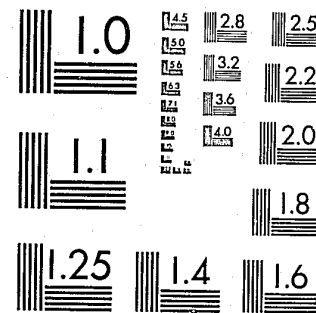


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SEPTEMBER 1982

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS

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Subscriptions may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at an annual rate of \$9.00 (domestic) and \$11.25 (foreign). Single copies are available at \$3.50 (domestic) and \$4.40 (foreign).

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Administrative Office of the United States Courts, Washington, D.C. 20544

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Washington, D.C. 20402

Federal Probation

A JOURNAL OF CORRECTIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

Published by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts

VOLUME XXXXVI

SEPTEMBER 1982

NUMBER 3

OCT 27 1982

This Issue in Brief ACQUISITIONS

Homicides Related to Drug Trafficking.—Homicides as a result of business disputes in the distribution of illegal drugs appears as a new subtype of homicide in the United States, report authors Heffernan, Martin, and Romano. In this exploratory study of 50 homicides in one police precinct in New York City noted for its high level of drug dealing, 42 percent were found to be "drug-related." When compared with non-drug-related homicides in the same precinct, the "drug-related" more often involved firearms and younger, male victims.

Management Theory Z: Implications for Correctional Survival Management.—Increased workload and decreased budgets are realities facing correctional management during the remainder of the 1980's, asserts Dr. William G. Archambeault of Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge. This means that fewer employees must be motivated to produce more and higher quality services. Faced with a similar dilemma, American business and industry have "discovered" Theory Z management and have demonstrated its pragmatic value. This article analyzes the utility of Theory Z in correctional organizations and outlines the steps necessary to implement this approach.

Making Criminals Pay: A Plan for Restitution by Sentencing Commissions.—Attorney Frederic R. Kellogg writes that the recent controversy over the insanity defense has focused public doubt over the criminal justice system. It highlights the need not for further tinkering but for wholesale reform. This recent proposal would classify offenses according to harm and enforce restitution in every case. It would sweep away the entire uncoordinated panoply of postconviction proceedings and replace them with a well-staffed sentencing commission of experienced trial judges whose assignment would be to assess the harm done by the of-

fender and collect judgment to repay the victim and the state.

Information Processing in a Probation Office: The Southern District of Georgia Experience.—Chief Probation Officer Jerry P. Morgan believes there is a place for word/information processing in the probation office. In establishing a system in the Southern District of Georgia, local sentence comparison became the first project followed by

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Class of '63

Career Patterns of Federal Prison Correctional Officers Who Entered Service During 1963*

BY LOREN KARACKI

Research Analyst, Federal Prison System

AT THE Federal Prison System's 50th Anniversary Celebration in May of 1980, both Sherm Day and Richard McGee paid tribute to the "career service" which characterizes the operation of the Federal Prison System with respect to staff.¹ McGee referred to correctional staff as the "most important single ingredient of successful prison management," while Day, for his part, identified the two critical components of career correctional staff—those who advance and those who stay. Concerning those who advance, Day said:

The fact that people are able to move laterally and upwardly in the Bureau is unique. No one is restricted from being an administrator in the Bureau of Prisons. Any person, regardless of previous education or speciality, can better his/her career within the Bureau of Prisons. Perhaps the Bureau epitomizes the Lincoln syndrome—that anybody can start at the entry level and rise to director.

In contrast, there also are those staff who work "in the institution at the line level—people who decided to remain at their local institution, occupying positions of senior officers, caseworkers, teachers, foremen and a variety of other titles." They are, in the estimation of Day, "the real heroes of the Federal Prison System."

This report will examine a segment of Federal Prison System staff in terms of their careers in corrections. Specifically, it will provide career information on correctional officers who joined the Federal Prison System in 1963 and were still employed in prison service as of June 30, 1980. The experience of this group will then be related to the present situation regarding new correctional staff.

First Year Experience

During 1963, 200 individuals joined the Federal Prison System, or Bureau of Prisons as it was

known then, as correctional officers. They were part of an original group of 249 who had passed the then required Civil Service written entrance examination and were contacted by mail about possible employment. Of the 249, 12 did not respond to the letter of inquiry, 24 failed the oral interview, and 13 failed the physical examination, leaving the 200 who actually entered prison service.

The position of correctional officer was advertised at the GS-6 level and paid \$5,035 to start. It was not a glamorous job. As one source described it:

The work includes maintaining custody of Federal prisoners, supervising their conduct and maintaining order and discipline. Incumbent works 8-hour shifts, night or day rotation, climbing stairs, operating devices for locking doors, carries firearms on outer perimeter security duty, has long hours of walking and standing, and must be alert and vigilant. In case of emergency or escape of prisoners, incumbent is required to work longer than 8 hour shifts on manhunts, fighting fires, quelling riots, etc.

Despite the often monotonous, sometimes frightening nature of the work, those who started as correctional officers in 1963 were drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds. A few had completed college but most were high school graduates or at best had a year or two of college. Several already worked in corrections at the state or local level or were involved in police work. Others were bartenders, factory workers or truck drivers. Some were clerks or held other white collar jobs and still others were farmers or railroad workers. A few were unemployed and a fair number were retired military.

In some cases becoming a correctional officer represented "an opportunity to pursue a career in corrections," but for the majority it was more simply a job and they were attracted to it because of the "security" it provided, the promise of "steady work" or, it would seem, the prestige of working for the Federal Government. The pay, \$5,035 a year, while not much by today's standards, was more than what most of those hired

*This article is an abbreviated version of a research report under the same title prepared for Federal Prison System circulation. Copies of the report are available from the author, U.S. Penitentiary, Marion, Illinois 62959, or through the Office of Research, Federal Prison System, 320 First Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20534. The conclusions presented here are those of the author and do not necessarily represent official Federal Prison System policy.

¹Richard A. McGee, "Careers Versus Jobs," and Sherman R. Day, "People Make a Difference," *FEDERAL PROBATION*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (1980), pp. 48-50 and 40-44.

were making and thus was added incentive for joining the Federal Prison System.

During the probationary first year, 70 of the 200 correctional officers who started during 1963 left the service, for a 1-year turnover rate of 35 percent. Fifteen took other jobs, 10 reported family problems, 23 were dismissed for unsatisfactory job performance and 22 left for "other" reasons such as failure to pass the character investigation or financial considerations. Compared to those who successfully completed the probationary year, those who left tended to be older, less educated and more likely to be female. The average age of those who left was 38.1 years as opposed to 32.8 years for those who stayed while 10 of the 15 individuals who had less than a 12th grade education left as did 5 of the 6 females.

Active Duty Employees

As of June 30, 1980, 72 or over 55 percent (55.4 percent) of the 130 correctional officers who completed their probationary year were still with the Federal Prison System. Sixty-five had uninterrupted service time while seven had left prison service for varying periods of time ranging from less than 1 year to over 5 years. They had spent 1,214.75 years of service with the Federal Prison Service or an average of 16.87 years per person.

Among the 58 individuals who had left Federal Prison System service after their probationary year, 17 resigned or transferred to other Federal agencies, 4 voluntarily retired, 10 retired on disability, 1 died, 2 were removed for cause, and 24 were "unknown." Most resignations or transfers occurred prior to 1973, indicating that by the time study group members had some 10 years service, career commitments were very strong. If those who retired voluntarily (including one deferred retirement) or on disability are added together along with the one death to the 72 who were still with the Federal Prison System as of June 30, 1980, there are at least 88 individuals who have been or are likely to be with the Federal Prison System to career completion. The net result, therefore, is that of the 200 officers recruited during 1963, some two-thirds (65 percent) successfully completed their probationary year and of these, some two-thirds (67.7 percent) completed or are likely to complete careers with the Federal Prison System.

Those still employed through June 30, 1980, had received 302 permanent promotions or an average of 4.2 promotions per person. This was partially offset by only 14 change to lower grade actions, all of which were voluntary moves and in almost

every instance in the interest of long-term career advancement. Twenty-eight of the 72 had never moved out of the 007 correctional service series while 44 had—15 into such career consistent positions as unit manager, case manager and personnel officer, and 29 in career divergent positions such as in food service, mechanical service, and business office. This shift into other departments by custodial staff reflects the many avenues for advancement available to correctional staff and is considered one of the keys to maintaining the career service concept. The net effect, in the case of the present study group, is that out of 200 individuals originally recruited for correctional officer positions, only 31 remained in these posts as of June 30, 1981.

The average grade for those in GS-level positions as of June 30, 1980, was 10.7 while those who had moved into WS-level positions had an average grade of 10.6. Average salary was \$25,153 or almost five times their starting salary in 1963. Ten of the 72 were presently wardens or were rated as potential wardens while another 10 were considered to be potential associate wardens.

The 72 study group members had transferred a total of 169 times of which 26 were at employee request and expense. They had received 101 Quality Step Increase Awards, 24 Sustained Superior Performance Awards and 22 Special Act Awards. In addition, 74 cash awards for suggestions had been presented to individuals in this group.

During their first 5 years of service, study group members were promoted at an annual rate of 0.25 or an average of one promotion during every 4 years. During the second 5 years the rate was 0.26 and during the third 5-year period the rate again was 0.26. The final time period, covering some 2 years to June 30, 1980, showed a decline to 0.17 or an average of less than one promotion every 5 years. The transfer rates during these same time periods were 0.06, 0.09, 0.19 and 0.09.

Locals and Movers

A common contention in the Federal Prison System is that one cannot advance his/her career without transferring. In order to consider this proposition, study group members were divided into two categories: "locals" and "movers." To be categorized as a "local," an individual had to meet one of the following conditions regarding transfer:

- (1) He has never transferred to another location with the Federal Prison System.
- (2) He started at an institution away from his home community and the only transfer in his

career was at *his request and expense* to his home community (e.g.—an individual from Leavenworth starts at Lompoc and 18 months later pays for his transfer to Leavenworth where he now remains).

- (3) The only transfer in his career was a *forced* transfer necessitated by the closing of the institution where he started (e.g.—National Training School in Washington, D.C., and Chillicothe, Ohio).
- (4) The individual was so located that he could transfer from one Federal Prison System duty station to another without any actual physical move on his part (e.g., Lewisburg and Allenwood Camp and some FPS institutions and nearby Community Treatment Centers or Staff Training Centers).

By this definition, 32 study group members were found to be "locals" while "movers," who were defined simply as anyone not falling into the "locals" category, numbered 40.

When the two groups were compared, it was found that "movers" had transferred an average of 4.8 times each during their careers while "locals" had transferred an average of 0.5 times. It was also found that "movers" generally tended to be younger, better educated individuals than was the case with "locals." Their average age when hired was 28.0 years or 5½ years less than the 33.5 years average for "locals." In the case of education, 32.5 percent of the "movers" had some college or better as opposed to 12.5 percent for the "locals" group. The average GS-level for "movers" was 11.9 and average salary was \$27,746 as of June 30, 1980, both well above the 8.8 average GS-level and \$22,007 salary average for "locals." Nine out of ten "movers" were GS-11's or above and 70 percent had left the 007 correctional series as opposed to 50 percent among "locals."

The "movers" group was further subdivided into 12 "executive level movers" (GS-13's and above) and 28 other "movers." The analysis of these two groups indicated that there are at least two promotional tracks which appear to apply to "movers." There is, first of all, a fast track which typically takes effect during the second 5 years of service and results in fairly rapid promotional advancement thereafter. And there is a slow track which generally comes into play during 10-15 years service and may be hardly more than a one time spurt. The end result is that as of June 30, 1980, those in the fast track—"executive level movers"—had an average GS-level of 13.8 as op-

posed to 11.1 for those in the slow track, had an average salary of \$35,013 compared to a figure of \$24,632 for slow track "movers" and had transferred an average of 5.3 times as against 3.2 times among slow track "movers."

In contrast to "movers," "locals" tended to have more limited career advancement and were likely to have remained in custodial positions or, if they had moved out, to have gone into career divergent positions such as in mechanical service or business office. Of the 16 "locals" who left the 007 correctional series, all had gone into career divergent positions and none into career consistent positions. As of June 30, 1980, 84 percent of the "locals" still in GS-level positions were GS-9's or lower and their average within-grade step level was 8.3 (out of a possible 10), suggesting that for most, their careers had peaked. Indeed, the promotion rate for "locals" shows a steady decline over time from 0.23 per year during the first 5 years of service to 0.20 during the second 5 years to 0.14 during the third 5 years and finally 0.11 during the 2 plus years to June 30, 1980. In contrast, the promotion rate for "movers" has gone from 0.26 per year to 0.31 and 0.36 before declining during the final period to 0.21.

While "locals" have not enjoyed the same career advancement as "movers," their service to the Federal Prison System has not gone without recognition. During their careers, they have received an average of 1.9 cash awards for Quality Step Increases, Sustained Superior Performances, and Special Acts which is close to the 2.2 average for "movers." In addition, "locals" have averaged 1.3 cash suggestion awards or above the 0.8 average for "movers." Notwithstanding this recognition, the comparison between "locals" and "movers" provides ample indication of the need to transfer to achieve promotional advancement in the Federal Prison System.

It would appear that it is this mixture of "movers" and "locals" or those who advance and those who stay as Day described them who form the core of the Federal Prison System career service and who give character and strength to its operations. Both groups have their contribution to make and both do so in their own way.

Current Comparisons

This article has presented a historical picture of what it has meant for some individuals to work for the Federal Prison System. It is a picture which has largely been colored by the conditions of the times and by the personnel policies and practices

of the Federal Prison System which prevailed in the early 1960's through the 1970's. The question which remains to be answered is if the findings from this study have relevance to the current situation in the Federal Prison System.

We can begin to consider this question by recognizing the many changes which have occurred since the early 1960's both in society as a whole and in the Federal Prison System. Economic conditions have improved and there has been an increase in education including a proliferation of degree programs in criminology and corrections and closely related fields. Correctional service has gained in respectability and increasingly has come to be viewed as a profession rather than simply a place to find steady employment.

Written examinations are no longer required for the job of correctional officer and emphasis has been placed on hiring minority candidates including females while persons age 35 or older have been eliminated from hiring consideration. Many of those hired now have undergraduate and even graduate degrees and it has been possible to close the caseworker roster to the general public in order to emphasize promotion from within. There are now new positions of counselor and unit manager and new institutions and new programs have been established along with regionalization.

Given these many changes, one would expect that new correctional officer recruits of the 1980's would substantially differ from the recruits of the 1960's and, indeed, this is the case. An analysis of correctional officers with less than 1 year service as of May 1981 shows that 9.1 percent were female and average age when hired was 29.0 years. In addition, 28.5 percent had a college degree or better and another 39.6 percent had attended college. Information on race for new hires was not available but it is known that 28 percent of all correctional staff were minority members and it is assumed that this figure would be higher among new officers.

Information on race was not available on the 130 recruits in 1963 who completed their probationary year but we were aware of one black and one hispanic in the study group, and it is unlikely that there were more than one or two other minority group members. In the case of sex, there was one female among the 130 and average age when hired was 32.8 years. Regarding education, 5.4 percent were college graduates and another 18.5 percent had some college. It is evident from these figures that, compared to 1963 recruits, new correctional officers are much more likely to be younger, better educated, female and a minority group member.

If we confine our attention to age and education, it also appears that new recruits, on average, more closely approximate the characteristics of "movers" as identified in this study than "locals." Thus, the average age for new recruits was 29.0, while it was 28.0 among "movers" and 33.5 among "locals." In the case of education, 68.1 percent of new recruits had some college or better as opposed to 32.5 percent among "movers" and 12.5 percent among "locals" in the 1963 study group.

The figures on age and education suggest that present hiring practices for correctional officers have resulted in recruiting individuals who historically have demonstrated the greatest career advancement within the Federal Prison System. Conversely, proportionately fewer individuals are being recruited who, based upon age and education, have evidenced rather stable careers with limited promotional advancement and institutional mobility. In other words, new recruits, as predicted by age and education, appear more "skewed" toward "movers" and away from the more "balanced mixture" of "movers" and "locals" found among the 1963 recruits. This contention, if true, may have important implications for the Federal Prison System.

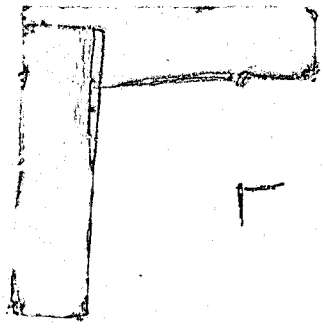
The main concern is that it appears that this shift in recruitment pattern toward a younger, better educated group comes at a time when transfer and promotional opportunities may be decreasing. Recent partial or total hiring and promotional freezes provide dramatic demonstration of decreased opportunities for career advancement. And it is likely that the Federal Prison System will continue under budgetary pressure which will limit promotional opportunities in the future.

This suggests that the Federal Prison System may have reached a possible watershed with respect to correctional staff. On the one hand, the study results indicate that historically the Federal Prison System has been comprised of a mixture of career service "locals" and "movers," each with a contribution to make to the total work effort. On the other hand, information on present hires suggests that the Federal Prison System has moved substantially in the direction of recruiting proportionately more individuals who, based upon age and education, appear to fall into the "movers" category whose careers are marked by transfers and promotions up the line. Yet this comes at a time when the indication is that both promotional and transfer opportunities are decreasing.

This would seem to have potentially serious implications for such matters as staff morale and

turnover as staff realize that advancement opportunities are not more limited and that competition for promotion is greater than ever. These concerns need to be closely monitored and a need

would seem to exist for innovative personnel programs to address the problems identified if the Federal Prison System is to continue to experience the success of the "career service" concept.



END