A Study on the Treatment of Young Prisoners with an Advanced Criminal Tendency

— Second Report —

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I. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to make clear correlation between institutional climates and treatment of inmates of Class YB prisons (whose prisoners are young adults under 26 years of age and have an advanced criminal tendency) in comparison with that of Class YA prisons (whose prisoners are young adults under 26 years of age and have not an advanced criminal tendency) and Class B prisons (whose prisoners are not less than 26 years of age and have an advanced criminal tendency) with a view to exploring effective means of correctional treatment for Class YB prisoners, and thereby to submit necessary proposals for treatment measures for them.

To put it concretely, we attempted to clarify the following:

(1) Characteristics of institutional climates of Class YB prisons;

(2) Correlation between institutional climates and groups of inmates;

(3) Correlation between institutional climates and treatment.

The reason why we took up institutional climates as objects of this study was that environmental factors of institutions, psychosocial climates in particular were considered to be one factor influencing behaviors of inmates in institutions. In this report, we call psychosocial climates of institutions "institutional climates" and define the concept as follows: Institutional climates are the whole of cognition of certain groups belonging to institutions to their physical environment (natural climates surrounding institutions, laws and regulations, treatment programs, etc.).

II. Method

We used a Japanese translation of Correctional Institutions Environment Scale (CIES) developed by Wenk, E.A. and his group as a tool to measure institutional climates, and conducted sociometric test in order to analyze the structure of inmates'

groups. We also collected information on treatment supposed to be related to institutional climates (disciplinary violations, etc.) and analyzed correlation between institutional climates and the structure of inmates' groups.

The subjects are 552 inmates of 5 prisons of Class YA, 503 inmates of 5 prisons of Class YB and 520 inmates of 5 prisons of Class B. Sociometric test was conducted on groups of inmates of 3 prisons, each of the prisons being selected from among institutions under survey as an institution supposed to be typical of each Class. In addition, CIES was carried out on treatment staffs of 6 prisons (about 100 staffs a prison), 2 prisons being chosen out of each Class.

CIES is composed of 9 sub-scales, that is, "Involvement," "Support," "Expressiveness" (These 3 are included in the area of Relationship), "Autonomy," "Practical Orientation," "Personal Problem Orientation" (in the area of Treatment Program), "Order and Organization," "Clarity" and "Staff Control" (in the area of System Maintenance). Standardization of CIES was made on Class Y prisons (whose prisoners are young adults under 26 years of age).

III. Findings

(1) It was found by principal component analysis of the results of CIES of inmates and staffs that they responded to CIES in the almost same framework of estimation. Comparison of CIES profiles between inmates and staffs showed that their profiles were similar as a whole, tending to make differences in the sub-scales of "Autonomy," "Personal Problem Orientation" and "Staff Control."

It could be said by comparison between institutional climates of Class YB prisons and those of Class YA prisons that the former were centered around discipline and intended for Personal Problem Orientation to inmates, while the latter were therapeutic and educational. Class B was roughly between Class YA and Class YB, exactly near to Class YB regarding institutional climates.

(2) The characteristics of inmates' groups of Class YB prisons found by analysis of the results of sociometric test were as follows: Although inmates' groups of Class YB prisons had fairly strong group cohesion and close emotional relations between inmates, they did not grow into big groups, were weak in psychological ties in group activities such as work and lacked strong leaders who linked inmates to formal activities.

It was also found by analysis of correlation between the results of CIES and sociometric test conducted at 2 prisons of Class Y that there was significant correlation between the results of the sub-scales of CIES, namely, "Involvement," "Clarity," "Expressiveness" and "Staff Control" and those of sociometric test, and that such correlation was based on the characteristics of groups of Class YB inmates mentioned above.

(3) The following was shown by analysis of correlation between institutional climates and treatment on the basis of the results of CIES and information on treatment: The core of institutional life such as living guidance, prison work and treatment affecting the morale of inmates, especially living guidance was closely connected with institutional climates in which inmates participated positively in the flow of treatment.

As to correlation between institutional climates and attitudes of inmates, it was found that two aspects of their attitudes whether they had bright hopes in the future or not and hey accepted positively formal influences or not were closely connected with institutional climates at large.
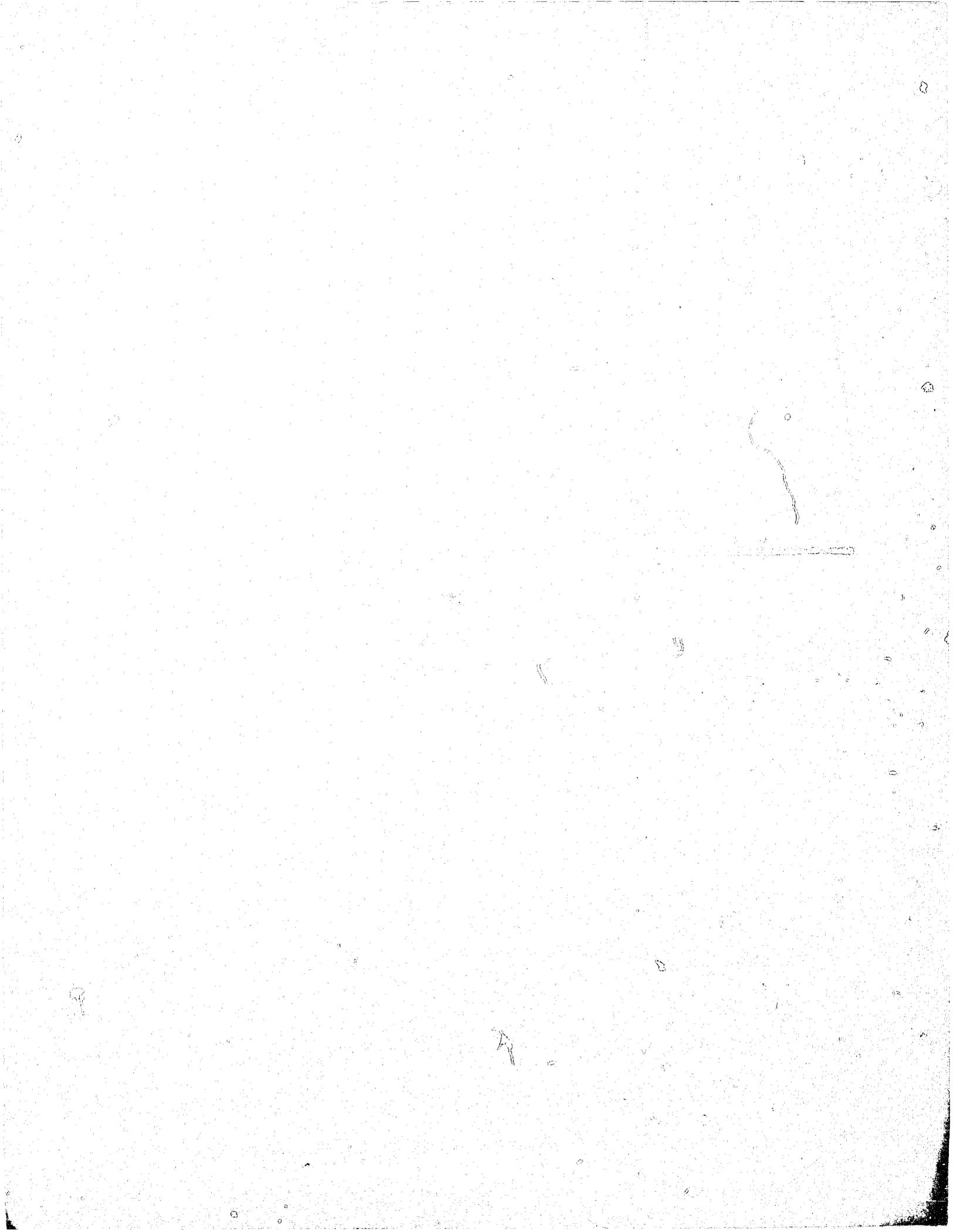
Lastly, by analyzing correlation between the structure of inmates' groups and several aspects of treatment, it was pointed out that strong group cohesiveness of Class YB inmates was not related with good results in living attitudes, work achievements and observing disciplinary rules, because small sub-groups closed to outside stood in a row within the groups and had strong negative attitudes toward formal influences.

IV. Future Perspective

On the basis of findings mentioned above, we make the following proposals as important measures for the treatment of Class YB prisoners:
(1) To establish means of bringing institutional climates of Class YB prisons near to therapeutic ones of Class YA prisons;
(2) To lay stress on lessening differences of institutional climates between staffs and inmates;
(3) To attach importance to direction in which strong group cohesion is connected with reformation of inmates;
(4) To integrate small sub-groups emotionally related into big purposeful ones;
(5) To find and train leaders with mature character and full insight who can integrate the groups at large;
(6) To harmonize their functions between groups organized by the institutional authorities and psychological ones formed by inmates;
(7) To put emphasis on living guidance as a core method of treatment.

Our next task is to make clear interrelation between individual factors and environmental factors influencing treatment, and to find treatment types of inmates.

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