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What Shall We Do With Our Convicts

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der. The decision of Murashev to kill Lavrishev was approved. Only a few dissented.

When Murashev was put into the house of preliminary imprisonment, a group of his fellow students assembled at a special meeting and discussed the case. Some of the pupils (girls) stood for the death sentence, the others (boys), for the immediate release of Murashev. As a result of this meeting a decision was made: *Murashev must be released.*

The teachers of the school in their resolution demanded that Murashev should be sentenced to capital punishment. In their resolution they said: "Murashev is an incorrigible rough. It may not be his fault. It may be his inheritance. The whole district of Anjero was known in the past to be the place where all criminals were exiled."

The State's Attorney freed Murashev from prison and the case was dropped, because he came to the conclusion that the murder was a *result of deplorable school conditions!* The official magazine remarks: *The State's Attorney has shown in this case a better pedagogical understanding than the teachers of the school.*

In conclusion, Murashev's psychology is very peculiar, and, no doubt, unhealthy. The medical investigation, however, revealed that he was psychically healthy. As a matter of fact, his verses written before and after the murder (in prison) are of high quality, although those in which he confesses his murder is disgusting to a normally thinking person. He says in it:

"Oh, why have I killed him!
I didn't kill him for nothing,
I have killed him for cause!

All have sentenced him to die,
Although he was a good man.
But since I have committed the
crime,

I shall be sentenced to death.
You, judge, sentence me as you
like,

And I, it may be, shall die very
soon.

But if my life will be spared
I shall work and through work
I shall erase my crime."

(In Russian it is written in good
rhyme.)

True enough, this is an exceptional case even in Soviet Russia. But *one* case of the sort being known to the public in Russia is illuminating to the outside world.

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR CONVICTS?

JEROME DOWD

The riot in the Stateville Penitentiary in Illinois, resulting in property damage to the amount of \$300,000.00, was a continuation of a series of riots which have broken out in state and federal prisons within the past two years.

Having studied penal institutions in the United States and in European countries, I have become convinced that our penal system is in need of a thorough reorganization from the county jail to the penitentiary.

First of all I would recommend the total abolition of all state and federal penitentiaries and the substitution for them of rural colonies outside of the United States, preferably in one of our islands of the West Indies. And I would model each of these colonies after the

present penal colony on the Palawan Island of the Philippines. There the climate is mild, the soil rich, and one can make a living with very little exertion. The convicts on this island are turned loose to take care of themselves. If they do not work for each other or for themselves they do not eat. They encounter no dark cages, no armed guards, bloodhounds, nor tear bombs. Proper officials are there to show the new arrival how to find employment or to clear land for cultivation, how to build his house and market his crop.

And what has been the result of this kind of treatment? Have the inmates organized to murder the officials, burn the buildings and make their escape? On the contrary, some of them, at least, have sent for their wives and children, preferring to remain on the island where they have learned to work and to save. Many of them remain on the island after their term expires.

The cost of transporting convicts to these colonies would be a mere bagatelle compared to the enormous outlay for the maintenance of our penitentiaries.

Next, I would abolish all so-called reformatories and substitute for them industrial schools under the control of the educational department of the state. The present-day reformatories are hardly anything more than duplicates of the penitentiary. They are run by political appointees and would be more properly called schools for crime than reformatories. The inmates are generally young people who have committed crimes of less degree than felony, and a large proportion of them are susceptible of reformation through education. They need to go to a school of the

kind that non-criminals attend, conducted by educators and not politicians, and equipped and conducted along the lines of an ordinary college or university.

I have visited such a school at Red Hill, England. Here I saw a variety of buildings of a pleasing style of architecture, beautiful groves, lawns, shrubs and flowers. There were no walls or fences enclosing the one hundred or more acres of ground, and there were no armed guards. There was nothing visible to suggest a penal institution. A stranger might easily have mistaken the plant for a British College. The boys were out on the lawn, in their white trousers, playing cricket. They were lodged in home-like cottages, corresponding somewhat to our American College fraternities. They were not marched lock step to a common mess-hall, but had freedom like a college student, giving a part of their time to class work, a part to learning a trade and a part to various forms of recreation. Boys were in this school for every offense from petty theft to murder. And what has been the result of this kind of treatment? The records show that ninety percent of the boys make good, which is perhaps as satisfactory a record as the average college or university can boast of.

We have in nearly every state penal institutions called Industrial Schools, designed for boys and girls who commit crime, or fall into evil habits, under the age of sixteen. Some of these are excellent, especially those for girls, and some are very bad, especially those for boys. If a school is to be anything more than a name it must be under educational and not under political control.

I would do away with all county