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Current Notes

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CURRENT NOTES

V. A. Leonard, Editor.

Wisconsin Institute for Probation and Parole Officers—Wisconsin's fifth annual Institute for Probation and Parole Officers was held on the University campus at Madison on June 12-15, under joint sponsorship of the University of Wisconsin and State Bureau of Probation and Parole. The registration of 122 included members of the State Bureau, county probation officers, institution casework personnel, University staff members and several out-of-state people interested in correctional work. Appearing on the program as speakers or discussion leaders were numerous people nationally recognized in correctional circles. They included Joseph D. Lohman, Chairman, Division of Correction of the State of Illinois, Frank T. Flynn, University of Chicago, John Burke, Warden, Wisconsin State Prison, Marshall B. Clinard and Howard B. Gill of the Sociology Department, University of Wisconsin, Dr. Fritz Kant, Professor of Neuropsychiatry, University of Wisconsin, Dr. Hertha Tarrasch, Psychiatrist, and Perry Old of the editorial staff of the *Milwaukee Journal*.

The general theme of the Institute—Treatment Aspects of Probation and Parole—was descriptive of the general content of the program. The keynote address stressed the need or obligation to provide specific substance and content to probation and parole beyond that of supervision and routine requirements. The remainder of the Institute dealt with the development of treatment, with emphasis on techniques and methods of treatment. The morning sessions were devoted to an analysis of probation and parole records taken from the files of the Bureau. These analyses and subsequent discussions highlighted some of the casework problems encountered and suggested methods of approach for treating them. The afternoon sessions considered treatment techniques of group therapy and individual psychotherapy, and trends in probation and parole in their relationship to the entire correctional process.

The Wisconsin Bureau of Probation and Parole has been undergoing reorganization and growth. Personnel standards have been raised, additional casework staff has resulted in a workable case load average of fifty cases, research has been provided for, and great emphasis has been placed on staff training. Developments in Wisconsin indicate that healthy strides are being made toward a professional state-wide probation and parole system.—From A. C. Gillett, Instructor in Correctional Sociology, University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Gault Appointed Honorary Member of the Penal Institute of the Argentine—The following communication was addressed to Dr. Robert H. Gault, Editor of this JOURNAL under date of July 10, 1950, from Roberto Pettinato, in the Ministry of Justice, and Director General *de Institutos Penales de la Nacion*, Buenos Aires: "Our Institute of Criminology, founded in 1907 by Professor Dr. Jose Ingenieros, has resumed its activities after a certain time during which it functioned as a part of the Institute of Classification created by Act 11833, of Prison Organization and Regime of the Penalty, sanctioned in 1933. The Institute of Criminology is, at present, the purely scientific branch of the General Direction and its activities aim at the progress of criminology through the study and observation of the results of the action of the Institute itself. The Institute wishes to continue the studies initiated by its founder toward perfection in this aspect of the sciences with the seriousness and brilliancy of the earlier days. For that reason, and with the purpose

of attaching to it persons who have an outstanding capacity and knowledge of penal sciences, I am happy to appoint you a Member of Honor of the Institute of Criminology."

Rural and Urban Justice in Iowa—The lack of regard for law and order and social solidarity in urban areas is evident from the fact that anarchists, revolutionists and those who attempt to overthrow established order and the government are usually highly mobile people who live in large cities where the social structure is shattered and fragmented in small particles. In contrast to this anarchists, "Bolsheviks" and revolutionary persons are very seldom found in rural or farm areas of a nation. The rural population are the last people in a society to become disloyal to government. In the main, farm people in rural areas feel themselves a part of their community and strongly identified with their fellow neighbors. The greater social solidarity and the identification of self with law and order in a farm area constitutes one of the main reasons for the relatively low crime rate in rural areas. These same factors also play an important part in determining the degree or severity of punishment meted out to criminals. In order to determine the validity of the foregoing principles, the criminal cases in the 99 counties of Iowa were examined for a period of three years. It was found that the amount of criminal litigation in a community and the severity of punishment for offenses varies according to the degree of social solidarity of the population. The rates of criminal cases in court tends to increase with the size and density of the population in the counties of Iowa. In criminal cases involving crimes against persons, against morality and against the family, penalties are more severe in the rural counties than in the large urban counties of Iowa. The degree of difference in severity varies according to the offense with crimes against persons and the family being three times greater in the rural areas than in the urban counties and crimes against morality two times greater in the former than in the latter. In crimes involving property, the penalty tends to increase with the size of the county. In cases involving intoxication and motor vehicles, the differences in penalty are very slight. *Why are rates of criminal litigation high and the severity of penalty lower in the city areas than in the rural areas?* Conclusions of the study indicate that in general, social conditions in the city tend to break society up into small occupational and social groups, shattering standards of conduct and reducing uniformity in code of behavior. As a population becomes more urbanized and as cities become larger the penalty or the punishment attached to crimes becomes "softer" and less severe because social controls are weaker. City people are highly mobile persons with few loyalties to place, group or to institutions.

Another factor closely related to the severity of the penalty is the amount of protection which offenders and their associates may obtain in the city. In rural areas there is little or less opportunity to "bargain" for the penalty in criminal cases. In addition, the city is a place where organized crime and gambling pressure groups operate whereas they are almost absent in rural areas. The fact that penalties involving crimes against property are usually higher in the city counties may be due in part to the fact that a city is virtually a great "stock pile" of property. Wealth in movable property is a basic factor to city life and it naturally follows that penalties are more severe to the degree that property is held in high regard. The greater rates of criminal cases in the cities and the lesser penalties for crimes is not due to the fact that city and country people are innately any different. The differences lie in

their mode of life and their relationship to other people. Rural life is less sophisticated than city life, but its crimes are few and its punishments severe.—From an article in *The Iowa Sheriff*, January 1950, by Professor Walter A. Lunden, Iowa State College. James Phipps, a senior student in Iowa State College, assisted in the statistical tabulations for the study.

Traffic in Dangerous Drugs During 1949—The illicit drug traffic in the United States indicates that sources of supply, such as Iran, India, Mexico, Turkey, France, Italy, China, Hong Kong and Singapore were active during 1949. Another source of supply was Thailand, whose soft metal tubes of Monopoly opium were seized on at least one occasion. Raw opium seizures decreased slightly in the Atlantic coast area. Iran led the field as the source of supply of the greatest quantities of raw opium, followed by India, Turkey, Mexico and China. According to information received from reliable sources, the cities of Shanghai, Rangoon, Calcutta, Singapore and Hong Kong and the countries of Thailand and Mexico are centers of narcotic activities where opium may be obtained with very little difficulty. Marseille appeared to have been the source of supply of many raw opium and hashish seizures. Takrouri apparently came from North African and Near Eastern ports, bang from Indian ports, dagga from South and West African ports, and marihuana from Mexico and South American ports. The opium poppy is cultivated illicitly in several Mexican states, the principal one being the State of Sonora, adjacent to the border. It has been evident for several years that raw opium sticks may be purchased with ease by seamen at almost any of the Persian Gulf ports.

The quantity of prepared opium was slightly larger than that seized in 1948, and the bulk of the prepared opium came from Mexico. It was of poor quality and often grossly adulterated. Customs seizures of morphine were few and the quantities small. They consisted most of morphine tartrate at Atlantic coast ports, and morphine hydrochloride, poorly bleached, at Mexican border ports. In the internal traffic, morphine was encountered in the form of sulfate and tartrate. Seizures of heroin were about equal to those made in 1948. The traffic in heroin was scattered throughout the United States. In 1948 there was a great increase in the cocaine traffic, most of the drug arriving from Peru. This situation continued into 1949 and there were many heavy seizures of cocaine, one amounting to over 18 pounds. Diligent efforts to reach men at the top of the smuggling organizations bore fruit when a conspiracy case was developed against Eduardo Balarezo and six of his associates. Numerous other smugglers and wholesale dealers have been arrested, including more than 50 people who have been involved in cases disclosing major conspiracies to smuggle and distribute cocaine. These smuggling rings have been found to be highly organized and well directed. Some have been found to have made very close studies of the risks and the possibilities. The marihuana traffic along the Mexican border is serious. The total quantity of marihuana seized in 1949 is practically equal to seizures made in 1948, which was a record year. The heavy flow of marihuana in commercial lots from Mexico is unabated.—*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs for the Year Ended December 31, 1949*, Bureau of Narcotics, U. S. Treasury Department, Washington, D. C.

New Wisconsin Director of Corrections—Announcement has been received concerning the appointment of Mr. Russell G. Oswald as Director of Correc-

tions in the Wisconsin State Department of Public Welfare. He was appointed by Mr. John W. Tramburg, Director of the Department, effective July 1, 1950, to succeed Mr. Paul D. Yount, who had been Acting Director of Corrections since October 1, 1949. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Oswald had been for two years Supervisor of the Bureau of Probation and Parole in the Division of Corrections. A career worker in public welfare, he had previously been District Supervisor for the Division of Public Assistance and a county welfare director before becoming parole supervisor. Mr. Oswald is 42 years old, and is married. He will continue to act as supervisor of the probation and parole bureau until the position is filled by civil service processes. Collateral to the appointment of Mr. Oswald, the announcement is made that the Wisconsin Parole Board has been put on a civil service basis with the appointment of two members under the merit system. They are Quentin K. Ferm, 41, who had been a field agent in probation and parole, and B. O. Odegard, 48, formerly an administrative assistant to the director of the department. Mr. Oswald as Director of Corrections will be chairman of the three-man board.—*Communication from* Will C. Hyde, Director of Public Relations, Wisconsin State Department of Public Welfare.

The Child Welfare Boards of Sweden—There is no Juvenile Court in Sweden. When the United States, followed by England and most other European states, established special Courts for children and young people to save them from the evil taint of the ordinary criminal courts, the Scandinavian countries, starting with Norway in 1896, sought the same end by different means. They refused any longer to recognize youthful delinquency as "crime" and raised the legal age of criminal responsibility to 15 years. They ousted the *judiciary from this field* and established Child Welfare Boards to deal with delinquent children and young people, and with those in need of guardianship or protection from material, moral or educational neglect. Broadly speaking, this administrative body, the Child Welfare Board, performs the functions of the Juvenile Court and the Children's Committee in England. In addition, it deals with offenders between 15 and 18 (and in some cases up to 21) who though triable in the ordinary Courts may be referred either before or after trial to the Child Welfare Board. The Public Prosecutor often seeks the opinion of the appropriate Child Welfare Board before deciding whether to make a criminal charge against a youth or girl of 15-18 or to remit the case to the Board.

The Child Welfare Board is appointed for a two-year period by the municipal or communal council. There is a Board in every village as well as in every town and city, for the village commune (500-10,000 inhabitants) has been the historic unit of democratic local government in Sweden for a thousand years. Each Board consists of at least five members and must include one woman, one member of the local Poor Relief Committee, a local clergyman and a teacher, and if available, a doctor and a lawyer. The other members are men and women appointed as being interested in child welfare and capable of dealing with youth problems. The chairman in the larger municipalities, receives a salary but his post is not a full time one. In the great cities, Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmo, and perhaps in smaller towns, local government is run on party lines and the balance of parties is reflected in the political leanings of the members of the Board. A council with a Social Democrat majority will probably appoint a Social Democrat Chairman of the Child Welfare Board and a Conservative Vice-Chairman. The system is open to the obvious criticism that this job should be unaffected by party divisions.

Against this it was claimed by both a Social Democrat Chairman and a Conservative Vice-Chairman that they were completely oblivious of their political differences. In support of this view, it is suspected that appointments to the Child Welfare Boards are about as political as magisterial appointments in England and that politics affect their work as little as they affect that of a decent bench of magistrates. In the small village communities, the Boards are handicapped by the otherwise fortunate circumstances that they only deal with a difficult case at very long intervals and therefore, lack experience.

The meetings of the Board are frequently held at 6:00 o'clock in the evening and last for about 2½ or 3 hours. They are conducted in a business-like manner. The procedure is that of a Committee, not of a Tribunal. The members, officials and social workers sit at a long table in a dignified and pleasant Board Room. The majority of cases are dealt with on the strength of information and reports given by the social workers, the complete case papers being in the hands of the chairman. In cases of dispute or difficulty or complexity, or on the demand of parents or children, there is a personal interview. There are obvious criticisms which come to an English mind and they have been frequently expressed. The first is that the Swedish child suspected of stealing or other offenses, and his parents, are at the mercy of the administration and its social workers. There is no Court before which he can deny his guilt or his parents their neglect or incompetence. It is a system which stresses welfare at the expense of individual liberty. There is substance in the criticism but not as much in practice as in theory. The Swedish Boards are required to use every method of persuasion, admonition and supervision at home, change of employment, apprenticeship or placing in foster home, before taking the drastic step of sending a boy or girl away to a Welfare School. Moreover the fact that Welfare Schools provide only 1,100 places in a country with a population of 6,600,000 is indication that the Child Welfare Boards do not lightly tear young people away from their homes.

A criticism of the day-to-day work of the Boards is the extent to which the cases are dealt with on paper without any appearance by child or parent. However, both parents and children may insist on access to the Board. What actually happens in Sweden when a policeman sees Tommy (or Gustav) stealing or has reason to think that he has stolen? Can he do anything, and where does he take him? The answer is that he can stop Gustav and take him into custody. But the custody is that of the Child Welfare Board. The Board's officer must be told at once and the child may not be interviewed or asked questions by the police except in the presence of a C. W. B. officer. The child must be taken forthwith to the Board officer or an institution of the Board, never to the Police Station. The initiative in the case of delinquent, as well as of maladjusted, neglected, ill-treated children, vagrant and idle youth and problem families, is taken by the Board's Officers. The Scandinavians "have cut juvenile delinquency clean out of the penal system." It is held that the procedure has served to concentrate official and public interest on the educational and social problems connected with the treatment of young offenders. Swedish experts believe their way is good but they are on the alert to criticize and improve it.—*From an article by Cicely M. Craven, The Howard Journal, Vol. VIII, No. 1, 1949-50, The Howard League for Penal Reform, London.*

Movement of Prisoners in State and Federal Penal and Correctional Institutions—At the end of 1948 there were 157,470 prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and reformatories, according to figures released by James V. Bennett,

Director, Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice. This represents an increase of 4,906 prisoners, or 3.2 per cent, over the 152,564 prisoners confined in these institutions at the end of 1947. In connection with his release of this information, Mr. Bennett commented as follows:

“The nine years from the beginning of 1940 through 1948 have witnessed wide changes both in the volume of commitments to State and Federal prisons and reformatories and in the number of prisoners confined in these institutions. These changes seem for the most part to have been caused indirectly by this nation’s participation in World War II. At the end of 1939, almost two years before Pearl Harbor, the population of State and Federal penal and correctional institutions stood at 182,641. During the succeeding five years, the prisoner population declined steadily to a low point for the 9 year period of 134,236. This figure, reached at the end of 1944, represented a decrease of 48,405 or 26.5 per cent. Several factors contributed to the decline. Stepped-up defense preparations began in 1940 and meant improved economic conditions and thus better job opportunities for those who might otherwise have become first offenders as well as for the thousands of persons released from prisons and reformatories. Contributing also was the shift of approximately eleven million persons from the civilian population to the armed forces. Most of these were young adults and thus in the age group most likely to violate laws.

The foregoing figures do not, of course, include persons committed to the correctional institutions operated by the armed services. Thus the war period was an abnormal one with respect to the factors which determine the size of the regular prison population. The increase in prisoners after 1945, as military personnel returned to civilian life, seems to have constituted merely a readjustment to a more normal situation. It is to be noted that the 157,470 prisoners present December 31, 1948 was 25,171 less than the 182,641 confined in State and Federal prisons and reformatories at the end of 1939. This decrease of 13.8 per cent is significant when it is considered that from December 31, 1939 to December 31, 1948, the civilian population of the country is estimated to have increased by more than ten per cent.—James V. Bennett, Director, Bureau of Prisons, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories*, May 25, 1950, Number 1.
