectiveness of a model based mainly on verbal interaction as a medium of socialisation and acculturation, of the quality of the society and culture to which the newcomer is being invited to affiliate himself, and of the appropriateness of this particular model for short-stay inmates on the one hand and long-stay inmates on the other. Over and above this the question arises of whether the model exploits more than a very few of the possibilities inherent in the community experience, and indeed in the very idea of "community".

Evaluation of the Henderson model

These remarks may help to evaluate the suitability of the Henderson model of therapeutic community for prison settings.

In the first place, admission to and discharge from the Henderson Hospital is voluntary, and, in the case of the latter, is supported by the staff only when the patient is judged to have "recovered". In this respect the Henderson Hospital is organised on traditional hospital lines. The model is therefore not, on the face of it, appropriate for a situation where neither admission nor discharge is voluntary, nor where the length of stay is in any case fixed in advance by a court. In prisons the date of discharge is only marginally affected by progress in "treatment". This is a consideration that helps to determine the kinds of "treatment" found in prison settings, encouraging the choice of techniques like intensive case work and group work which take a long time and can never be said to be completed. (The success-

1. Levin, Sol, "Psychotherapy as Socialisation", *Int. J. Psychiatry*, September 1969.

ful treatment of sex offenders by aversion therapy, on the other hand, poses awkward problems about release.)

Secondly, the average length of stay at the Henderson Hospital was and is something in the region of six to nine months. It therefore does not seem an appropriate model for a therapeutic community harbouring medium and long-term prisoners, since here the use of the "treatment" model which offers by implication the prospect of discharge when the inmate has recovered becomes not only ludicrous but immoral. Practitioners of transactional analysis, as we have seen, solve this essentially logistic problem by seeing the successful completion of the "treatment" as leading to promotion to the status of therapist. Short of this the treatment idea can be retained only by redefining the term in ways that empty it of all meaning. Inmates are rarely deceived in these matters, and the end result is invariably a charge of hypocrisy.

The Henderson model of the therapeutic community is, in fact, essentially an extension of the group idea. Just as some early theorists saw group psychotherapy as a series of individual psychotherapies proceeding simultaneously, and without reference to group dynamics, so, for example, the authors of *The Correctional Community* see the community as essentially the therapeutic group writ large, and without reference to organisational dynamics except in terms of a limited and somewhat impoverished conception of community, and of what community life is about. The community, in this account, is made manifest in the community *meetings*. Not surprisingly the authors cite the Henderson Hospital as their prototype. While there may well be a place for this model in a limited range of establishments dealing with short-term prisoners, it will not do for longer term prisoners for the reasons stated, and for others.

It is not in fact possible to conceive of a healthy and even possibly enriching community life developing in circumstances where the entire content of the community idea is contained in the achievement of personal insight via the medium of verbal interaction. Prisoners cannot be expected merely to talk about their relationships over long periods of imprisonment. Nor is it good that they should do so, since there is good reason to suppose that undue emphasis over a long period of time on the trivia of feeling and of relationships may merely distort feeling and inhibit the growth of healthy relationships. Groups and communities based on purely verbal interaction do tend to attract the ruminative intellectual and the verbally facile—among staff as well as prisoners. The sensitivity they produce is not always of a high order, and they do provide opportunities for a kind of moral sadism.

There is the additional danger that group meetings, and perhaps especially community meetings, that take place against the background of a materially and emotionally impoverished environment have a merely amplifying effect, making of every minor grievance a major political issue. Something other, and indeed something *more* is needed than this.

Communities for longer term offenders: an alternative model

A hint of an alternative is provided in *The Correctional Community* in the few words Howard Ohmart has to say about "activity groups". They include these:

"Since many inmates are verbally not skilled, activity groups offer them ways of establishing relationships not dependent on verbal skill."

Also:

"Activity groups are not intended to explore the inmate's personal problems but to offer him the opportunity to examine his attitudes and feelings in the group. They offer practical experiences in co-operative living and tasks which require structured activities and relationships; they contribute to an inmate's self-control, pleasure, and group achievement which can be continued in life after confinement."

Very little more is said. Perhaps there is little more that could be said, since the literature of group work is on the whole the literature of the more glamorous and intellectually stimulating types of group activity, just as its vocabulary reflects the view that personal development is achieved by essentially verbal and cognitive processes. Yet it is a view that encourages the neglect of non-verbal communication, and an undervaluation of expressive activity as an important component in the idea of community and in mental health. It therefore leads to a situation where a rich source of genuinely therapeutic potential (using the term in a wider sense than hitherto) may be completely missed. There is therefore a need for a new look at activities as important in themselves, and not just as means of generating incidents to talk about. The workshops at the Henderson Hospital, far from being used to elaborate the material environment, seem merely to provide settings for events that will later be discussed in group meetings.

It is partly a question of the quality of life that is generated within the community of long-term prisoners. If the idea of com-

munity implies, as one of its components, the idea of commitment, of readiness on the part of an inmate to settle down and indeed to live, then the question arises of what is the quality of the environment to which he is being invited to commit himself. To condemn this process of settling down as one of "institutionalisation" is appropriate only when the quality is impoverished. In this connection it is impossible not to note how the moral earnestness of the Henderson model is reflected in the general shabbiness of the buildings there, a precedent only too dangerous for prison administrators.

Beyond this the idea of commitment implies the idea of ownership. People "belong" within an organisation when they feel that the organisation belongs to them. In this connection it is noteworthy how in the past the most meaningful activities have often been those where prisoners built their own premises, or undertook the entire work of constructing a new establishment. (The famous march to North Sea Camp is one of the enduring sagas of the British penal system.) Moreover there is no reason to doubt the belief that a high state of morale is associated with the carrying out of meaningful community activities, such as constructing playgrounds or restoring canals. It is perfectly possible to do too much for long-stay prisoners. Indeed the idea of treatment too easily carries the overtones of things done *for* or even *to* people when the need is for things to be done *by* them.

Another respect in which such activities do not fit in with the idea of treatment is that in which such projects emerge from the circumstances of the moment, can be predicted and planned only to a limited extent, and are in any case only temporary. This forces us to consider the organisation in the context of time. Pioneering organisations inevitably become institutionalised. Indeed all organisations exhibit characteristic phases in their growth, moving from the phase of innovation to that of routinisation, and so to senescence, with an eventual choice between either a radical restructuring or else death. The main reason why it is impossible to set up a "treatment organisation", as though there were a model that could exist for all time, is that living organisations do not stand still. There is good reason to suppose that the effectiveness of treatment organisations depends on the phase the organisation is in. (It has already been suggested that the effectiveness of group methods, of any variety, is greater in the earlier experimental stages than it ever will be again.) This being the case we are therefore required to think of a managerial approach that emphasises not only the efficient running of standard establishments but an attitude of imagination and

creativity. There is no doubt that these qualities have been neglected in recent years, largely because of the idea that there existed somewhere "a method" (if only we could find out what it was), and this therefore forces our attention in turn to the requirements of the prison management, and to questions of leadership.

One thing is clear—that such a leadership will be more personal and perhaps more idiosyncratic than has been customary in recent years. It may itself have to change periodically since individuals too become routinised. Assuming, however, that the object is to improve the effectiveness of prisons as agencies of rehabilitation, then we can specify certain requirements not only of the prison management but also of the central administration.

On the one hand it is necessary to have a leadership with positive and not merely *remedial* ideas. It is not enough to know what is *not* wanted: there must be a positive sense of direction and of what the individual governor or director wishes to achieve. Apart from the fact that the man in charge must have an understanding of group dynamics and of institutional processes if he is to be successful in implementing his objectives, the really crucial consideration is not so much training as selection. Where are such leaders to be obtained? The chances are that such people exist already, relatively unused. This is certainly true of the British prison service where the annual intake of graduates is matched by their equally regular departure a short time later, mainly for this reason.

Whilst the man in charge must have his own ideas, he must at the same time be open to dialogue and sensitive to the ideas and feelings of his own staff, and of the inmates in his charge. How is this paradox to be resolved? It is of course the paradox of all successful leadership, and not insurmountable. It is essential to be aware of what is going on; it is equally essential not to respond to all pressures, otherwise the sense of direction disappears altogether. These are matters of judgement. Over and above this, however, there is the need for consultants to be appointed to each organisation—generally psychologists or social scientists on the staff of a central training establishment or of a university—whose function is essentially that of providing the man in charge with an opportunity of testing his ideas.

What finally is the role of the central administration? The essential thing is that once they have understood what it is that a director is aiming to do, and have appointed him on that basis, they must then support him. They must acknowledge the in-

evitable conflicts of perception and of interest between central administration and the institution, and be capable of coping with it. Above all, perhaps, they must be ready to acknowledge that nothing worthwhile is without its component of risk.

V. Application of group work in non-custodial settings

A. *Group work in probation*

Probation is traditionally an individual form of treatment, but in recent years there has been a growing interest amongst social workers, including probation officers, in the use of groups. This development can be traced to two sources. In the first place the membership of groups has been considered beneficial for young people as an antidote to delinquency. Thus, youth clubs, sports and activity groups generally have been encouraged by those interested in the welfare of the young, including the probation service.

The second influence has been that of group psychotherapy and group counselling techniques as explored, particularly in the United States, in mental hospitals and penal establishments. The growing body of literature, including psychological and sociological theory, has helped spread these techniques to other countries.

There is considerable variety in the types of groups run by probation officers. A few have play groups for their younger charges, who occupy themselves with games or arts and crafts. Other activity groups for young adolescents concentrate on developing particular skills or interests, such as woodwork and model making, the aim here being to give a sense of achievement through creativity and the constructive use of leisure. More ambitious programmes are occasionally planned of an educational and recreational nature, in which quite large numbers of probationers may participate voluntarily. These may include various sports activities, and visits and expeditions to places of interest.

By far the commonest type of probation group, however, is the counselling or discussion group, in which a small number of probationers meet together with their officer. These groups usually conform outwardly to a general pattern, members meeting regularly in the same place, most frequently the probation officer's room. The seating arrangement is usually fairly informal, in a circle or occasionally around a table, and discussions may cover a wide range of subjects.

What are these counselling groups expected or intended to achieve? The specific aims of any one group will depend to a large extent on the probation officer who runs it. At the same time there are some general aims which we can assume to apply to all groups of this nature, as deriving from theory and the general literature on group functioning.

Essentially it is well known that no individual functions in isolation, but is subject to the influence of other people with whom he comes into contact. This influence is especially apparent in small intimate group situations. In addition to this, it is recognised that a young person is highly susceptible to the pressures of his own group. Group counselling in probation work attempts to tap both these features of human behaviour, by using constructively these naturally occurring group forces. The probation officer's guidance is assumed to operate, whether more or less overtly, with greater effectiveness through the medium of the group than in the more traditional one-to-one situation, where interaction tends to become somewhat constrained.

Beyond these general principles there are the more specific aims of different types of counselling group. Some groups are geared towards straightforward discussion of a wide variety of topics with a view to broadening the outlook as well perhaps as the knowledge of group members in the general exchange of ideas. Topics range from the serious to the superficial, from crime, work, marriage, the family, to football, the cinema and clothes. In general, however, subjects chosen either by the group as a whole or by the probation officer are selected for their particular relevance to members.

The influence of psychotherapy is more keenly felt by some probation officers engaged in group work who see their task more in terms of achieving a change of personality or attitude in their clients, and a gaining of insight into their own behaviour. Groups of this nature tend to examine the problems and feelings of members studying their behaviour towards one another in the group situation, rather than to discuss outside topics.

The approach of the leader to the group and his method of conducting it depends largely on the personality and preference of the individual probation officer. He may favour a non-directive approach in which group members are left to run the discussions as they please, the officer himself taking part as one member on equal terms with the others. He may on the other hand prefer a more structured group situation, taking a more active leadership role and giving more overt guidance and direction to discussions.

We have looked at the basic rationale behind probation officers' groups but of course there are numerous reasons for holding groups other than ones of theory. Some probation officers use groups experimentally, having heard or read something of their functioning and wishing to explore their treatment possibilities. Others, having found difficulty in relating to the less articulate of their clients, find the group situation more relaxed and supportive for such people, enabling them to communicate more readily. Allied to this is the finding by some officers that, since young offenders behave more naturally in a group of their peers, a better assessment of them may be made under these conditions.

Purely practical considerations also influence the decision to run groups for offenders. Pressure of work may mean that insufficient time is available for adequate individual casework, and the holding of group sessions is seen as a way round this problem. Similarly group meetings avoided long spells in the waiting room and the associated disturbance and resentment.

The composition of groups of probationers varies. Whilst there are arguments to be made for the careful selection of members having characteristics in common or complementary to one another, practicalities such as numbers and convenient times for meeting usually set limitations on planning.

Some officers favour the use of "national" groups, that is of offenders known to each other, perhaps members of a gang, anticipating greater effectiveness in efforts to influence the group as a whole. This is sometimes possible, even very occasionally including voluntary membership from gang members not on probation. Most groups must however be made up of offenders not previously known to one another. This gives the officer a chance to assemble people he considers appropriate. His decision will be guided by his conception of what constitutes an effective group. He may select people with shared difficulties or similar backgrounds, or he may see more lively prospects in a group of somewhat dissimilar people. In practice, the majority of probation officers take the first alternative, bringing together people who have at least some problems in common.

Other considerations in selecting group members are age and personality factors. The majority of groups cater for young people between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, although activity groups have a rather lower age-range, with members as young as ten.

Group leaders have different opinions about the type of personality best and least suited to group work. These opinions

are no doubt partly shaped by each probation officer's view of the type of group he can safely handle. Thus many officers would exclude people with severe personality disturbances or strongly aggressive tendencies, whereas others consider that a very inhibited withdrawn person might fail to benefit from group involvement. There is no real consensus about the inclusion or exclusion of any one type of case. Once again the chief determining factor is the group leader's personal orientation.

The majority of probationers are male, and there is in any case a tendency to separate the sexes for treatment purposes so that most groups are single sex. A very few enterprising experiments have been undertaken with mixed groups and there seems to be no reason why this development should not be extended.

One further question about the composition of groups concerns their life-span. Are they to consist exclusively of the same members throughout, or are new members to be added from time to time? The closed or exclusive group tends to be more cohesive but is likely to have a shorter life-span as members leave. The open-ended group may be kept going indefinitely but has less of an identity and may also present problems of adjustment to new members. In practice most officers seem to favour closed groups or almost closed groups.

A few technicalities of probation groups not already covered should here be mentioned. Groups are nearly always small, with between three and eight members. Some groups meet weekly but the commonest frequency of meeting is fortnightly with a very few meeting as infrequently as once a month. The average length of a session is between thirty and ninety minutes for most groups, lengths being fixed by about half the group leaders, the others allowing some variability. The life of a group varies considerably from a few weeks up to two years. A substantial proportion seem to expire rather early, at under three months, but those that survive this period seem to have an even chance of continuing for anything from six months to two years.

The results of group work in probation are difficult to assess. In the first place, aims are varied and seldom clearly defined. In the second, the effect of groups as such and in isolation from other variables is all but impossible to measure with any hope of accuracy. Thirdly, little or no objective research has been attempted. The chief source of information about the value of groups is the reports of probation officers themselves, with all the objections attendant on subjective reports.

The impression gained is certainly a positive one. Very few groups are terminated because of unsatisfactory progress,

and most officers claim advantages of groups for purposes of assessment and treatment over the more traditional individual approach. Disadvantages are also recognised, but these seem to be fewer. Significantly, most probation officers with group experience express the intention of forming further groups in the future. How far these reports represent real achievement beyond merely expressing the satisfaction of the leaders is of course impossible to say.

The final point should be made that most officers recognise that, since not all probationers respond equally well to group situations, and others may have problems they are reluctant to disclose to the group, there may well be a need to provide individual treatment as a supplement to treatment in groups. It could be claimed that this is the desirable situation for all probationers, but the added burden to the officer must also be considered and a measure of discretion allowed him.

Knowledge being as it stands at present, the conclusion to be drawn seems to be that groups are a promising development in the probation service and their possibilities are worth further exploration. In particular, more rigorous research into aims and benefits is needed so that future developments can be carried out to a rational plan.

B. Group work in hostels

Part of the philosophy behind the setting up of probation and after-care hostels is the notion that living in a small community can be a positive aid to personal development. Furthermore, a hostel would appear to offer an ideal ready-made group situation. It is therefore perhaps surprising that little systematic work has been done to establish group counselling or group therapy in such hostels. Most of these concern themselves primarily with the daily lives of their residents, giving them a structured environment in which it is hoped that they will develop regular habits of work, recreation and so on, learning to live adequately within the law. Individual support is given where required.

Only a few hostels have consciously introduced group methods, but their efforts are worth looking at and may provide the basis for further extensions of this sort of work.

There seem to be two forms that hostel group work takes at present. One is the clinical approach in which therapeutic group meetings are held by a psychiatrist or other trained group worker, and run usually against a background of psychoanalytic

theory. Residents taking part in such groups do so voluntarily and the method is considered appropriate for those suffering from emotional or psychiatric disturbance.

The second approach is less formally therapeutic. Rather, group meetings and discussions between residents and staff form part of the life of the hostel, and there is no specially trained therapist to guide or interpret the interaction and group processes. Within this framework, different types of groups may form. Some hostels cater not only for ex-prisoners but for people with a variety of social problems and thus there may be separate groups dealing specifically with each problem. There may be an alcoholics group, a drug addicts group, a group of gamblers, as well as one of ex-prisoners seeking to keep out of trouble. Such "specialist" groups tend to model themselves on the style of Alcoholics Anonymous, with members expressing their difficulties and offering one another mutual help, advice and encouragement. The value of such meetings is that they enable people to identify with others sharing their problems but on the road to recovery, and from the group, members derive much needed social support.

There is, however, a need for integration with a wider community, and to this end group meetings involving all hostel residents and staff are encouraged. Reports from one hostel in which such meetings are considered to play a very important part in the process of rehabilitation claim that involvement by residents, usually after initial resistance, tends to be high. Emphasis is placed upon each person recognising and tackling his own feelings and weaknesses, and members go through a sort of conversion process to the group's system of values. Ex-prisoners are found to show rather more resistance to this sort of situation than other types of resident, and young offenders in particular resist the assumption that they have problems needing treatment. The amount of resistance varies, however, and the approach seems worth pursuing, particularly amongst certain types of inadequate rather than actively anti-social delinquents.

Although the value of much of the work described above is recognised, one criticism is that some men cannot adapt to the demands of public discussion of their personal lives, and tend to withdraw from the situation altogether. Furthermore, staff should perhaps receive some form of training in group dynamics before engaging on group work of this sort, so that members are not wholly dependent on one another for guidance, valuable as this is, but may have some external resource to call on.

The above account is based on the very small number of hostels known to undertake group work, and the implication

seems to be that the field is a potentially fertile one, at present almost untouched, but one worthy of much further development.

C. *Family groups*

For many offenders, relationships with the family are a crucial element, and it is therefore necessary to work with the offender's family.

Within institutions, discussion of family relationships is a normal part of group work as of social work generally. Relationships to wife, fiancée, chidren and parents are discussed. If, for example, a member of a group has problems with his wife, the group will help him to get a clearer understanding of those problems. On the other hand, group members sometimes feel that it is very unsatisfactory that they then cannot talk to the relation involved. For instance, the wife may have something to say on the matter, and consequently the members of the group feel that more effective work can be accomplished only if the family members in question are present in the group.

Where members of families join such a group, the group works with its member and his family. Thus, for example, a non-understanding, over-protective, fussing mother (with all her well-intended friendliness, an essential factor in the son's difficulties) may be influenced in the direction of more adequate behaviour by the understanding relatives of other group members. Here the accepting atmosphere of the group plays an essential role, where the norms of the group are those of "understanding" and "support". The feeling of "sharing" common experiences with other relatives makes their influence more effective.

Through the participation of family members, there are further opportunities for inmates to test "reality". Such situations can become tense and the role of group worker is crucial to helping the members work at the problems.

Through such family groups, members of families get a better understanding not only of the individual client but also of what really is happening to the client during his stay in the institution. Hostility, mistrust and scepticism towards the institution, which easily arise on account of lack of knowledge and information, can thereby be diminished.

Experience suggests that family groups seem to be of special value to those group members who feel rejected or misunderstood by their families and where there is some good will; clearly some preparatory work has to be undertaken before such groups are convened.

VI. Training

From what has been written in this report it will be apparent that the success of any of the group methods described will depend on the ability of the group workers to undertake their work with a measure of confidence in the procedure. Much of this confidence will be gained from preparation for their work through training. In this section, it is not possible to give a detailed account of the training which would be necessary for each method. Facilities will differ from country to country just as there will be variations in each method. It is possible, however, to state some general principles.

We have stressed that it is essential that those who have responsibility for initiating any form of group work should be clear about the objectives. Thus the proposal may be to introduce one form of group work with a limited aim within an institution, or it may be to introduce group work with the intention that it will have a significant effect on the working of the whole institution. There are group methods whose effects could be more far-reaching than others, for example group counselling compared with group discussion. This distinction has important implications for training. In the former instance it may be necessary to engage a trained worker (or arrange for a suitable member of staff to be trained), whilst in the latter, since the philosophy of the institution is likely to be modified, it will be necessary to consider the training of the whole staff, for staff attitudes, relationships and mode of working will be affected. It may seem a formidable task to train all the staff in an institution in order to prepare them for a new way of working, but this has been done in a number of member countries with considerable success. This approach can be extended to include training in the understanding of group relationships to all staff including prison officers during their initial training. The point which is being made is that it is possible to train an individual to undertake a limited task within an institution, or to train all the staff of an institution or penal system so that the organisation may make the maximum use of group procedures.

We are faced then with the issue of training versus education. Our starting point may be to have some staff trained in the techniques of managing different kinds of groups. The understanding of these techniques will inevitably lead to a quest for further knowledge of, for example, the sociology of organisations, or the

psychology of human growth and development. Staff will become aware of their own personal development arising from their experiences as group workers and from their training.

The training of group workers has been undertaken by those who are themselves skilled and practised in group work, usually psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers by profession. It is an advantage to have training staff who have themselves worked in the prison system or who are very familiar with it.

The organisation of such training is not only the provision of special courses and basic training; it must incorporate a combination of traditional didactic methods with practical group experience.

Specialist training in group work

On the one hand, then, is the specialist training needed for those who are going to practise specialist techniques, e.g. group counselling, activity groups, group psychotherapy. In some of these cases (e.g. group psychotherapy), training is the function of outside agencies. In others (e.g. group counselling, activity groups) special arrangements must be made to train basic grade officers and others deemed suitable. Some reference has been made in Sections II and III to the forms of training needed in respect of each technique. Here certain general principles may be outlined in more detail.

In the first place training in group techniques must be via group techniques. Didactic methods have their place since a certain amount of basic information has to be conveyed. Beyond this the main vehicle of training must be the group itself, i.e. via "sensitivity training" or "T-groups". Resources may be found within a prison training organisation—among members of central training establishments who have themselves received specialist training or in outside agencies including university departments. There are grounds for encouraging the use of such outside agencies wherever possible since this is likely to be accompanied by a freshness of perception and a greater likelihood of up-to-date methods; inevitably such contacts often bring new ideas. There is, however, a need in such cases for permanent or long-term contacts and for continuity of supervision. The introduction of trained specialists into an establishment can bring its problems too, especially when it is associated with the view that something very special is going on about which "untrained" staff know nothing. Staff jealousies and a split of the staff into specialists and non-specialists can easily follow; this leads to the second point.

Staff training and staff development

The use of group techniques as a vehicle of training requires us, however, to think of what we have in mind when we speak of training. For these are not "techniques" to be learned and then applied impersonally. The individual staff member is inevitably involved as a person, both at the training stage and later in the course of his work. It is important to stress not only that training is not merely a matter of teaching and learning techniques, but also that the common distinction between training and education is, in this connection, quite spurious. The process is an educational one; indeed training, properly understood, is a matter of staff development.

It is implicitly recognised, in practice, that a governor has a responsibility not only for the efficient running of his establishment but for the personal development of his staff members too. This dual responsibility is rarely made entirely explicit, yet a management philosophy based on the principle of identifying and encouraging personal motivations must bring the issue into the forefront of consciousness. This has a number of further implications.

The first is that training seen as a process of staff development is inevitably a continuous process. Although reference has been made above to basic training, it must be understood that this must be complemented by a permanent staff training and development function, perhaps located in a specially designated training officer. Such an arrangement might also help to meet the second point, which is that a genuine concern with staff development is inevitably associated with a loss of some degree of predictability in running an organisation. Staff whose personal needs and growth are seriously being considered (and only such staff can make any real use of group and community ideas) are not being trained as functionaries, and it would be foolish to pretend otherwise. Obviously a balance between these two considerations has to be struck—the purpose then is to emphasise that in this and other respects, group and community methods properly applied are not consistent with ideas of the organisation as a machine, with each individual staff member a cog in that machine. What is a familiar line of thinking when the question is one of inmate management is perhaps less familiar when the question turns to the needs of staff members.

Supervision

Reference has been made to supervision. The purpose of supervision is to provide support to the worker enabling him to

understand what part he is playing in the work of the group and providing an opportunity to develop his skills. A supervisor is himself experienced in the technique.

VII. Evaluation

General considerations

Penal administrators must necessarily be concerned with the effectiveness of any method that they use or consider using in the treatment of offenders. However the complex issue of evaluation becomes even more acute in the area of group and community methods, by reason of the variety of possible techniques, differences between penal establishments in which they are applied, and perhaps above all certain difficulties in establishing the objectives such methods are expected to further.

Effectiveness of group and community methods

Since group and community methods are generally referred to as forms of "treatment" it is reasonable to assume that they are expected to bring about basic behavioural or personality changes in offenders. In fact it is often surprisingly difficult to ascertain what these methods are designed to achieve. There is no common agreement, for example, that group methods are intended to reduce recidivism, and certainly research evaluating the effectiveness of group counselling in one member state gives no indication of recidivism rates being reduced as a result of this method. It is often suggested that lacking positive results may be due to deficiencies in the application of the method (e.g. inadequate training of group leaders, structural hindrances to a group approach in the administration of penal establishments, insufficient support to released prisoners etc.) rather than to its real ineffectivenes in this area. A more convincing answer would be that research workers and practitioners agree that group and community methods can bring about favourable changes in the attitude of the offenders, as well as in the general atmosphere of penal establishments.

Specifically, these methods can bring about any of the following effects, whether intended or unanticipated:

i. they may relieve anxiety and diminish the aggressiveness of inmates towards staff; tensions existing between staff and

inmates can thus be worked out in a way facilitating both management and individual forms of treatment;

ii. they give the staff a feeling of involvement and help them to cope with the stresses inevitably involved in their work;

iii. they may assist the introduction of change in establishments, progressively transforming traditional "vertical" structures into "horizontal" ones, involving consultation and participation of all members of staff in treatment programmes;

iv. they help long-term prisoners to live through their sentences;

v. they facilitate the preparation of inmates for life in outside society.

Conclusions

In short, research evaluating the effectiveness of group and community methods needs to take into account not only the official *purposes* which each method is primarily intended to achieve, but also its unanticipated but probably useful *functions*. In fact it is difficult to see why such functions should not be raised to the status of formal objectives.

ANNEX I

MONOGRAPHS

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES
IN PENAL ESTABLISHMENTS
IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTRODUCTION
OF GROUP WORK

by Dr P. Allewijn
Head of Prison Administration (Netherlands)

The traditional organisation of a penal establishment

The introduction in penal establishments of activities performed in groups, including methodical group work, will certainly affect the whole atmosphere of the institution and also the organisational structure of the establishment.

The organisation will have to be adapted to the new conditions. It is, however, wiser to consider in advance what organisational changes will be necessary to accommodate basic changes of this sort in penal treatment. In this way unnecessary tensions may be avoided.

We shall endeavour to indicate, from practical experience, what organisational measures can be considered when the principle of group activities for prisoners is introduced in a penal establishment.

Naturally, the extent and intensity of the measures will depend on the intensity with which such work is put into practice in the institution.

A description of this sort must of course be rather generalised, but we shall try to express as concretely as possible the procedure followed and the thinking on which it is based.

When we speak of accommodating these changes by structural changes in organisation, it is presumed that there is, in general, a certain structure common to most penal establishments which is not conducive to the practice of group work among prisoners. Thus we should be able to take this traditional prison organisation structure as our basis.

Although there will no doubt be many variations in practice, it can be postulated that such a traditional organisation structure exists in prisons just as it does in commercial and industrial concerns.

In general it can be said that the military organisation which provided the model for industry was also the basis for the organisational structure of the penal establishment.

Without going into details, it can be stated that a military organisation is characterised by various self-evident principles, namely unity of command and of execution of commands and facility in supervising that execution. Unity of command and of execution of command are best achieved where each man is under the direct command of one superior only and, conversely, where each superior has a clear idea of the body of men for which he is responsible.

This latter point facilitates the supervision of the execution of orders and the whole system is based on strict discipline. Thus the military system is known as the authoritarian or command organisation. The structure of such an organisation has a pronounced vertical character and is generally referred to as the line-organisation. It is reproduced in diagram form as follows:
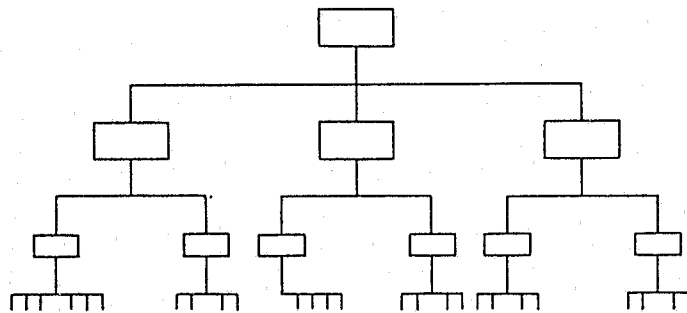
It is clear that this organisational model was adopted by the business world when the larger concerns were founded, since the principles on which they were established were at first little different from those of the military organisation.

In general, penal establishments have adopted a fairly strict form of the military organisation outlined above.

There are various obvious reasons for this:

1. When prisons were introduced as instruments for combating criminality, the main concern was to punish offenders. This was not only to chastise the wrong-doer, but also to provide a general deterrent. Military organisation, characterised by strict

order and discipline, was very well suited to give imprisonment a punitive character.

2. It was also widely believed that strict order and discipline had an important educative value; this belief is still widely held today.

Thus a vertical, military, organisation structure offered the double advantage of being capable on the one hand of providing discipline and punishment and, on the other, of having an educative effect.

This penal philosophy was probably based on existing practice that already applied the tenets of military organisation. After all, putting and holding in prison are activities traditionally associated with the army. Partly as a result of this way of thinking, army officers or retired army officers were—and still are—placed in charge of penal establishments in many countries.

However that may be, the application of military organisation to the prison system has led to the prisoner being ranked at the very base of the hierarchy and being traditionally regarded as the lowest element of the organisation, who had to do only what he was ordered to do, no regard being had to his thoughts or feelings. The structure was as follows:
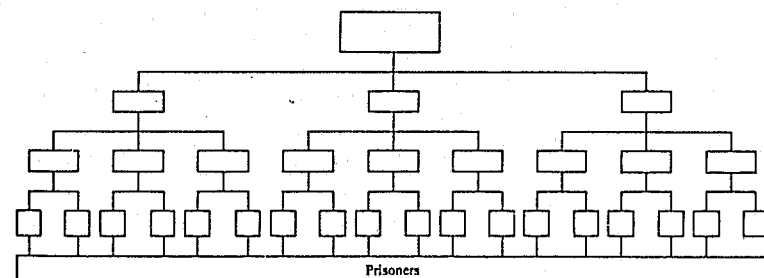

Present-day views, however, differ considerably from those outlined above. There are two essential differences:

1. The view that deprivation of liberty as such, and not the prisoner's treatment during detention, is the real punishment—this view is gaining ground all the time.

2. The view that the prisoner's treatment must be determined by the need to create the most favourable conditions for his reinstatement in society.

In the development of these views we see a clear divergence appear between the aims of the military and industrial organisations on the one hand and the penal organisation on the other. In the former the objective lies, as it were, outside the organisation: it is the winning of a battle or the marketing of a product.
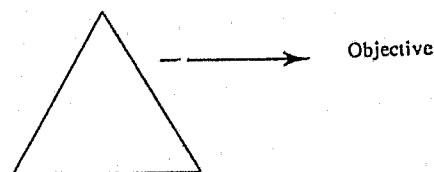

And, in fact, this was also true to a large extent of the penal organisations.

Here the external aim was the deterrent effect on society of the manner in which the prison sentence was executed.

According to the new views on the aims of penal establishments, the objectives are much more inward-looking, as it were.

Now the main concern is to influence the prisoner so that *he* will function better within society. This can be expressed by the following diagram:
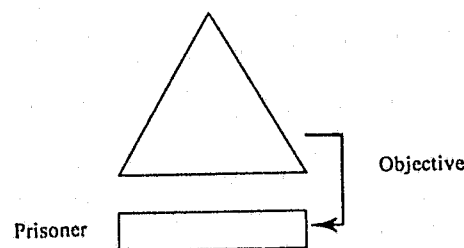
This diagram is, however, based on the principle that, although views have changed, the vertical organisation structure is still clearly the most natural structure for penal establishments.

However it is better to adopt a circular diagram in which the objective—the prisoner himself—forms the central point in relation to the organisation (direction and staff).
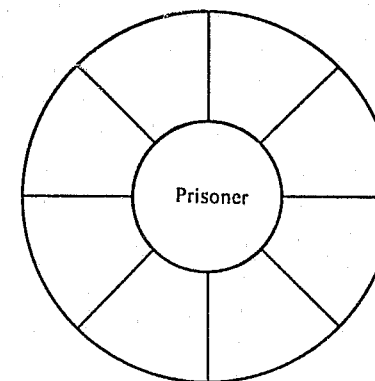
Development in practice

There are three reasons why the strictly vertical organisation structure persists in penal establishments.

1. Although new ideas on penal treatment are concentrated on the restoration of the prisoner's relationship with society and his social responsibility, deprivation of liberty is nevertheless still the basic condition. This means that security remains a necessity and the vertical line organisation is ideally suited to the efficient maintenance of security; for with this organisational structure there is unity of command and facility in the supervision of the execution of commands.

2. Given the fact that a relatively high proportion of the prisoners display deviant behaviour characteristics, and the deprivation of liberty is always unnatural, keeping life running smoothly within a penal establishment is a far from easy task.

3. Even when the positive treatment of the prisoner is considered to be important, the vertical organisation may be maintained where there seems to be no other way to influence the prisoner than by imposing discipline, and by training him to observe rules in the expectation that this will condition his behaviour so that he will later observe the rules of society too.

With these new views on penal treatment, we are now seeing a change of policy on the part of directors and staff, this being motivated by the duty to guide the prisoner successfully back into society.

The methods of working with prisoners are also changing. The time prisoners spend in their cells is being reduced. Outside

working hours (work was once considered to be part of the punishment), prisoners can engage in sport and educational and cultural activities. Ostensibly, it would seem that methodical group activities are already being employed. But this is usually not the case; these communal activities are simply incorporated into a system of behaviour-conditioning, of rules and sanctions, and the vertical organisation structure can be strictly maintained.

The development of the behavioural sciences

It is clear that the development of the sciences concerned with human behaviour, that investigate the causes of different kinds of—so-called—deviant behaviour and the ways in which human behaviour can be influenced, has had, and still has, a great impact on the whole field of human communications, and especially in communities where communication is especially intensive, such as the family or firm.

However, these developments would seem to have made little impact, in the past, on penal establishments. This is understandable, of course, since the notions of security and order had become deeply rooted there. This lack of impact can also be explained by the fact that directors and staff found it hard to reconcile deprivation of liberty with positive treatment.

At best—and often in spite of personal experience—those in authority believed that a disciplinary approach on a strict hierarchical pattern was the best way to ensure better adaptation to free society.

Behavioural scientists and penal establishments

Progress in the behavioural sciences led to the development of ways and means of influencing behaviour which were not based on conditioning or enforcement of fixed rules. It was, however, difficult to incorporate the new methods into the existing structures of penal establishments.

No wonder, then, that the first behavioural scientist to penetrate beyond the walls of penal establishments had to face considerable resistance. This resistance arose from the need to safeguard the organisational structure, so the behavioural scientists (psychiatrists, psychologists and sociologists) were kept, as far as possible, at arm's length.

In this respect the director of the penal establishment had already gained some experience—namely with spiritual advisers and prison doctors—and his defences were already organised to

a certain degree. The influence of the latter experts had been restricted to their personal contact with the prisoners, one exception in respect of the spiritual advisers being the church services, an exception that was not always welcomed.

However, there was no development of the so-called staff-and-line organisation, as adopted by the army and industry, i.e. a structure whereby the direction is continually advised on policy by specialists in a separate organisation known as the "staff".

The influence of behavioural scientists in penal establishments was not only limited in that they were only allowed contact with individual prisoners—they frequently remained strongly individualistic among themselves.

This was due not only to a divide-and-rule policy on the part of the directors of the penal establishment, but also to the competition between the various disciplines which put themselves forward as behavioural sciences.

The fact that, for various reasons, most of the "staff" specialists were only employed part-time by penal establishments is a further reason why the specialist remains an outsider, and the vertical organisational hierarchy persists in most penal establishments.

Changes in the traditional organisational system and methods of penal establishments

There are two principal reasons for the gradual movement away from the traditional organisational structure as described above.

In the first place, experience and scientific research have shown that the traditional form of detention may be responsible for a number of so-called prison neuroses in the prisoner, which will reduce rather than increase his chances of resocialisation. We cannot describe these here; further information can be found in literature on the subject. We could, however, group these neuroses together under the term "institutionalisation". There are clear indications that efforts are being made to prevent prison neuroses from developing too strongly.

These endeavours, which emanate from the direction, are having a marked effect on the organisational structure. In particular there is increasing integration of the staff specialists, since the direction requires more and more advice as the rigid line organisation is made more flexible.

A second reason is the desire to find an alternative mode of therapeutic treatment in place of the traditional behaviour-conditioning, the customary repressive system. The behavioural sciences now offer alternatives which mainly consist of group work methods. Without wishing to go into these methods in any detail, it can be stated that one feature they have in common is the development of a dialogue between equals, the prisoners being encouraged to express their thoughts and views and being given the greatest possible opportunity to influence prison life and to bear joint responsibility for the form it takes.

Even in penal establishments where such methods are employed only to a very limited extent and outside the organisational framework, we can observe them giving rise to a certain effect which tends to modify the organisational structure. If there is no way of changing the traditional structure, tensions arise, with the result that the valuable effect of, say, group therapy is lost and frustration is produced instead.

It goes without saying that if one wishes to introduce new methods for the treatment of prisoners, such as group work methods, and to integrate them into the working of the penal establishment, it is most definitely important to consider in what way the consequences of such changes can be absorbed by the organisation. A number of organisational measures will now be discussed which have in practice been implemented to accompany fundamental changes in the therapeutic effect of the prison system, while deprivation of liberty and thus security have, of course, been maintained.

Concrete measures designed to modify the traditional organisation

Introduction

Although some practical experiences are described below, it should not be imagined that the institutions where efforts have been made to achieve an integrated introduction of group work as a therapeutic method were formerly old-fashioned or particularly strict. The first was an institution with accommodation for 150 young offenders. It was reasonably well equipped as regards both the prisoners' living quarters and the facilities for work, sport, dramatics, films, handicrafts etc. There was a good atmosphere, and having regard to the character of the prisoners—serving sentences of 1 to 3 years—everything ran much more smoothly than might have been expected.

Nevertheless security was an important element and the system was based on the rewarding of virtue and the punishment of evil.

Demarcation of treatment and security

One step for which the pros and contras were carefully weighed against each other was the division of the function of the warder into two parts, that of the new-style warder primarily charged with security, order and domestic duties, and that of the "group leader" primarily charged with treatment as the permanent leader of a more or less definite group of prisoners.

It was considered to be important for the achievement of a sound socio-therapeutic atmosphere to abandon the ambivalent function of the old-style warder.

A further great advantage was that it was then possible to attract people of a distinctly higher calibre to whom it would be possible to impart greater knowledge of institutional treatment and who would also have completely different reasons for being interested in the treatment of prisoners. This made for a distinctly different attitude on the part of group leaders.

This measure should not be seen as making an absolute division. Indeed, the group leader and the warder work together in many parts of the establishment, the warder even taking the group leader's place at times.

It could be said that a warder is an officer responsible for the maintenance of security and order, with some understanding of the treatment element, and that the group leader is an officer whose principal concern is treatment, but who has understanding for the framework within which work must be performed, i.e. deprivation of liberty.

Co-ordination between group leadership and work

In most penal establishments the work engaged in by the prisoners forms an isolated element within the organisational set-up. This is probably due to the fact that the main concern here is production. The work section of a penal establishment has its own personnel who are in no way connected with the warder. The introduction of group work means that the work process becomes part of the treatment. For this reason, measures have been taken to ensure good communication between the group leaders and work section personnel. Moreover, the work element was invested with a stronger therapeutic function in a group-dynamics context.

The integration of the specialist staff and the co-ordination of their activities

The most important organisational measure was to place the main responsibility for the whole treatment process in the hands of the specialists. The specialist staff engaged for this purpose consists of a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, doctor and spiritual advisers.

The specialist staff as a body has three responsibilities:

1. to communicate with each other about indirect contacts with the prisoners;

2. to advise the prison personnel on group work and to suggest possible ways of resolving difficulties encountered;

3. by request or recommendation, to advise the direction on all affairs of a general nature concerning the institution.

From this list of responsibilities it can be concluded that the specialists have been allotted an important position in the establishment. The really new element was that the specialists were given the task of advising the executive personnel in particular, such as the group leaders, workshop staff, and also the warders, on how to tackle problems concerning the prisoners.

The specialists were also required to consult regularly with the director and his assistants. As the specialists could themselves take the initiative and no restrictions were in fact laid down as regards subjects, the staff were in fact an integral part of the structure and, in their role as advisers, were partly responsible for the running of the institution.

Co-ordination of treatment

Staff meetings were no longer held, as they had been previously, under the chairmanship of a member of the direction. A separate "treatment-advice co-ordinator" was appointed and made responsible for preparing and presiding over the meetings, as also for maintaining contact with the executive officers, who submit written reports on their work. These reports are edited by the treatment-advice co-ordinator and made suitable for perusal by the staff. He is also responsible for communicating the results of the staff's deliberations to the personnel concerned. This is done directly, by-passing the director's office, in so far as the staff's conclusions are of a general directive nature. The organisational structure thus becomes more horizontal, and if we represent the above-mentioned set-up in diagram form, we get the following picture:
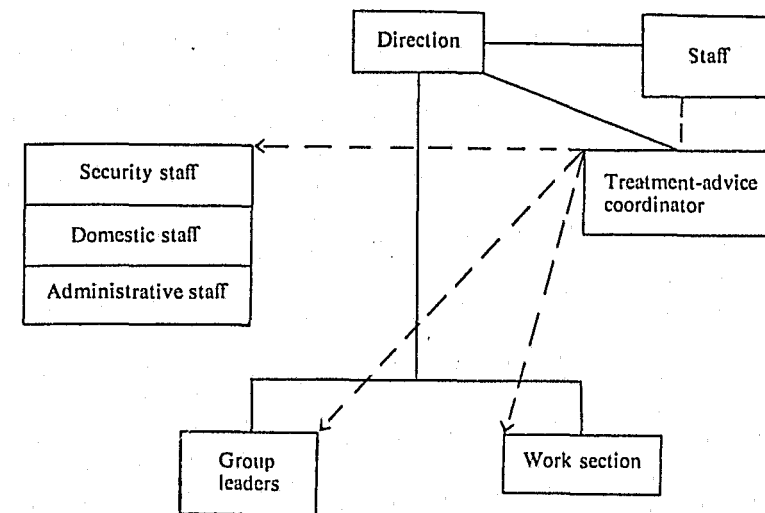
The direction's functions

The responsibilities of the three-man direction have also been revised, its functions being classified as follows:

a. functions connected with the general management of the prison, policy, personnel, communications etc., which the director performs as overall manager of the establishment;

b. functions connected only remotely with penal treatment (security, inventory, administration) which are performed by the assistant director responsible for prison administration;

c. functions directly connected with the treatment of the prisoners (work, day-to-day care of the prisoners) which are performed by the assistant director responsible for treatment.

However, so that a balance may be preserved between security, internal administration and treatment, this division of tasks between the directors should not be allowed to lead to intensive specialisation.

I hope that this has given you some idea of the structural changes which have been initiated in the Netherlands prison system, changes which need, by their very nature, to be carried out with the utmost circumspection.

Although we cannot yet boast of long experience, the results give every reason for satisfaction and encourage us to continue along the same path in the future.

THE ROLE OF CENTRAL CORRECTIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS IN PROMOTING CHANGED APPROACHES IN THE HANDLING OF OFFENDERS

by Mr Gunnar Marnell
Regional Head of Corrections (Sweden)

I. *As to the work in prisons*

1. *The situation*

According to the United Nations "Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners" the offender is deprived of his liberty as punishment, and the suffering inherent in such a situation should not be aggravated by punitive measures. On the contrary the offender should—within the framework of his imprisonment—be given a treatment that will enable him to adjust socially and not relapse into crime. Reality, however is somewhat different.

With relatively few exceptions the deprivation of liberty is still carried out in forms which are more punitive than therapeutic, at least in the opinion of the inmate himself. Even in penal institutions of a more progressive type one still finds punitive measures side by side with therapeutic ones. And when changes occur there often are alterations of a more superficial character in order to improve the living conditions of the inmates. These may be very important in themselves but changes in treatment will not automatically follow. "It is not easy to find any particular trend in the *institutional treatment* of offenders. In my opinion we have had no important changes in the basic philosophy of this part of correctional work during the last twenty-five years. What we have got is some changes in the prisoners' *physical environment* and *standard of living*. But changes of this kind (e.g. in Sweden) are nothing to be proud of—they are only a natural result of a better standard of living in the society as a whole." [1] *

As to more accommodation and visit conditions, there still is a heavy burden of inherited security-coloured routine. Solitary

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* The footnotes to this monograph are found at p. 94.

confinement, for instance, is still used in Sweden to a higher extent than is justified by security reasons. Visiting facilities have improved, it is true, especially in open establishments, but there are in Sweden several closed prisons where there is no possibility of sex contact.

When, as now in Sweden, public opinion through the mass media shows itself in favour of a radical change of the prison system as it is functioning today, the prisoners naturally feel themselves strongly backed and go on strike to get rapid change.

For a year now they have given up work strikes, which are forbidden for disciplinary reasons, and instead use hunger strikes. By negotiation with representatives of the prison board, the staff unions, the correctional regional directors etc., the inmates have obtained several results. The most important of these seems to be that a general permission has been given to the inmates' representative councils (*Förtroenderåd*) to keep in continuous contact with similar organisations in other prisons. They can therefore act with solidarity. The prisoners also have organised themselves in a state-wide association, called "United Prisoners' Central Organisation".

The situation as to the handling of prisoners has been characterised in different terms. For instance, it has been said to be *a state of transition* from punishment to treatment,[2] though often however, more like *a state of compromise* between punishment and treatment.[2]

Other descriptions are:

as *a stage of confusion* because of the clash of ideologies;[3]

as *a state of conflict* between psychiatrists and prison authorities;[4]

as *a chaos of norms:* "It is not merely a question of different terminology or details of treatment, it is a question of different standpoints";[4]

as a deadlock;

all of which indicates an unsatisfactory state of affairs, implying:

2. *The need for change*

a. When a person receives a sentence of imprisonment, its length is decided according to the severity of the crimes committed, not according to his need for personal treatment. After trial, however, the individual need for treatment should be the focal interest, in accordance with the United Nations' rules mentioned above. This is the case only in a few exceptional institutions.

Usually there is a strong tendency to treat everybody in a uniform way. This is looked upon by the staff as just handling because all should be treated as equals and at the same time the staff is spared from considering security aspects at the first allocation decision by having the same security measures for all newcomers. Both high and low escape risks are very often kept under similar security conditions.

Unduly severe security measures in the initial stages must be avoided if the new inmate is not to experience the situation as purely repressive and punitive, which from the very beginning must hinder any motivation towards rehabilitation.

b.   As mentioned above the treatment of the prisoner should "enable him to adjust socially and not to relapse into crime". But to put it like this is appropriate in a general programme but far too vague as a goal to be useful in practical work.

The objectives of the treatment of prisoners must be clarified and specified in order to activate both staff and inmates and make them aware of what selected objectives might deserve priority.

Instead of extensive, vague goals it is better to get the tasks stated in solid plain words as they appear through the differing needs of prisoners. Some suggestions as to "partial" objectives are:

Developing communication abilities, including the sexual area (by affording communication facilities; unsupervised and if possible conjugal visits, free letter writing, free access to telephone, frequent home leaves etc.);

Helping solitary prisoners in getting contacts with individuals or groups (by an enlarged system of prison visitors);

Performance of different roles—as part of the prison community—as son, as husband, as father, as worker and so on (by observing and discussing "style", appearance, manners etc.);

Resolving conflicts (by listening and talking instead of fighting);

Resolving problems (by considering alternatives);

Promoting the taking of responsibility (by initiating as far as possible units of self-governing groups, consisting of both prisoners and staff).

c.   The authoritarian pattern of relationships within the staff hierarchy must be replaced by a democratic one.[5]

In most prison establishments managed in a traditional hierarchical way norm conflicts have been hidden and therefore everything has seemed to be quiet on the surface. As soon as

institutions have tried to replace a strong authoritarian system by a more democratic one, all the conflicts, however, have become unveiled. This in turn has created severe tensions both between different groups of staff members, between the staff and the prisoners and often even among the prisoners themselves. Compared with the old days when prisoners were kept under solitary confinement, the inmates in today's prisons mostly live in association with fellow prisoners and have opportunities all the day to communicate freely.

As a result of understaffing and long-standing opposition between prisoners and officers, this openness sometimes has been judged to be dangerous. This might, however, be taken as a reason for change, and not the contrary as Mr Dupréel concluded in Strasbourg in 1965: "Community life in prisons had created a prisoner sub-culture. It was open to question, therefore, whether, in order to establish direct contact with the prisoner, certain forms of isolation should not be revived, thus eliminating the influence of environment." [6]

d.   Improving the staff and inmates' relationship and mutual acceptance through closer association between them (also at meals and coffee time) [7] and through sharing in the business of prison management, using as far as possible small wards and small institutions. The role of the individual prisoner and staff members alike as part of the community must not be overlooked but be used in a constructive way along the lines of the therapeutic community.

e.   Group work must not be limited in the traditional way to group therapy, group counselling or activity groups. All sorts of grouping of different size and kinds ought to be encouraged, including regular community meetings. Such meetings, although more of a discussion character when treatment experts are not available, meet the permanent need in institutions for communication and mutual information.

Staff members of all grades should be encouraged to feel it natural always to act in an unstructured and informal way by using "real life" and "here and now" situations, for an hour of therapy may be all very well but an open understanding of the problems in an institution leads to a demand for what has been called "the other twenty-three hours of treatment".

3. Obstacles to change

a. A general view

Most individuals are—for different reasons—consciously or unconsciously against change in their work situation. This

becomes still more apparent especially in "people helping" professions in which changes have ideological implications or are experienced or interpreted ideologically. In this respect professions centred on human relations often reveal tensions. These tensions are easily intensified when change—regardless of its content—is suggested. This phenomenon can appear in hospitals, among people like doctors and nurses, who by training and tradition are identified with treatment and as an integral part of their task have always to try to refine their methods of treatment. No wonder it is far more difficult to bring about changes of approach in the treatment of offenders, especially in the work inside prison establishments.

One criminologist interested in the problem of change is Thomas Mathiesen. In a paper on "Problems and possibilities for the future" (given at the third European Conference of Directors of Criminological Research Institutes in Strasbourg, 1965) he underlines the importance of the problem by concentrating on change and resistance to change, which in his opinion must be looked upon "as a major problem for future research" (p. 63). Mathiesen emphasises that there is hardly resistance to *all* kinds of change in custodial regimes. "I am not", he continues, "going to suggest to you that custodial regimes have an intrinsic tendency towards traditionalism, towards resisting *all* kinds of changes. I am only going to suggest that certain kinds of changes are resisted by the participants—namely *those that threaten certain vested interests that participants have in the* status quo..." He underlines, further on, that "*the implementation of the modern principles and policies of a professional treatment rehabilitation personnel are particularly threatening.* I will therefore concentrate on this kind of change in structure and goalsetting of correctional establishments. Of course, the concept of treatment is a thorny one to define in precise terms", he says, and illustrates what he means by emunerating examples of the kind of treatment efforts he has in mind, namely "group counselling programmes, group therapy programmes, ideas about the therapeutic community as well as various forms of individual therapy, including psychoanalysis".[8]

Further on in his paper Mathiesen describes different kinds of refined techniques counteracting change or neutralising innovation, e.g. "absorption", "postponement", "deflation" and "cooptation", all very illustrative examples of how resistance to change can be effectively hidden under a pretended will of change.

b. *On the central administration*

What a correctional administration can do has some final

limits set by the nature of legislation, the budget and other constraints or requirements from the Ministry of Justice.

The administrator therefore cannot always act in accordance with his own convictions.[9] This observation, however, is entirely commonplace. People at all levels now and then have to face and solve conflicts of loyalty. The higher the position, the better are the chances of the incumbent to argue and convince superior authorities.

There are, however, other obstacles to change.

In understanding treatment and the necessary conditions for promoting treatment it is of the greatest importance that officials responsible for planning have an educational background which can help them to find adequate solutions and means. From this point of view the dominance of legal training in the central administration is worth noticing. In the Swedish Correctional Board nearly all people in leading positions have a legal training (about thirty!). Apart from them there is one psychiatrist and one psychologist and some few officials with a diploma from a university social school. This emphasis on legal training in fact has been experienced as a drawback. In this context, however, it is to be noted that a person experienced in the treatment of offenders has been nominated as leader of a special section for development questions, recently organised. One hopes that this expert may be able to influence policy questions.

People with a law education believe as a rule in the theory of general prevention and have a judicial normative frame of reference. All this, however, goes rather against a treatment approach, which on the contrary presupposes the individual prevention theory and a behavioural scientific frame of reference. It is, with the ideological background here mentioned, quite natural that someone from the central administration is apt to expect conformity—obedience to programmes designed for equal application in all institutions, irrespective of differences as to location, the character and capacity of the governor, traditions, local practical conditions, "climate" at the time and so on.

Thus a year ago in Sweden directives were given for the organisation in establishments of consultative committees with equal staff and inmate representation. But the wide consultative purposes of these bodies were limited by formal provisions which exclude spontaneous personal interaction.[10] Another example of what can happen when officials of a behaviourally scientific orientation have not had any decisive influence is that new prisons in Sweden, for instance, are of a highly technical design but the effect obviously is an alienation between prisoners and staff.

Smaller open prison establishments sometimes also are structured in a strange way for routine. This happens when the treatment policy is based on generalised theories on the part of the administrator. A prisoner who had proved a failure in an institution known for its exact classification system explained his failure by saying that the institution was an automaton and that he himself was a coin that did not fit into the slot.

Central administration offices are as a rule situated far away from the prisons, which reduces their possibilities of getting sufficiently comprehensive information. *Temporary* visits to institutions do not entirely eliminate this drawback as they often are caused by violations of the regulations in force or by complaints. Hence the inspecting officials mostly meet an institution under strain. Often the inspectors conclude that the rules have not been followed in a adequate way. Practice must be brought closer in accordance with the paragraphs in power, they claim, when in fact the proper thing would be to reconsider the sort of regulations that have been "broken". On the other hand central administration has an interest in keeping the *status quo*, which means as the most important thing smooth administration of the institutions.

c. *On the local level*

Prisons are in all respects founded on a solid ground of distrust. A consequence is that in prisons the acceptable way of how to behave is formally regulated by a network of paragraphs operating to the same extent, I think, for both prisoners and staff. These rules are used by each side to control the other—to the detriment of good relationships. Certainly there must be some regulations in order to create safe guarantees for the inmates against pure arbitrariness, but hundreds of paragraphs covering all routines of the day take away both self-respect and—still worse—the desire to take on responsibility. Such a system also is apt to diminish staff capacity to take initiatives, and this is bad in treatment contexts for it also hinders change.

Usually the work in prisons is split up into many separate functions, each of which has its specialist among the staff. There are the governor and the deputy for decisions as to discharge, discipline and so on, the social worker for social problems in connection with the prisoner's family, the doctor for medical care, the principal officer for security and so on. Everything usually is kept in good order by this system. The drawback, namely that nobody knows anyone in a deeper sense, seems not to worry anyone. If one wants to promote a treatment approach the

inmates must be brought together in smaller groups with a leader responsible for all functions. If not it will be impossible to preserve continuity and all individuals become depersonalised. The lack of acknowledged communication channels upward towards the central administration is often experienced as a further disadvantage.

4. *Essential points in promoting change*

a. In the field of corrections the traditional *frame of reference* is a judicial normative one. I think it is urgent that this should be replaced by a behavioural scientific frame of reference as a necessary starting point in promoting a treatment approach.

b. A unified *education for administrators and senior officials of the prisons* is urgently required. What should be done is to recruit more officials with education in behavioural sciences, an education which could be supplemented with some courses in administration. Officials with legal training could in addition be given special training in behavioural sciences. This is of special interest having regard to a recommendation of the Council of Europe saying that those responsible for administration should be in frequent contact with research workers.

Referring to this need for collaboration between research workers and administrators, Nils Christie (Strasbourg 1968) has observed that there are sometimes difficulties of communication. There were, he explained, the differences of education, of background and approach between sociologists and administrators. Furthermore, certain institutions had been created by administrators in the belief that they would be effective. It was none too pleasant for such administrators to see their own work proved ineffective by research workers.[11]

c. *Training of prison staff* regularly takes place at staff colleges, where separate training courses are arranged for different categories, prison officers, principal officers, workshop instructors and so on. I think the basic training probably cannot be arranged in any other way. As a complement, however, to this, it would be worth while to train one establishment after the other in such a way that the whole hierarchy, from the governor to the officers throughout the ranks, was included. By such a "vertical" composition of a group of staff for training on the spot where they have to collaborate daily, the participants just have to face how they are inclined to meet the prisoners in concrete treatment situations, to realise if and why they are apt to judge conflicts and problems in different ways, to learn how to improve com-

munication and so on. When it comes to the treatment of clients the learning process second to none is that, as Maxwell Jones puts it, "you learn when something happens to you". For teachers as well it must be important to experience training and its effects according to this model. Otherwise—by the traditional system—they themselves run the risk of becoming alienated from the field they ought to be effectively familiar with.

d. *The role of the prison officer.* Against this background it goes without saying that all categories of the staff—as in Sweden —should be included in treatment process. For everybody concerned in the treatment of prisoners the task is twofold—control and contact. Until recently neither the prison authorities in the central administration nor those at the local level have tried to give the prison officers a more treatment-oriented role. I think therefore that it is a wise strategy (practised right now in Sweden) to strengthen the role of the officer by giving him opportunities to share treatment responsibilities with other staff in special consultative meetings. We are looking forward with great interest to see if this attempt will work.

e. *The role of the inmate* must be improved. He must be accepted as a human being in a new way, as possessing equality of rights with his fellow beings, of course within the self-evident legal framework given through his sentence. In principle this is stated in the Swedish law which regulates the treatment of prisoners. To reassure the inmates that the statement in the law actually shall be enforced, I think it is necessary to accept them in a democratic way and accept their influence in the process of decision-making as far as possible. This is actually supported by the Swedish prison officers' trade union. It is also consistent with a broad trend in the society of today towards accepting different groups, earlier in a completely powerless situation, as participating with administrators in dealing with their own situation, e.g. patients' democracy, students' democracy, military democracy and so on.

f. *The role of expertise*

It is more than a common saying that the real expert in treating prisoners is the prisoner himself. His role has been overlooked and so also the role of the relations and the acquaintances of the prisoner. All must be included in the process of rehabilitation, and that means the necessity of opening up the prisons—a point which especially has been underlined by the Dutch member of our group, P. Allewijn.

By this I mean not only that the inmate has a special capacity in understanding his own problem but that he should be actively involved in treatment according to the model "Using criminals to reform criminals", recommended by, among others, Donald Cressey.[11a]

As to experts in a more narrow sense it must be recognised that psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists and so on never will be available in sufficient numbers nor will it be possible for financial reasons ever to get as many specialists as would be desirable. Therefore it is necessary to economise with the people we get and in the first place use them in helping other staff to function in a sensible way. (Psychiatrists, for instance, often feel themselves used just to take care of difficult cases and make things easier for the prison governor.)

I should like to add, however, that at least a small number of these experts should be kept as "outsiders" in the sense that they would be free in relation to the chief of the institution but regularly go visiting it in order 1. to help the staff in handling their interpersonal relationships and 2. to suggest alterations, when necessary, in the organisational structure of the establishment concerned.

g. *The role of pressure groups*

Within the Scandinavian countries specially organised pressure groups have been formed in recent years with the object of reforming the conditions of prisoners and, as a matter of more long-term policy, of getting the whole system radically altered. These groups consist of both registered offenders and other people, often criminologists and other scientifically-minded men and women. They have provoked a lot of anxiety and resistance among prison administration people but are nowadays, at least in Sweden, allowed to visit prisons and meet the inmates in discussion groups. Because of their critical attitude they still meet a lot of opposition among prison staff, especially from the prison officers' trade union. They have, however, without doubt an effect in promoting change.

Swedish experience suggests also that the trade unions, especially those for prison officers, have great influence upon the prison authorities and on the Ministry of Justice. They have concentrated less on trade union questions in the narrow sense but instead participated publicly in discussions on criminal policy. Their role as to change is ambivalent.

Mass media are positively in favour of a treatment approach and radical change, a situation which is probably unique in the world.

h. *The need for assessment and evaluation*

From an organisational point of view prisons and industrial enterprises have some traits in common but also traits that differ. In my opinion the dissimilarities, however, are greater than the similarities. With industry you have measurable components both as to input, production and output. The work is predictable. It results in concrete products, visible to everybody. By improving the technique the products become better and better and also the reputation (and profits) of the industry concerned. People working there feel satisfied, even proud.

With prisons the "input", the raw material, consists of human beings who are very unpredictable indeed. The work done inside prisons doesn't result in a "production" which gives the workers a reputation for efficiency.

Most people engaged in prison treatment work are often reminded that they have not been successful by meeting recidivists again and again, by reading critical articles in the newspapers and by hearing of research uncovering all sorts of failures. This in fact produces all kinds of defences, and retention of the *status quo*.

In Strasbourg in 1965 the Directors of Criminological Research Institutes urged, as an important part of prison research, that special attention should be paid by research workers to those factors which impede improvements in prison organisation and which usually generate a high degree of resistance to reform.[12]

I suggest that research concerning a social organisation like a prison system is better done using an action-research model, which simultaneously with a continuous feedback and constructive criticism brings practical support. The staff concerned can then get the important feeling of being helped and not just criticised. Such a project is being carried out right now in Massachusetts and seems to have very promising implications.[13]

However, even a research model like this can well meet with resistance if the staff is not prepared for it by special training and special experience. If staff at all levels can also be given opportunities to do, or closely observe, the work of other persons having different functions, there develops wider awareness of problems and failure and success in handling them. This facilitates acceptance of change and assessment of its results. (This presupposes a new approach on the part of the administration. If

failures lead to disciplinary sanctions they are likely to be hidden!) An example is prison staff volunteering as supervisors for the after-care stage and so getting an opportunity of learning in a practical way what sort of difficulties a prisoner has to face when discharged. Moreover by such means the staff can more easily realise the importance of continuity of treatment. This has been done for many years in some countries, especially in Scandinavia. (Mostly, however, ordinary members of the community are used for after-care.)[14]

But in speaking of treatment and the need for evaluation of treatment it must still be realised, however, that there is still very little methodical treatment covering all essential needs of the prisoners in a way they feel meaningful. In Sweden today there is, for instance, a strong trend towards replacing prison work by studies. This is very good *per se* but until now there have been no resources (with the exception of *Studiegården* for twenty inmates) simultaneously to tackle the psychological problems combined with such a situation.

Family prison and holiday prison have been introduced—all very important as endeavours—but here again no qualified help as to personal and psychological problems is given. About 300 prison staff of nearly all categories (including female clerks) have gone through training courses for group counselling. Yet today only a handful of groups are functioning. Why is this so?

In my opinion, I must finally repeat, the basic obstacle to change is that we are lacking a treatment approach because we lack a treatment frame of reference. Let one give an illustrative example. In Swedish prison service there are very few positions for psychologists. The persons holding these positions feel uneasy and dissatisfied, so one after the other they disappear. I consider this to be so because they experience the situation as a state of transition, confusion, conflict, chaos of norms and, in brief—a deadlock!

II. *As to after-care and probation*

The situation here is for a number of reasons more stable. The objective of rehabilitation has never been questioned, nor the treatment approach.

Control must often be enforced, but it is not conceived as a repressive measure but looked upon as a means—combined with others—of promoting the main goal, to help the client towards social adjustment.

By tradition the work of the probation officer is "client-centred", firstly in the practical sense of bringing the individual client support and help but also through meeting his individual personality problems. One the other hand fear of criminal contagion has led the probation officer to restrict his treatment efforts to the individual separated from other offenders. At the same time, however, the needs of the individual (either discharged or on probation) as member of a group sometimes have been overlooked.

During recent years this concern as to keeping people under supervision separate and unknown to other offenders has decreased and probation officers have felt able to start groups of different kinds. In one place a gang of four young offenders created a kernel for a combined discussion and activity group with a probation officer as the leader and with four other probationers as co-members. The group met regularly and turned out most satisfactorily. In some cases groups, run by psychologists, have been called "study circles in psychology" which obviously has made it easier for the members to acknowledge their membership. In one town there is a contact group meeting in the local prison which consists of prisoners and their eventual supervisors. In yet another town there is a training group for supervisors in which parolees actively participate in the training process. Thus training is realistically related to parole experiences and at the same time the parolees' self-image is enhanced.

These are but examples of the more flexible and client-centred approaches possible in the probation and parole fields.

It is important to recognise that. When such local experimentation yields promising results it is for the central administration to take them up and ensure their development over the whole country.

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1. Sveri, Knut, 6th European Conference of Directors of Criminological Research Institutes, Strasbourg, 1968, DPC/CDIR (69) 8, p. 93.

2. Marnell, Gunnar, General Report, 4th International Criminological Congress, Section 14 - Penology, The Hague, 1960.

3. 6th European Conference etc., DPC/CDIR (69) 8, p. 118.

4. Törnqvist, Karl-Erik, "Correction and the Prevention of Crime", *Scandinavian Studies in Criminology*, Volume I, p. 197.

5. Morris, T., "Research on the Prison Community", *Collected Studies in Criminological Research*, Volume I, Strasbourg, 1967, p. 145. "Perhaps the most important single conclusion that may be drawn from prison researches so far, is that any change in the role of the custodial staff must be accompanied by a change in the authoritarian pattern of relationships within the staff hierarchy."

According to the opinion of Otto Wilfert — in a note presented to ECCP Sub-Committee No. XIV — it should not be advisable to disturb a large institution when introducing new treatment methods but "to act independently thereof". Is it possible entirely to avoid such an effect and — why should one?

6. DPC/CDIR (66) 3 rev., p. 24.

7. Separate canteens for prisoners and staff are arranged in recently constructed Swedish prisons.

8. DPC/CDIR (66) 3 rev., p. 63.

9. DPC/CDIR (69) 8, p. 109.

10. So far in Sweden the Director Gene° of the Correctional Administration during conflict situations has met the inmates' representative councils (*Förtroenderåd*) and has also met staff groups. There have been no meetings to date between him and the mixed staff-inmate consultative councils.

11. Christie, Nils, DPC/CDIR (69) 8, p. 114.

11a. Cressey, Donald R., "Using Criminals in the Rehabilitation of Criminals", 1965, *The Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, Volume 2.

12. DPC/CDIR (66) 3 rev., p. 101.

13. Ohlin, Lloyd E., "Reform of Correctional Service for Delinquent Youth in Massachusetts. A Research Proposal", Harvard Law School, November 1970 (internal working document, not yet publicly available).

14. In Britain prison staff seems not to be used greatly in after-care. See Barr, Hugh, *Volunteers in Prison After-Care*, London, 1971.

THE PROBLEM OF EVALUATION

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There are two main ways of approaching the task of evaluation. On the one hand we may ask what results a technique is intended to achieve, and then ascertain by objective criteria whether or to what extent it achieves them. This is to interpret the task in terms of the idea of effectiveness or efficiency. On the other hand we may, without enquiring too closely into what is intended, yet ascertain what in fact is achieved, whether intentionally or otherwise. We may then enquire whether what is achieved is also desirable, or whether desirable effects do or do not outweigh undesirable effects. One undesirable effect might be the cost of the innovation in question, which might be desirable in all respects but this, and indeed the most familiar example of this second kind of approach would be that of cost-benefit analysis. This can in principle be applied without reference to declared objectives, and even in the entire absence of such objectives. In this paper both approaches will be discussed. It will be found that the implications, in respect of group and community methods, are strikingly different according to which approach is adopted.

There is no doubt, however, that in respect of forms of penal treatment, and even in the evaluation of penal systems as a whole, the first is the more familiar approach. Virtually all systematic evaluative studies of group methods (there has been little attempt to evaluate community methods) proceed on the assumption that evaluation means the assessment of efficiency. The question then arises: efficiency in respect of what criteria? More specifically, in terms of what objectives? Clearly we cannot say how effective a technique is unless we have some idea of what it is intended to achieve. Here, however, the difficulties arise, since it is in the evaluation of penal methods or penal regimes that the assessment of efficiency is most difficult, owing to the difficulty of establishing what the objectives are.

In respect of penal systems as a whole the issue is complicated by the existence of multiple and contradictory objectives. Given the fact that the objectives of containment and of rehabilitation conflict, it is either unclear by which of the two criteria (or of others) prisons are properly to be assessed, or else it follows that

efficiency in terms of any one criterion can never be more than partial. This is, in fact, a realistic assessment, but is generally taken to imply criticism of penal regimes. It might equally be taken to imply criticism of those who attempt to apply simplistic notions of efficiency to complex organisations. [1] *

In respect of particular methods of penal treatment the issue is complicated by the difficulty of obtaining statements of intent that are consistent and operationally meaningful. Thus the author of one report on group counselling emanating from the United Kingdom [2] seems to have been somewhat hampered by vagueness and ambiguity in official statements of objectives. She received the usual assurance that group counselling was not intended to bring about basic personality change, but beyond this disclaimer there seems to have been little certainty. In California references in 1959 to "the improvement of attitudes and social adjustment" had already shifted by 1964 to the "more sophisticated" definition that group counselling "uses the small group method to change the basic climate, environment or subculture in a prison". In the United Kingdom, official statements seem to have been equally general and shifting. Thus the statement that "the object of group counselling is to help inmates to think out their attitude to society, to authority and to their own future by means of free discussion in a small group with a member of staff" (1960) was reiterated in 1962 in a reference to "the correction of the distorted view which many inmates have of themselves and of society", but in that same year a circular instruction defined group counselling merely as "a method in which a group of about eight inmates meet regularly for an hour and a half, with a member of staff, to discuss in an informal atmosphere any subject they wish".

Yet there is nothing wrong with objectives of this kind. They are modest, and even their ambiguity reflects the fact that in the world of events new techniques are generally motivated less by scientific curiosity than by the urgent need to do something about a pressing social problem. Penal administrators are under no obligation to frame their intentions in terms that would be more acceptable to research workers, and the main body of this report describes techniques that have been or are being used for the most part without any great attention to scientific methodology, or even to the need for declared objectives. If, however, an administration invites systematic evaluation problems do arise, for these are objectives that seem not to be satisfactory from the

* The notes to this monograph are found at p. 105.

research worker's point of view. They are too general, and too vague.

This raises the question of the basis on which such systematic evaluation as has been done has in fact been conducted. In fact such evaluative research seems generally to be conducted on the basis of assumed objectives, such as the reduction in recidivism rates, or the promotion of behavioural or personality change in inmates. These are reasonable assumptions. They are implied in most public discussions of "the purposes of imprisonment", which tend to be conducted in terms of such concepts as that of rehabilitation. They are also publicly stated objectives (Rule 1 of the Prison Service (England and Wales) states the purposes of imprisonment to be "the encouragement of convicted prisoners to lead a good and useful life") and therefore reasonably taken to apply to any specific techniques employed by the organisation that adopts such overall objectives. In respect of group techniques, the assumption that the method is intended to bring about behavioural or personality change is given additional justification by the use of the word "treatment" to describe these activities.

But if this is the intention then it is clear that the efficiency of group techniques is, in terms of these criteria, highly problematical. The report already mentioned [2] contains many references to research results, yet these are on the whole inconclusive, and the words "no significant difference" recur with depressing regularity. A more recent study of the effectiveness of group counselling regimes comes to the unequivocal conclusion that, in terms of the objective of increasing "parole survival" rates these techniques are indeed ineffective. [3] There is in fact no hard evidence that group counselling is effective as a means of reducing recidivism rates, or of bringing about behavioural or personality change in a desired direction. This is not to say that the technique has been proved ineffective in those directions, or that it might one day be proved effective, but enough evaluative research has been done to make such an event unlikely.

In the face of negative findings of this kind, prison officials who have committed themselves to the proposition that group counselling does reduce recidivism rates, or does produce behavioural or personality changes tending in that direction, find themselves in an embarrassing position since there remains no apparent justification for continuing with the experiment. That is, if they accept the findings. In fact they generally do not, arguing that the technique was discontinued before it had a chance to prove itself, that it was never properly financed, that untrained staff were used, and so on. Cressey provides a list of these retrospective

justifications that penal administrators would do well to study (see appendix to this paper). [4] One which he omits is the argument that the technique was intended to achieve something else anyway. This of course may be so if the objectives we have in mind are those very modest ones referred to earlier. If, however, a management is on record as having claimed more, and in the institution referred to under [3] this does seem to have been the case, then the implications would seem to be serious.

Needless to say those administrators and research workers who have experience of evaluative research of this kind are well aware of the situation. If evaluation continues to be conducted on this basis we may therefore reasonably expect a future situation where research workers feel obliged to obtain firm declarations of intent in advance of their research, and where astute management are increasingly reluctant to furnish them. There is already evidence of a tendency on the part of managements to establish objectives retrospectively, to wait to see what good results a technique achieves, and then to claim that this is what was intended from the outset. An experiment may be counted as successful if staff morale (for example) is significantly improved, though something entirely different was intended originally, such as a reduced disposition to recidivism. Needless to say these manœuvres do not impress research workers. Such arguments are not convincing, and advocates of group counselling deserve to lose if they continue to behave in this way, especially if they continue to claim for group counselling an efficacy that it has not been shown to have, namely as contributing to the reduction of criminality. There are indeed dangers that group counselling and similar experiments might be discontinued for this very reason. But this would be an unsatisfactory outcome, since it would arise from an entirely artificial situation in which managements and research workers alike have colluded in the setting of unrealistic targets, and in which real but unacknowledged benefits are being overlooked by both parties. For while the introduction of a research team seems often to have the consequence of shifting objectives in a direction that is, from the research point of view, operationally more meaningful, it is necessary to add that from the administrators' point of view they may be less realistic. Furthermore administrators who invite such research often seem to collude in the process, redefining their own objectives in ways that, though more precise, may as a result be more precise (and more ambitious) than is practicable.

Part of the difficulty is that in the evaluation of penal techniques the issue is often confused by the use of an entirely

inappropriate model of organisations. While we may wish to view a prison merely as a means to an end, or as a "conversion process", the fact remains that prisons are complex organisations, and in particular that they are social systems, and that any penological experiment takes place within an essentially social context.

The point may be illustrated if we consider the circumstances in which such experiments generally take place. At least at the outset there is present an atmosphere of enthusiasm and indeed hope. Now a purist might well argue that these are not the circumstances in which a technique is going to be given a proper chance to prove itself, and from one point of view this is obviously true. There is too much opportunity for subjective factors to operate in the perception and assessment of results that we are committed to. Nevertheless to adopt such a detached view of events is to neglect the fact that such experiments must inevitably take place within some social context. Laboratory conditions, however desirable, are never present. This has a number of implications.

In the first place the context, in human affairs, may well affect the outcome. The state of mind of the observer may affect not only his perception of the events, but events themselves. Here we refer to the well-known "Hawthorne effect", discovered by Elton Mayo in his classic studies of the Hawthorne works of the Western Electric Company in Chicago. There it was found to be the presence of a research team that led to the increased productivity, not their recommendations. Someone, in short, was taking an interest. It is an effect equally apparent in educational experiments (it is for this reason that it has been said that all educational experiments always succeed—for a time) and one therefore to be expected to affect the outcome of penological experiments too. There are therefore grounds for believing that the presence of precisely this factor of enthusiasm may determine the success of penological experiments in their initial stages. To evaluate a technique without reference to context ignores the possibility that effectiveness may vary according to the part played by the technique in the life of the wider penal community, the "phase" the community is in,[5] and the phase the experiment itself is in. The first point, then, relates to the possibility—it is not suggested that it is more than a possibility—that these techniques may, under certain circumstances, be more effective—even as treatment techniques—than they seem.

More important, however, is the fact that the ignoring of the social context, and the use of a somewhat naive "laboratory" model, leads to quite invalid assumptions about the implications

of negative findings. The assumption stems partly from the practice of referring to group methods as methods of "treatment" so encouraging the use of inappropriate medical models of assessment. In the assessment of strictly medical methods of treatment it is possible to distinguish between the treatment itself, and the daily background of living against which the treatment itself takes place. If the "treatment" is shown to be ineffective it is quite properly discontinued, without affecting the general course of a patient's daily life. But in the case of group methods this distinction is inevitably blurred—"living" is not discontinued while the "treatment" takes place, indeed the treatment is an aspect of living. Hence it does not follow that if an experiment cannot be shown to be effective it must be on that account discontinued, since this is merely to raise the question of what is to be put in its place anyway. Furthermore there are important respects in which the significance of time is different within the prison setting from what it is in more obviously utilitarian organisations, for example, short-stay hospitals. In the hospital situation a patient is admitted, is given treatment and is then discharged at a time dependent on the outcome of treatment. In prisons, on the other hand, the date of release is only marginally affected by progress in treatment. In the clinical situation time is to be used; in the prison situation, however much we may be inclined to deceive ourselves about the matter, time is to be filled. But this means that what fills it may be quite properly evaluated according to criteria quite other than mere "effectiveness". In the extreme case it might be enough that no actual harm was done. Florence Nightingale said that the first task of a hospital was to see that the patient was not made worse. Prisons might well adopt this as a minimum objective. In fact, however, a good deal more can be done than this, as is suggested in the section on community methods.

In short, a purely utilitarian assessment of group methods involves naive assumptions about the burden of proof derived from the laboratory rather than from real life. These are not experiments in the academic sense. Part of the trouble is that this is exactly what they have so often been claimed to be. Prison administrations undoubtedly invite a good deal of the trouble they get by persisting in representing their activities in grandiose and impractical terms, which leaves them defenceless when evaluative research shows that what they claim to be doing they are not doing at all. This is important since it has a direct bearing on the question of morale.

There is a common tendency for service organisations, often in response to outside pressures, to adopt aims before there exist

relevant techniques by means of which these aims may be imple-mented. The very use of the word "treatment" during recent years stemmed from the belief that "crime" was a form of "illness", and so referred more to aspirations than to possibilities. The consequence of this process is, inevitably, that an efficacy is claimed for techniques that do exist that they do not in fact possess. This discrepancy between aims and possibilities reveals itself over a period of time, with an inevitable onset of disillusionment among the staff and institutions concerned.

Meanwhile, however, these same techniques are often reveal-ed to have useful functions of which insufficient account is taken. Continuing to assess themselves in terms of what they "should" be achieving, and manifestly are not, instead of what they are achieving, however desirable this might be, staff (and institutions) assess themselves as having failed. Morale within an organisation is at least partly a function of the perceived effectiveness of that organisation. Effectiveness, in turn, is a measure of the relation-ship between aims and achievements. But effectiveness, and so morale, can be improved not only by bringing achievements in line with aims, but also by setting aims that it is demonstrably possible to achieve. A parallel case exists in the history of British psychiatry. By adopting an impractical aim of "treat-ment", nineteenth century mental hospitals neglected the entirely feasible aim of securing a humane standard of patient care.

Clearly it is not enough to argue that even when a method does not have the intended therapeutic effect, it generally has other useful effects, none of them anticipated. Yet there is ample evidence in this report of incidental benefits of this kind. It is impossible to endorse a way of working with offenders merely on the grounds that it exists, that it gives members of staff a feeling of involvement, and that it improves staff-inmate relations, unless these were the effects that were intended. It is recognised that these are indeed useful functions (i.e. unanticipated consequences), but in that case we see no reason whatever why these functions should not be raised to the status of objectives. There is nothing whatever to be said against a technique that helps an individual to live through a long sentence, or helps to improve the atmosphere, or creates improved conditions for individual treatment. Whether group methods in fact do any of these things is, of course, a matter of separate assessment. What is certain, however, is that to evaluate group methods solely in terms of declared objectives —such as the reduction of recidivism rates—may be to miss the fact that organisations and people may sometimes be doing more good than they are aware of.

The first advantage of such a shift of focus relates to staff morale; the second advantage relates to credibility. Not every-one is impressed by group methods, and if these methods are to develop, or even survive, they have to convince. A con-siderable improvement in the public image of penal admin-istrations might be secured if they ceased to claim to be doing what they manifestly are not doing, and concentrated instead on acknowledging as their aims what they can in fact do well. It would be well if, in any future experiments, the objectives were stated in advance, the underlying rationale also stated as clearly as possible, and the results carefully noted. This may be a pious hope but if it were done it could avoid some of the confusion, and indeed mystique, that has often surrounded the introduction of group activities into penal institutions. Certainly it is only in this way that it will be possible to evaluate experiments, and to know which methods are useful, in what way, and in what kinds of institution. There is a further respect in which the issue of context has a bearing on that of evaluation. The point is made that we consider one common source of confusion in discussions of group experiments, namely, the tendency to confuse two quite different senses in which we can speak of the success of such experiments, i.e., as effectively implementing certain objectives, and as merely managing to survive. The survival of an experiment is no guar-antee of its success as a form of treatment or as anything else. It is, however, a necessary condition of its success. An experiment that does not survive cannot succeed. Nor can we ever know whether it would have succeeded had it survived. We may be tempted to say that it would have been a success had it not been for the attitude of the staff, or for some other reason that led to its rejection, but we can never know. This forces our attention, if we are to take group methods seriously, to the issue of what conditions are necessary for the survival of any particular kind of experiment. We need not doubt that some forms of group activity, in some institutions at some particular phase in that organisation's life are successful even in the direction of promot-ing behavioural change. The relevant research, perhaps on the lines of Rapoport's as indicated above, has not yet been mounted. But there is certainly no guarantee that an experiment that is both viable and successful in one kind of institution will be successful or even viable in another, or even that what survives and succeeds in one country will survive or even have the chance of being introduced into another. This introduces a further consideration.

Experiments in group and community work are not to be understood without reference to time and place and to prevailing currents of thought, since many of these experiments seem to be

very characteristic products of their countries of origin at particular historical times. Group activities take different forms, for example, in Scandinavia and in England, and again in France and the United States. The reasons for this seem to be related to the political and intellectual climate of each individual country, and to the historical antecedents of the experiment. There are religious (e.g. Quaker) antecedents to group work in the United Kingdom which subtly influence practice, yet which seem to be entirely absent from the Scandinavian scene. Similarly, the work of Fenton and Cressey in the United States, which attempts a process of reorientation by using the peer group, is simultaneously democratic and pragmatic in a way that one might think of as characteristically American. Little emphasis is placed on the esoteric skills of experts, except in the training process, and Cressey has expressed the opinion that effective group work is best carried out by otherwise quite uneducated people who will operate under supervision as a kind of "behavioural mechanic" (see section on counselling by inmates). No attempt is made in his therapeutic scheme to go into questions of depth psychology, or even motivation. L. T. Wilkins [6] has expressed the view that "In some American States . . . public disapprobation is strongly expressed if treatment fails . . . but not if the sentence (by British standards) is regarded as either too lenient or too severe" (Wilkins, 1962). Cressey's ideas have exactly these pragmatic overtones: he is above all concerned with ends, only secondarily with means. Yet behaviourist approaches of this kind have been strongly opposed in the United Kingdom and are even now virtually confined to the treatment of alcoholics and drug addicts. On the whole British workers seem to favour a more modest use of group activity, aimed less at major behavioural change than at the development of personal understanding.

This being the case there is little point in recommending any particular forms of group work regardless of context. A technique may be demonstrably effective in its country of origin, yet be entirely inconsistent with the ethical or political orientation of another.

It is likely, however, that selective borrowing will continue to take place, and that each member country (and indeed individual institutions) may take certain parts of group practice and adapt them to their situation. This seems likely to happen to the extent that member states find themselves facing essentially the same problems. Thus, looking to the future, if any serious attempt is made to examine alternatives to imprisonment this is likely to have implications for the expansion of a probation service

or its equivalent. Group work undertaken by such a service is likely to be acceptable only to the extent that it offers a realistic alternative means of crime prevention and also assists in relieving the burden of a heavy caseload for individual social workers. The long-term offender, on the other hand, will require a form of treatment calculated to make the inevitable pains of imprisonment more acceptable to him. We can on this basis expect some degree of bifurcation in group activity in the future. If this leads to a greater degree of precision in the statement of objectives this will be to the good.

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APPENDIX

D. R. Cressey on justifications for negative findings

Let us assume that a state has passed a law requiring all its parole agents to be registered psychiatrists who will use professional psychiatric techniques for rehabilitating parolees. Let us assume further that the required number of psychiatrists is found and that after ten years a research study indicates that introduction of psychiatric techniques has had no statistically significant effect on recidivism rates—the rates are essentially the same as they were ten years earlier. The following are ten kinds of overlapping themes which are likely to be popular among the personnel with personal interests in continuing the program.

1. "You can't use rates as a basis of comparison—if only *one* man was saved from a life of crime the money spent on the program is justified."

2. "Even the New York Yankees don't expect to win all their ball games; the program certainly *contributed* to the rehabilitation of *some* of the clients."

3. "Recidivism is not a good criterion of efficiency; 'clinical observation' indicates that the criminals handled psychiatrically are 'better adjusted' than were the criminals going out of the system ten years ago and that even the repeaters are 'less serious' repeaters than were those of a decade ago."

4. "Psychiatric techniques for rehabilitation never were tried; the deplorable working conditions made success impossible—there was not enough time, case loads were too big, and salaries were so low that only the poorest psychiatrists could be recruited."

5. "You can't expect any system in which the criminal is seen for only a few hours a week to significantly change personalities which have been in the making for the whole period of the individual's life and which are characterised by deeply-hidden, unconscious problems; we can only keep chipping away."

6. "For administrative reasons, the program was changed in mid-stream; good progress was being made at first, but the program was sabotaged by the new administrator (governor, legislature)."

7. "The technique was effective enough, but the kind of criminals placed on parole changed; ten years ago the proportion of criminals amenable to change was much greater than at present."

8. "Had the technique not been introduced, the recidivism rates would be much higher than at present; the fact that there is no difference really indicates that the technique has been very effective."

9. "There are too many complex variables which were not controlled in the study; a depression (prosperity) came along and affected the recidivism rate; the newpapers gave so much publicity to a few cases of recidivism that parole was revoked even in many cases where genuine progress toward rehabilitation was being made."

10. "The study is invalid because it used no control group, but it has pointed up the need for really scientific research on psychiatric techniques; we must continue the program and set up a ten-year experimental study which will reassess our potential, locate some of the transactional variables in the patient-therapist

relationship, determine whether some therapists have what we may term 'treatment-potent personalities' and others have what we are tentatively calling 'recidivistic creativity', identify whether the catalystically-oriented therapeutic climate is self-defeating when occupied by reagent-reacting patients, and measure the adverse effects of post-therapeutic family-warmth variables on favorably-prognosticated and emotionally-mature discharges."

Annex II

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