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E.P.E.A.

EUROPEAN PRISON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Editorial

In her article on Estonia, Tessa West describes finding "orderly, humane **islands** of educational provision" within a disorganised system. Benedikte Uttenthal says in her piece on Scottish Prisons, that "the **sea** is closing around much of the work" achieved by Strategic Planning groups.

I think it is no accident that these images of "**islands**" and the "**sea**" appear when people are writing about prisons. But it does suggest a certain feeling of isolation and helplessness. Prison educators often feel they are working in isolation, in the middle of a system which rarely changes to suit their needs. It is often like swimming against the current.

All the more reason then for the EPEA to exist, to offer the support and encouragement which prison teachers may not find elsewhere.

While prison educators may often feel alone on this "island", wondering if they are getting through to anybody, if they are making an impact, then it is all the more heartening to see prisoners like Clive Richards (see p.19), using and responding to the education service in prison, by not only achieving a B.A. but also doing a study on the whole area of prison education.

Perhaps the island is not so remote after all.

Catherine Coakley, Cork Prison.

WANTED!

ARTICLES FOR THE EPEA NEWSLETTER

Are you running a programme you think people might like to know about? Would you like to liaise with prison educators in other countries? Do you want to respond to any articles already published in the EPEA NEWSLETTER? Would you like to publicise an event or a new publication? Yes? Well what are you waiting for? Send your submission to the Newsletter and you can be sure that people all over the world will be reading it.

EPEA NEWSLETTER,
EDUCATION UNIT,
CORK PRISON,
RATHMORE ROAD,
CORK, IRELAND.

U.S. PRISON DIARY

Pam Bedford is spending 12 months as vocational education manager in a correctional facility in Colorado, USA, on a Fulbright exchange.

**February 1....*
New moon, new month. Make writing the monthly report a priority: program developments, student successes, staff training, but most of all the figures that demonstrate efficiency. 1 / class sizes vary from 8-23, with several vocational classes running at above capacity; with more space and equipment we could have more students, but how many is efficient AND effective? Work on purchase orders for computers and CNC lathes, which need written 4-part justification for the many, many approval committees.

**February 2....*
Big meeting to consider how to squeeze more activities into the vocational education space. Seems that ever since the prison was opened in 1896, "constant remodelling" has been the norm.

**February 3....*
Attend meeting at Central Office (one way trip takes 2 hours, 100 miles over two 10,500 foot mountain passes). Division of Education was established 18 months ago and matrix management is being constantly refined. Buena Vista has a strong tradition

of education and the Warden is very supportive, so it is relatively easy to work for two bosses. Winter storm dumps 8" of snow after our return.

**February 4....*
Inside the double fence, strung with razor wire, selected prisoners drive snow ploughs to clear pathways across the yard; teams sweep the snow throughout the day. Staff meeting to work on our 4 year strategic plan: key objectives are continuously updating the curricula and equipment of the 12 vocational courses to meet the needs of employers. Hope for adequate funding. Work on monthly report. Study curriculum for a new vocational program, janitorial maintenance; find out how it's scheduled in other prisons, as the students will clean the facility as On-the-Job-Training. Find my way through the state's teacher 'credentialing' process. Another system almost understood.

Education staff are working on a marketing plan, hoping to communicate better with the prisoners about the advantages of education.

**February 5....*
On their way into work, 9 staff slipped over in the parking lot. Usually it is cleared by the time the day shift, including the teachers, arrive at 07.20. (If you can call 07.20 "day!"). For once, perhaps, the inmate work crew may have been reluctant to go out in the dark at -20'C to chip at the ice.

**February 9....*
A welding apprentice has completed his course - 4 years of training in the same vocational program. This continuity must be the positive side of sentencing policy, for "life" here means life, and 20 years before parole can be considered. He and his teacher have really had to work at working together over this time, with a lot of support from his case manager to stick with it. We are all proud of their achievement. There are 8 places for apprentices in 8 of the vocational education programs; we tell applicants we will expect the same commitment from them. Send off monthly report. Celebrate!

**February 10....*
Administrative staff meeting: all the managers share information and work together on facility problems. Educators's views count, for education is the major "employer" of inmates. 40% of the 840 inmates in the main part of the facility are enrolled in day

time education classes and 160 are attending evening classes to work towards a 2 year college degree.

***February 11....**

Education staff are working on a marketing plan, hoping to communicate better with the prisoners about the advantages of education. Prisoners who go to work or to classes reduce the part of their sentence spent inside by 10 days "earned time" each month; despite this, there are still 150 men who prefer to watch TV all night (7" black and white sets in their cells) and laze through the day. How can we get through to these guys?

Today, 7 students have been moved before they've finished their courses; with 800 men and women in the county jails, using every bedspace is a priority. We send off their education records, hope they'll carry on their courses. Feel disappointed.

***February 12....**

Train to use a revolver along with 10 (volunteer) teachers and many officers. Second time I've handled a gun. Disturbing how much fun it is.....

***February 15....**

The US of A is on holiday (President's Day) but life goes on as usual inside. Directive from Central Office that inmates can buy tennis shoes only through the canteen. They will all have the same pattern on the soles, so the heels need not be notched. Escapees are tracked through the snow or the desert sand (summer is the more popular time to "rabbit").

***February 16....**

An inmate student drops in to the office, anxious to make a decision about whether he should finish his degree here or move to another facility to do a required mental health program; how would each affect his chances of getting parole? Which will help him most?

Educators' views count, for education is the major "employer" of inmates...

***February 18....**

Review the paperwork showing our compliance with American Correctional Association (ACA) standards - clear guidelines on what educational provision should be available, student access, staffing etc. If we work to ACA standards there is less chance of prisoners suing the state.

***February 19....**

Joint education staff meeting to consider the whys and hows of integrating academic and vocational education. This is the big thrust of SCANS 2000, the current initiative.

***February 22....**

Hear that despite 10-20% budget cuts the state's maximum security prison WILL open. It will house 504 inmates and death row (capital punishment is still on the statute book, but

not used since 1967).

***February 23....**

Alarm bells rang at 08.30. Emergency Alert Drill. The inmates were locked down and staff accounted for. Teachers put on black uniforms and work in search teams, or clear trash, or make 1400 brown bag lunches to keep the place going. We feel part of the facility staff and, in general, are happy to do whatever's necessary.

***February 25....**

Spend the evening in a housing unit. Canteen night, so it's busy. Inmates can spend up to \$50 a week, buy cans of coke, microwave foods and real cigarettes. One prisoner comments on my strange accent.

"I'm from England," I explain. He talks some more, thinks a bit, and expresses admiration; "You must have worked REALLY hard to learn to talk English as well as you do!" Am reminded of the immense need for education and consider making human geography compulsory!

***February 26....**

We have 22 days off each year. Savour one of them.

*Pam Bedford,
Buena Vista
Correctional Facility,
P.O. Box 2017,
Buena Vista, Colorado
81211-2017, USA.*

(Pam Bedford was Education Officer at HMP Stanford Hill, Kent, England, before going to work in Colorado, for one year on a Fulbright exchange. She is the previous editor of the EPEA Newsletter.)

PRISONS AS A PRIVATE CONCERN

Britain imprisons a higher proportion of its population than other countries in Western Europe. But the U.S. rate of incarceration is three times higher than Britain's. Over the past decade, it has more than doubled to become the world's highest rate. To deal with the new inmates, the American criminal justice system is in the middle of a huge expansion programme. Accommodation for 17,000 new prison places is being built at a cost of more than \$10 billion.

Facing rising costs and a teeming prison population, the Home Office signed a contract with the security firm Group 4 to run Britain's first private jail: the Wolds remand prison in Humberside, which opened earlier this year. The contract for running the second privatised prison is expected to be placed soon, and may go to a British consortium which built Wolds and in which the Correction Corporation of America - the biggest in the U.S. prison business - has a one-third interest.

In the U.S. some 20,000 prison places are managed by corporate interests. Sixteen states have contracts with private companies to build and operate prisons in the U.S. About one-tenth of all the prison space under construction will be run by private contractors.

The Tennessee-based Correction Corporation of America was founded in 1983 when it began managing a 63-bed juvenile facility in Tennessee. Today, the

company operates more than 7,000 beds in six states and Australia, and the company expects revenues of \$80 million this year.

Another company riding the wave of incarceration is the Florida-based Wackenhut. It is best known for its international private investigation and security services, but now the company operates 4,500 prison beds in five states and in Australia.

In the U.S.
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i n t e r e s t s .

Texas, with more people behind bars than Britain, offers a good example of America's prison growth and the trend toward privatisation. Although Texas has less than one-third of the population of Britain, it has some 57,000 prisoners (England and Wales have about 45,000). The state is constructing space for 37,000 new inmates. Key parts of the Texas prison system have been turned over to private operators. Wackenhut operates a 500-bed chemical-dependency treatment unit near Austin.

Carl Robins, an ex-convict who now works for

the Texas Employment Commission - trying to find employment for prisoners on parole - spent 27 years behind bars. He believes that drug treatment facilities like the one being run by Wackenhut are the way forward, pointing out that an estimated 80 per cent of Texas inmates are drug and/or alcohol abusers. "Being a dope fiend is a full-time job," says Robins. "When these guys get out of jail, you have to replace that drug habit with something else. Otherwise they're going to go back to their old habits."

Regan and Bush's ongoing War on Drugs campaign has had little success in reducing the drug supply. Black leaders in Baltimore and other cities argue that the policy has only achieved a drastic reduction in the supply of free, able-bodied males. Nationwide, drug-related arrests have increased by 100 per cent, and the number of blacks arrested has risen by far more. The story is the same in Texas, where nearly half the inmates are black. Yet blacks make up only about 12 per cent of the Texas population.

The number imprisoned in Texas for drug-related offences has more than doubled over the past decade. In 1981, one in 12 were serving time for drug-related offences. In 1991, the ratio was one in five.

Robins argues that it is cheaper to offer drug treatment programmes to prisoners than to have them return to prison. At an

average cost of \$20,000 a year per inmate, America spends less than Britain on imprisoning each criminal, but half the American inmates released are back in prison within five years. The problem of prison overcrowding has led to the suggestion that criminals be given shorter sentences or community service. But some prosecutors oppose the idea. As one of them put it: "Restitution doesn't work. Community service doesn't work. Nothing works." Conservatives among prosecutors argue that the only alternative is bigger prisons. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics in Washington, 2.35 per cent of the US adult population is either in jail, on probation or on parole.

Critics of the "Nothing Works" policy, including Robins, say that it is cheaper to send an American teenager to university than to prison.

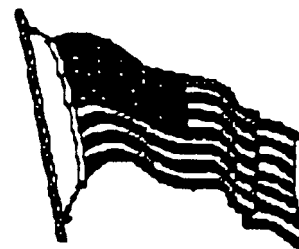
But with the prison budget growing at 13 per cent a year, the American penal system will only be able to grow as long as taxpayers are willing to pay for it. When the costs of parole and probation are added, the U.S. spends more on criminals than it does on the unemployed.

Critics of the "Nothing Works" policy, including Robins, say that it is cheaper to send an American teenager to university than to prison. But Robins sees no cheap, easy solutions. He believes drug treatment, job training and education classes should be mandatory for all prisoners. "Everybody is afraid to make a bold move. We have to get into more programmes that prevent people from going to prison in the first place." Sighing, Robins pauses. Then he delivers a thought that could have come from the Home Office: "We have to take some action. We don't have a choice."

Robert Bryce,
Journalist,
Austin, Texas.

(This article first appeared in THE GUARDIAN newspaper (England) on 28/10/1992, and is reproduced here by permission of the author. Robert Bryce is a freelance journalist with a special interest in matters related to prisons.)

WORK EXCHANGE



Mark Kauffman is a corrections educator in Colorado, USA. He is looking for a teacher exchange via the Fulbright Exchange scheme. Anyone interested in finding out more about this should contact him at the following address:

*Mark Kauffman,
Academic Teacher,
Skyline
Correctional
Centre,
PO BOX. 800,
Canon City,
Colorado, 81215.
USA*

EDUCATION IN A PRIVATE PRISON

Education provision at Wolds Remand Prison is sub-contracted to Humberside Adult Education Service. The provision negotiated with Group 4 has three elements - Education Guidance, Open Learning and a programme of weekly courses. The Contract is managed by a full time Education Co-Ordinator and courses are offered over a 52 week year.

Whilst the Contract was negotiated for the opening of the Prison, the ways of working have evolved and experience to date predicts that change will be the norm as new strategies continue to be tried.

The Adult Education Service of Humberside is the third largest of the seven colleges in the country in terms of both budget and student activity. Uniquely the Service owns few buildings and no large headquarters. Rather it operates and offers courses from premises hired in both rural and inner urban areas essentially those areas other colleges fail to reach. The majority of courses are taught by sessionally paid tutors who typically have wide experience of matters both educational, commercial and beyond. But these tutors share an enthusiasm to work with adults whatever their background, skills or ambitions. All tutors share sound interpersonal skills enabling them to work with adult returners and those students unsure of their ability to successfully complete a course - essentially the client group

in prisons.

The provision at Wolds Remand prison must be responsive to inmates needs; many may be imprisoned at Wolds for a short time. Inmates first contact with the Education Department is an education guidance interview. Usually within three days of arrival an educational guidance worker will seek out new prisoners. By explaining what is on offer at the Prison, inmates are encouraged to talk about their educational and vocational training needs. If the consequence of imprisonment has been to end a college course the education guidance worker will contact the college tutor to have work sent in and so maintain continuity. If prisoners ask for information about courses in their home area this information will be sought.

The Open Learning provision is managed by a half-time permanently contracted colleague. The aim is to pick up those wishing to continue or start an academic course. Open Learning resource materials are based on GCSE or GCE 'A' Level packs which students work through with tutor support. This area of provision is growing in popularity and scope as inmates are able to work on their units with periodic meetings with tutors to check progress.

The course provision is offered over eight sessions per week with a range of adult literacy, numeracy, information technology, job club activities, crafts,

pottery, guitar, stress and relaxation courses. Whilst prisoners may be present for short periods of time their level of stress may be high. The opportunity to become absorbed in a subject will be relaxing and hopefully enlightening.

Accreditation is an important motivator and as many courses as possible offer a route to qualifications. English and mathematics are accredited by Pitman, RSA and Open University whilst information technology is accredited with competence based worksheets, which offer three levels for word processing, spreadsheets, databases and desktop publishing. With tutor support, students can proceed at their own pace to achieve skill and understanding which is transferable. On a four week cycle certified one day courses are offered for first aid and food hygiene. The emphasis is on building confidence and confirming achievement.

The aim is to both respond to needs and offer new opportunities.

RUSSELL JOAD,
Education Co-Ordinator,
Wolds Remand Prison,
North Humberside,
England.

(Russell Joad is a Senior Manager within Humberside Adult Education Service. Currently he is seconded to manage the education contract at Wolds Remand Prison, which is England's first private prison, operated by Group 4 Securitas.)

- NEW LAMPS FOR OLD -

COMPETITIVE TENDERING AND PRISON EDUCATION

(My brief in this article is to forecast the effects that the exercise might have in the longer term on the quality of the service and on the present staff.)

Buying a New Lamp

Define the quality and size of your old lamp. Go down to the bazaar and invite lamp-sellers to offer the same lamp. Compare the costs and select the seller who offers the same, or better, features at the lowest price. Take your lamp home and assess its light.

This is how we wisely handle our purchases and how the government hopes to handle our money to purchase services on our behalf. The logic of applying the principles of purchasing a consumer item to purchasing a client-based service offered within a complex organisation needs careful examination. The principle of competitive tendering will not make the services purchased inevitably worse, nor inevitably better.

The lamp in this case is not Aladdin's, but involves the staffing and associated administrative support costs of the education service offered in prisons in England and Wales. At the moment the providers, mainly Colleges of Further Education, are reimbursed by the Home Office for the salaries and associated costs of their teaching staff in prisons, plus 5%. From this tiny mark-up they provide administrative services such as payroll handling and professional support. There is no significant profit; providers see it as a service to the community.

Further Education Colleges become independent in April 1993. This change prompted the prison service to seek competitive tenders for a defined amount of teaching hours and associated support. No costs of buildings, equipment or materials are involved. The only money is for staff wages and associated costs. This is the only area where savings can be achieved and a profit made.

Options

How to provide the same service at the same, or lower, cost and secure a worthwhile profit? The bazaar merchants all know that the only possibilities are:-

1. Reduce staff and increase teaching load.
2. Replace full-time staff with part-time staff.
3. Cut the pay of staff.
4. Reduce the professional support to staff.

Option 1 assumes that the existing staffing numbers are too high. This has surely been verified and rectified by the current review systems. It would alter the current nationally accepted level of class contact time and implies that prisoners can be taught with less preparation.

Option 2 is based on the current situation in the U.K. where part time staff are cheaper for each teaching hour delivered. There is a quality

implication for education as, owing to the nature of our students and their situation, continuity of contact offered by full-time staff both within the classroom and out of it as a significant support. I shall return to this point later.

Option 3 assumes that staff of the same quality are available for lower rates of pay. Experience shows this to be untrue. Suitably qualified staff in certain subject areas are in short supply. Reduced pay and conditions are unlikely to generate more.

Option 4. Prisons are complex organisations and within this setting education departments attempt to fulfil a wide range of needs. Staff need high levels of support as they are generally isolated from mainstream educational establishments.

Our Situation

Swaleside prison holds 500 long-term adult males and is remotely sited with two other prisons on an island in the Thames Estuary. There is a teaching staff of 6.5 full-time and 12 part-time teachers employed by the local college. Full time education for 25 hours each week is provided to just over 100 prisoners by these college staff. (Seven instructors employed directly by the Prison Service provide

vocational courses for a further 78 prisoners. Their posts are not at risk.) Professional oversight of all the college staff and four of the instructors is managed by an Education Officer and a deputy who teaches half time. Since September 1992, this group of college staff have, in common with most prison educators in England and Wales, suffered great uncertainty and have been given notice that their jobs are redundant. They have watched helplessly while a range of organisations have offered to do their work. Documents issued by the prison service made it clear that the existing staff did not have to be employed by the successful bidder. At eight prisons in my area, the parent linked college to which we belong denied our right to join the rest of the academic staff when the college becomes independent in April 1993. Attempts by the local education authority, our current employers, to limit it's liabilities has caused a five month delay in resolving the situation. Without an employer, without job security, with a series of decision deadlines arriving but being deferred, I need hardly describe the low morale, the stress and the lack of job satisfaction. This looks likely to continue for twelve or possibly sixteen months.

The few contracts which have been let, show a trend towards less management cover and lower rates of pay. Teaching staff are employed on worse conditions of service, in some cases being denied full academic status in the employing organisation. Experienced full-time staff currently in post have not been offered

jobs. Two prisons in Essex have lost all the full-time teaching staff. I leave you to judge if the quality of the service offered will remain the same!

Staff Continuity

Management costs should always be balanced against teaching costs but many of the tenderers, unaware of the special needs of prisoner students which arise simply from the disempowering effects of secure regimes, have cut the management input back to the levels of the 1960's. Specifications for tenders were generated in many cases by non-practitioners.

Provision of a range of learning events without surrounding support is the provision of a range of isolated opportunities for failure...

Students in prisons generally require a highly supportive environment which continually monitors and encourages their personal and academic progress. This can only be provided by a high degree of staff continuity and support beyond the classroom. Provision of a range of learning events without surrounding support is the provision of a range of isolated opportunities for failure.

Minimal management will result in isolated hourly-paid staff rarely meeting

and sharing experiences with colleagues. These experiences can be developmental in a general sense and can illuminate the needs of a shared student. Students are therefore unlikely to receive co-ordinated support from a group of teachers. Isolated establishments are not able to recruit hourly paid staff in certain subjects: they do not exist. For this reason such prisons tend to have several full-time staff.

The present staff, if offered work by the new employer, will no doubt carry on. They have financial responsibilities. Others will drift away, it will no longer be a career opportunity. Trained staff will not be attracted if only part-time work is available. Shortly European legislation will eliminate the financial benefits of employing part-time staff; they will become, on a hourly basis, as expensive as full time staff. By then the expertise of the current full timers will be scattered.

The saddest outcome of all is that the future students will probably not realise that they are not being offered the best possible service. They will attribute any failure of progress to themselves. The chance for that illuminating moment of attitudinal change which learning can bring about will be lessened. Their magic lamp of Education will contain no genie.

BERNARD NEAL,
Education Department,
HM Prison Swaleside,
Eastchurch, Kent,
England.

CENTRE de RESSOURCES MULTIMEDIA

Multimedia Resource Centre at Strasbourg Prison, France

The following is part of a letter from M. Jean Holt, of the Multimedia Resource Centre (CRM), Strasbourg Prison in France. If you would like to give him any information or to receive any information from him, please contact M. Holt direct at the address given below.

OBJET: demande de renseignements concernant l'utilisation de l'audiovisuel et des nouvelles technologies dans les établissements penitentiaires d'Europe.

Responsable du Centre de Ressources Multimedia de la Maison d'Arret de Strasbourg, j'aimerais entrer en contact avec des structures de ce type afin d'echanger des experiences des savoir-faire. Conseille par la Direction des Affaires Juridiques, Division des Problemes Criminels du Conseil de l'Europe, je serais interesse par l'eventuelle existence d'organisations equivalents dans d'autres prisons d'Europe et par des renseignements sur leur lieu d'implantation et sur leur mode de fonctionnement.

Le Centre de Ressources Multimedia de notre etablissement poursuit un double objectif, a savoir informer et offrir un complement au dispositif de formation deja existant. En quelques mots, voici une presentation de ce qui y est propose:

1. A travers un circuit interieur de television, des documents de creation video realises par les detenus eux-memes permettent de toucher le detenu a l'interieur de sa cellule pour lui apporter des informations pratiques sur la vie a la Maison d'Arret, sur la vie de la cite, ou d'aborder sujets qui interessent la population carcerale.

2. Une partie des cellules sont reliees a un reseau telematique interne, a partir duquel les detenus peuvent pratiquer des exercices auto-corriges en diverses matieres, dont le francais, les mathematiques, la physique, l'anglais etc.

3. Dans deux salles, a proximite de zones d'enseignement, ont ete installes des micro-ordinateurs, a partir desquels les detenus peuvent acceder a des logiciels d'autoevaluation ou d'auto-formation, en lien avec les formateurs et enseignants de la Maison d'Arret de Strasbourg.....

JEAN HOLT writes:

AIM: information on the use of audio visual material and new technology in European penal establishments.

I am responsible for the Multimedia Resource Centre (CRM) at Strasbourg prison. I would like to make contact with similar centres to exchange ideas. I would be interested to know if there are similar organisations in other prisons in Europe and how they function.

The CRM in our prison has a double objective - to give information and compliment the existing regime. In short it operates as follows:

1. In-house television which shows videos made by prisoners themselves and allows them to watch in their cells news and information about life in jail, life in the city or different subjects of interest to the prison population.
2. Some cells have a television network link which allows the prisoners to correct work in a number of different subjects such as french, maths, physics, english etc.
3. In two rooms, near the Education Unit, there are computers which are linked into the Education Unit system.

For further information contact:

M. Jean Holt,
Centre de Ressources
Multimedia,
Maison d'Arret de
Strasbourg,
6, rue Engelmann,
BP 25
67035 STRASBOURG,
France

*(English text supplied by
Anne Cameron, HM Prison, Perth,
Scotland)*

CREATIVE EDUCATION IN THE PENITENTIARY INSTITUTE AT GRAVE

Besides being a visual artist, I am also a part-time crea-consultant at the Penitentiary Institution (PI) in Grave. At the individual supervision department (IBA), I work independently with prisoners in fixed units.

After the Academy of Arts, I followed an in-service course in educational theory and teaching methods in Arnhem. To me artistry is a means of communication which can be entirely unconditioned, provided you want it to be. At any time, my personal emotions, surprise, indignation and frustration can be shaped into any piece of art I have chosen, and may lead to personal imagination.

To me as an artist/crea-consultant, it is very important to get this process across to the prisoners. To create a basis for creativity which the prisoners experience to be genuine, and which stimulates them to reflect their own imagination. Therefore, when I supervise it is my task to stimulate this personal imagination/creativity as much as possible.

The IBA is a department where prisoners 'are doing time' who cannot or can hardly maintain themselves within a 'regular' regime. They may have a distructive influence on it, or even get

lost in it. A strong individualising approach would be very helpful to stabilise or improve conditions for these prisoners, which requires specific facilities for special care. Behavioural disturbances hold a prominent place among these prisoners, and one has to tread carefully in approaching them. You have to try to win their confidence. This is a difficult problem, because often these prisoners are very vulnerable and (want to) isolate themselves. In the past many of the prisoners at the IBA were often the butt of teasing and ridicule by fellow-prisoners. They often lack self-confidence. One can approach this problem in a favourable way by means of crea.

"I can't do it" is an expression frequently heard. At crea you can show that lots of things can be done. Technique is only a means to imagine views or emotions and, consequently, not always required.

The most important thing is to 'get them going' and acquaint them with various materials/techniques in an enquiring and experimental way. For example, what can be done, what cannot be done, how to combine different materials, what do I eventually want to go on with?

At the PI Oosterhoek, just like 'outside', there are all kinds of laws and rules which people have to adhere to. I especially try to get across to them that within their works they can forget about these laws and rules. They can feel free about it and all by themselves determine what something should and may look like without any form of pedantry in their immediate environment. When there is 'Freedom', there is understanding. Without it there is only restriction/limitation.

"I can't do it", is an expression frequently heard.

I want to stimulate one's individual way of working as much as possible, so that one's personal character (own handwriting) is maintained in the works. And especially to learn not to be afraid but to dare to do a lot. Only with a lot of guts and by doing things will you be able to improve yourself. Consequently, it is often just a matter of imposing a certain mentality. If it sparks their interest, their self-

confidence will grow and a way to express themselves originates, together with a very useful means of passing time for people who often have difficulty in expressing themselves verbally. Of course, we should not look upon the value of the prisoners' expressions as a therapy, but just as a creative step from the constriction of a prison, and some relief from the (often) isolating way these people live. The work often has a great power of expression and genuine artistic value with its specific characteristics, views, conduct, possibilities and limitations. This makes

every single human being unique, the way he/she really is.

The IBA-prisoners are often less capable of giving shape to their own leisure-time activities and, consequently, are more dependent on the supply of creative training-possibilities. They will also need help in setting up a creative hobby and/or training.

I personally think that Grave has chosen the right form, i.e. that visual artists work independently with IBA prisoners. In my opinion, especially this professional help with the creative power of expression of these works by IBA

prisoners starts to play a determining and irreplaceable role as regards self respect, self-assurance and individualisation.

The most important thing is that the prisoners at the IBA department will be able to express themselves in entire freedom (symbolic) and determine their own process, and will be given time, means and space at their disposal.

HANS PRUYN
Crea-Consultant, Grave,
The Netherlands

(Hans Pruyt works part time in the prison in Grave. As well as being a qualified teacher, he is a very successful painter. He has four exhibitions each year.)



"When there is 'Freedom', there is understanding. Without it there is only restriction, limitation..."

(Left: Art work from a Dutch prison)

TALLINN, ESTONIA, MAY 26-29, 1992

Tessa West attended the International Conference on Prison Education in Tallinn, Estonia, May 1992.

The aim of this conference was to invite specialists to Estonia to discuss common problems and encourage prison educators in the Baltic countries, the Ukraine and Russia, because the re-created Independent Republic is keen to integrate its prison education into the European system.

While prison education cannot be high on the agenda of reform, it is clear that the Estonians are determined to capitalise on and create opportunities that will extend this knowledge and understanding in any area.

The conference was attended by prison teachers, heads of prison education departments, prison administrators and prison managers. They came from the following countries:

Estonia	20
Lithuania	20
Latvia	1
Sweden	11
Finland	8
Luxembourg	1
Norway	1
Netherlands	2
USA	1
Denmark	1
UK	2

Not surprisingly, I was the only delegate from a private prison.

We stayed at a conference centre about 40kms from Tallinn, the capital city. English was the working language, and simultaneous translation was provided. This was predominantly Russian/English, as not all the Baltic delegates were fluent in Estonian. About 30% of the 1.5 million population are Russians, with an even higher percentage in Tallinn, and particularly amongst prison employees many of whom are immigrants from the former USSR.

Our programme ran from 09.00 - 16.00 hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and on the Friday we visited two prisons before the final plenary session.

My own purposes for visiting Estonia were more than just wishing to contribute to and learn about prison education. I was keen to further my own knowledge of contemporary penal practice now that my own work responsibilities are across a wider spectrum of prison management. I have already made study visits to Hungary, Scandinavia and the Netherlands, and each time I travel I need to learn about the society which generates the prisoners and understand the climate in which the prisons operate before I can evaluate precisely what they are doing.

Thus, as well as participating in the conference sessions and presenting my own paper "Prison as an Educational

Environment", I conducted my own informal research by walking and cycling around the city, talking to plenty of people and constantly reflecting on my own work in prisons, and on the Wolds in particular.

I was pleased that my recent move from the public to the private sector caused interest rather than criticism from the international network I have been part of for about 3 years.

The Estonian situation made me think that our problems are relatively insignificant...

ESTONIAN PRISONS

The conference started with information about Estonian prisons from 4 speakers: the Head of the Prison Department, Mr Valeri Kravets, the Head specialist of the Ministry of Justice, Ande Tanav, and two practitioners working in prisons.

These speakers presented papers which gave insight into the background not only of prisons and their current difficulties, but of the wider perspectives of a re-emerging independent nation facing huge political,

economic, financial and social problems.

The picture they painted was, on the whole, pessimistic, negative, despondent and even defeatist. They are faced with what seems like insurmountable difficulties over lack of resources, over-large prisons, a growing number of riots, hostage takings and major disorders, an unresolved legal situation and little prospect of a better future.

How any prison education functioned within such a situation seemed hard to imagine, but our visits to a women's and to a men's prison on the final day of the conference revealed orderly, humane little islands of educational provision operating within the disorganised framework of the whole prison and indeed Estonia in general.

We saw small flats where prisoners could live with their families within the prison from time to time.....

I do not intend to describe the educational provision in detail, other than to stress that it was mainly vocational (despite the fact that unemployment is now a feature of Estonian life), but also aimed at upper secondary school level. It seems that a higher majority of children in Estonia actually complete their schooling than they do

in England, so there is less need for adult basic education.

I was more interested to know how education fitted into the whole prison, and how the whole prison ran. It was immediately clear that it was very difficult to manage Estonian prisons. Paid, industrial work had, until recently, been a co-ordinating and purposeful factor in prison life. Its absence now had not been filled and all the conference delegates with experience of prison management commented on the lack of organisation and on the opportunities that existed for the easy growth of prisoner-led sub-cultures. That is not to say that we did not see evidence of good practice too. We saw, for example, small flats where prisoners could live with their families within the prison from time to time. Despite the large (20 bed) dormitories, we found they had a warm atmosphere created by well cared for pot plants, pets and personal belongings. But the prisons were old, with dilapidated buildings, (although one had a building programme underway), and it was hard to see how physical security was maintained. Staff did not have guns but we were told that one prison had had eleven murders the previous year and that two prisoners were not accounted for at all.

Essentially our counterparts in Estonia are trying to run a prison service in a country beset by manifold problems which have not been offset, indeed possibly increased, by recent political change. They felt as if they were in a no-win situation and of

course that feeling is often experienced in England too, despite the fact that we have invested a huge amount of money in prisons.

The Estonian situation made me think that our problems are relatively insignificant, but I still reflected on the key problem of how to turn negativity into positivity, how to create order amongst a group of people who have little experience of order and often resist it, and how we train staff to be pro-active rather than re-active when working with large numbers of prisoners.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SWEDEN, FINLAND AND LUXEMBOURG

I was already conversant with the Swedish method of small scale prisons characterised by high staff-prisoner ratios. These must be very expensive and I am now researching into details of funding, but my positive response to small personal units is that they are by far the best method of housing prisoners. I found myself re-questioning the issue of size.

In the opinions of experienced prison personnel of countries whose policies and practices I value, and whose ideas have already influenced my own work, I reflected on the Wolds.

CONCLUSIONS

In particular, I thought about control. At the Wolds we have started out with huge amounts of positive energy, enthusiasm and determination to create an ethos in which control is founded predominantly on

good staff-prisoner relationships, and an active regime backed by confidence in control and restraint trained staff.

Setting up Wolds has been a period of intense activity. Since receiving our first prisoners that intensity and activity have increased. There is still a vast amount to be done, and sometimes it seems unachievable, but going to Estonia gave me time to reflect, and the opportunity to renew reserves of energy.

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England.

(Tessa West has taught in prisons for over 12 years, most recently as Education Officer at HMP Littlehey. In 1991 she was made a Cropwood Fellow at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge. She is now Inmate Services Manager at Wolds Remand Prison, the UK's first contracted-out prison, where she is responsible for a wide range of activities including education.)

ESTONIAN PRISONS

- * There are 17 prisons in Estonia.
- * The total prison population is 4,000.
- * 50% of the inmates are Estonians, 50% are Russian speaking - (Russians, Belarussians, Ukrainians etc).
- * 20% of the prisoners have the possibility to work.
- * Vocational and general education are available.
- * At present during the transition period, vocational training and development of vocational schools are the most important. After the reforming of the prison system we are going to widen the possibilities for general education and to consider special needs and wishes of inmates.
- * The quality of vocational education should be increased, we must be ready for diverse forms of education; long term and short courses within prisons and outside in the community, creation of motivation for learning and work. A new generation of teachers and instruction in Estonian prisons would be the goal of the future.

MADE KIRSTI, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
TALLINN, ESTONIA.

RECENT EVENTS IN THE SCOTTISH PRISON SERVICE

'CONTROL'

There has probably never been a good time for any prison service. It is not easy to run a dumping ground for society's outcasts, but in the late 1980's after a series of infamous riots, it felt especially difficult in Scotland. In the words of one of its Governors, there was a loss of control: of prisoners, of finance and of direction. 'Control' is very much a prison concept, and one with which educators might feel uncomfortable, but the idea of its loss is very much at the heart of the responses that the Scottish Prison Service made to the frightening and occasionally tragic events between November 1986 and early 1989.

To gain control and direction the Service started formulating policy, but more publically than hitherto, with the publishing of 'Custody and Care' and 'Assessment and Control' in 1988 for open debate in the public arena. There was a feeling that reached even the outlying education units that top managerial forces were mustering under the energetic leadership of the new and quite short serving SPS Director, Peter Mackinlay, in response to events that had been a near disgrace. The SPS Business Plan (de rigueur under our long-serving Conservative government that every organisation should have one of those even if it is not a business) was published in

1989, but the coup d'eclat was the formulation in 1989 of the Strategic Planning exercise which has permeated the Service since then.

'STRATEGIC PLANNING'

And what is it? Strategic Planning is something splendidly symptomatic of our times. Designed by a private firm, Market Initiatives and the SPS Planning Unit, it incorporates concepts and processes that have evolved in the business world, where market forces prevail. The vocabulary is of a boardroom cum production workshop with 'customers', 'products', 'stakeholders', 'performance targets', 'acid tests', 'blockages to delivery' and 'project launches'. Has the SPS taken to manufacturing reformed criminals? Not so, for in this model the criminal is already a responsible customer (see 'Opportunity and Responsibility' SPS May 1990). Strategic Planning is nothing less than the blueprint for the remanufacturing of the Prison Service itself in the image of a thriving business able to compete with the onslaught of private competition and through regained control to prevent a repetition of the events of the late 1980's. It is an exercise that all levels of staff undergo. Small groups of staff, whether the

Director and his group of managers or prison governors, or middle managers and prison officers, spend five intensive days in various hotels throughout Scotland. The Directorate 'mandates' the Governors who in turn mandate groups lower on the hierarchy to work out solutions for various management problems. It sets out to devolve some authority and involve staff directly in solutions to the problems of running a prison service. The whole process has been undergone once and it is planned to repeat it perhaps as much as five times.

And does it work? Well, yes and no. Prisoners are not customers in any real sense - they cannot refuse to 'buy in' to the prison service; there is no commodity, no product; the reality is that prisons contain social tragedies and human problems fraught with complexity. But it cannot be denied that the process of Strategic Planning is exhilarating and that the staff in the planning groups, including myself, feel involved and pleased to be briefly empowered to find and implement, with approval, improvements and solutions.

Nor can it be denied that it is an improvement to consider the prisoner as a customer. The concept implies some kind of dialogue with the prison authorities and the right to

some choice and control of his/her life which previous practice has not affirmed.

DISAPPEARING INITIATIVES

What has interested and saddened me is the fast disappearance of the involvement of all levels and types of staff and the dilution to almost without a trace of many of the plans. This has been a recurring experience of mine in the 13 years I have been associated with prisons. There have always been some good initiatives from people with vision and energy, not as massive as the reorganisation since the riots and the threat of privatisation, but nevertheless constructive ideas would come along. They would then quickly disappear maintaining the status quo as the ocean beneath a passing ship. And now again the sea is closing around much of the work that was done at prison level since the first round of the Strategic Planning groups.

WEAKNESSES

This tendency is no doubt universal in organisations, but it is particularly pronounced in prisons. And this is where I believe the fundamental weakness of the Strategic Planning model lies. It avoids addressing this issue; in fact, it avoids any direct tackling of human issues, preferring to translate them into economic and production metaphors. This, I am sure, will be seen as the great flaw and folly of the past 15 years when the new Conservatism comes to be more generally evaluated. And, alas, the Prison Service is no more immune to

the disease of the age than health care, education or any other organisation that depends directly upon government funding. So I attach no special blame. But I still continue to be astounded that an organisation which deals with human beings has managed to avoid so consistently and for so long any serious contact with the study of the behaviour of individuals and groups and has also managed to avoid the expert organisations that specialise in supporting institutions to become more aware of their own behaviour and that of their difficult clients, the prisoners themselves.

...the sea is closing around much of the work that was done at prison level since the first round of the Strategic Planning groups.

In the 1950's, a seminal and classic study of institutional neurosis was made by a Scot, Isabel Menzies Lyth, who worked for the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. She formed a 'sociotherapeutic relationship' with a London teaching hospital by their invitation, in which 'the aim was to facilitate desired social change'. She found that the management system had been developed, less to support the primary task of the hospital: caring for the sick and training the nurses, and more to somehow manage and make more

bearable the strong emotions engendered by having to care at close hand for the sick and dying. She demonstrated that these ways of managing, containing or avoiding the strong emotions (such as fear, grief, resentment, frustrated sexual drives etc) through group behaviour usually undermine the primary task, the stated aim and purposes of the organisation. The defensive behaviour is spontaneous, unaware and perhaps most importantly, the product of energies that are more urgent and overwhelming than the interest in the proper aims of the organisation. Typically, the defensive behaviour manifests itself in

(i) rigid, inflexible regimes where responses tend to be according to regulations and not to individual needs of clients;

(ii) rigid staff and client categories, expressed through hierarchies and the wearing of uniforms;

(iii) minimal personal contact between staff and client group;

(iv) lack of acknowledgement and of support systems for the level of stress to which staff are exposed;

(v) strong factional culture, i.e. departments tend to compete rather than to co-operate to fulfil tasks;

(vi) avoidance of change and the undermining of agreed changes, so that new strategies are diluted and the status quo maintained. Hospitals and prisons continue to have a lot in common.

It is far from impossible to tackle these issues. It would be a start simply to acknowledge the existence of

institutional defensive behaviour. It would make sense to include understanding of such behaviour in recruitment and training of staff and in the development of proper support systems for them. In relation to prison education the 'prisoner as customer' model encourages prisons to provide learning and opportunities for personal development across the whole prison regime and indeed, a committee has been formed to work on this issue in Scotland. Rivalry and resistance will need to be met not only as part of the design of educational reform but also as part of the whole organisation of the prison service to facilitate such reforms. In institutions dealing not with products and profits but with human beings, we cannot afford to ignore the study of human behaviour; we cannot afford to ignore the great institutions who research and provide consultancy such as the London Tavistock and the Scottish Institute of Human Relations; we cannot afford to ignore the richness, the potentialities and flaws of human nature.

Management and planning models based on market forces and aimed at greater control are cruelly reductive and themselves indicative of the level of anxiety that prevails in prisons.

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(Benedikte Uttenthal has been Head of Polmount's Education Unit for 11 years. She is a member of SPS's Advisory Group for Learning Opportunities, working on educational provision in Scottish Prisons. She has a private practice as a Gestalt Therapist.)

ON THE PATH TOWARDS WRITING

In the last issue of the EPEA Newsletter Peter Budweg and Marie-Therese Schins described how they and their students from the Fachhochschule Hamburg, set up a reading club in Hahnoferdand Prison, near Hamburg. The following edited excerpt describes how the group moved on from reading to writing.

Were the first afternoons in the reading club so exhausting because all of us felt so insecure? That may be one of the reasons. We had only few publications about activities which could have been a methodological help in this work. We were impressed by the experiences of Bernd Schiffer who, together with linguistics students, had carried out text workshops in a prison in Drieberg/Hessen for more than a year. Furthermore we appreciated the experiences of the author Wilhelm Genazino, who took part in a project of the Deutscher Literaturfonds (German Literature Fund) for half a year and read and discussed with inmates of the prison Oslebshausen near Bremen and talked with them about texts which they had written themselves.

We received some further interesting stimuli from the poetry and writing therapy of Frederic S. Perl's gestalt therapy.

In the beginning the inmates and we were very cautious with regard to procedure and choice of the topics, and we spared each other's feelings, maybe because nobody dared to say

what he really thought and wanted.

We chose texts and short stories which we believed would help us make contact with the participants of the reading club. We did not consider our own literary tastes.

We were all the more delighted when the participants generally reacted positively to such different forms of literature as texts from Antoine Saint-Esupery, Jack London, Hans Christian Anderson, Hans Fallada, Joachim Ringelnatz or old fairy tales, and to readings from books by children's authors. The most important factor seemed to us that contents and topic corresponded to the interests of the inmates.

The students and we, as project coordinators, prepared each reading hour very thoroughly. We hoped to reach the participants with our conversations and to awaken their interest in written material. In the beginning the main topics dealt with problems such as imprisonment, drug addiction, fear of school and poor housing, but we soon realized that the adolescents also wanted to treat completely different subjects. We did not try to evade such feelings as love, jealousy, grief, confidence, longing, being misunderstood and fury.

These hours required most precise arrangements and a sure instinct. During one hour we succeeded in

journeying through literary fantasy to a dream island, by means of a short meditation we did together, and relaxing music played on a Celtic harp. Afterwards we did some paintings and drawings which surprised not only us but also the young men.

Creative Writing as a possible way to a writing culture.

So far texts narrated and read aloud had been the central point of our reading club, but now we tried to approach the inmates with another experience. We made our first attempts to write something ourselves.

Here we faced the problem that some of the participants did not know how to write. In these cases students or other inmates discreetly acted as scribes. As an incentive, we used literary texts or certain keywords. In a further step we took postcards as our material and we made up texts with remarkable emotional density. The students typed each of these texts and at the next meeting gave them to the participants as a present. Sometimes we succeeded in king up a little "book" consisting of the single sheets. The title of this first writing attempt significantly was: "There are no lazy children". It must be an expression of the hurt and disregard these young men had experienced during their school careers.

Such text workshops inspired some men to continue to write in their cells. This resulted for me, as an author, in an individual relationship with the different writing inmates.

One of these relationships led to a literary dialogue between a Sinti and me. He had started to write only one year earlier, after having begun to read in the literacy courses he attended during his imprisonment. His teacher had pointed out a book about his people to him, and that was the incentive for Stefan to want to learn how to read and write.

In the meantime Stefan and I have written a little book, which will be published this summer, for new readers.

Wherever one of the inmates has gained confidence in us, it is ideal if the students or we, as project coordinators, care for him personally. The texts the inmates write in their cells are often very personal and intimate. We usually try therefore to find the time for individual talks after the reading club. In our work we have found a number of approaches which seem promising as a way into writing culture.

We have tried to combine literature with other sensual experiences such as music and painting, in order to reach the participants internally.

Summary

It is quite an adventure to start a reading club in an institution where young persons and adolescents with almost no previous contact to a reading culture are imprisoned.

One has to have a lot of confidence in one's own creativity and to be very sensitive to the psychosocial situation of these persons. A profound knowledge of the social background and the

experiences of the inmates is essential.

What our reading club offers fits in with the institutional educational provision concentrating on literacy, elementary education and vocational training.

"One has to have a lot of confidence in one's own creativity...."

But the reading club neither can nor will replace these efforts at re-education. It is, however, definitely able to help create an environment in which the printed or written word is experienced as something pleasant, even as something meaningful.

The reading club can provide motivation to learn to read, accompany that learning and, as a further component of post-literacy, support the development of the individual personality. With the help of different creative fields of work such as painting, writing something oneself and so on, the reading club is thus an instrument for the creation and design of a literate environment. This literate environment is necessary for successful re-socialization. Only a literate person can participate in significant areas of our society.

Peter Budweg and MarieTherese Schins, Fachhochschule Hamburg.

(Peter Budweg is a Professor in the Department of Educational Social work at Fachhochschule Hamburg, Germany. Marie-Therese Schins is a free lance author and part time teacher at Fachhochschule Hamburg, Germany)

A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON PRISON EDUCATION

Clive Richards, an inmate at HM Prison Long Lartin, has written a study of prison education called "Prison Education: A Frail Bloom in Desperate Need of Care and Attention!" For this study he was awarded a prize by the Prison Reform Trust. In the following article he outlines the important issues which became apparent to him while conducting his research.

When I first set down the parameters of the study that I meant to use in a research project for the Prison Reform Trust's Annual competition, I, perhaps naturally found myself using similar guide-lines to those that any outside Education Department would use to estimate its efficiency and effect.

I looked at exam results; numbers regularly attending classes; absenteeism; drop-outs and unruly behaviour within the Education Department's precincts, etc...

However, I soon discovered that such normal means of measuring a school or college's performance were more often than not out-weighted by the character and needs of the complex system within which it worked.

Security requirements dominated each and every activity. If there were not

enough discipline officers available, then classes were cancelled, the number of pupils allowed into the education department strictly limited or the Department itself would be closed down for the duration!

Even when the requisite number of officers were in attendance, they could be withdrawn at any time to man more 'important' departments (workshops etc...) with the same results.

A minor disturbance on any wing, over say, a cold breakfast or a late mail delivery, can strip a class of half its students without a moments notice.....

At the same time, financial limitations restricted most future planning and hoped for improvements, with available funding being concentrated on basic necessities. To save money, the issue of art materials was limited to actual members of the Art Class, rather than to encourage extra curricular activities, and text books had to be carefully

nurtured, for fear that they could never be replaced.

Sudden, involuntary inmate movements between prisons (Ghostings) can prove a major drain on any class supply of such text books, for inmates faced with such an impromptu movement order have neither the time nor the inclination to worry about education department material when their own few and precious possessions are being thrown into a transit box or property bag by officialdom, whose major consideration is speed rather than the fragility of someone's personal memorabilia.

The often chaotic tendency of moving inmates around within the prison system, either when their security category has been reduced (allowing a move to a less secure environment) or more often, when the Powers-That-Be blow a fuse also does nothing for the efficient running of educational planning.

A minor disturbance on any wing, over say a cold breakfast or a late mail delivery, can strip a class of half its students without a moments notice. A sudden bout of fisticuffs, or worse, might see two or more pupils being 'shipped-out' to less salubrious environs as fast as a Governor can sign a charge sheet.

Education, like every other shade of the prison service spectrum is ever at the whim of the over-riding 'Need to Maintain Discipline' and as such, it comes a very late entrant in any priority

race within the organisation's theory of necessities.

There are those, prison officers, politicians, Governors, Board of Visitors members, et al. who will quite openly state that in their opinion any form of education or training for inmates is a direct dereliction of authority, and an insidious plot by a 'Bunch of Liberal Outsiders' to pamper and indulge convicted felons who would be better 'amused' breaking rocks or digging ditches.!!

There can be no doubt, that for some inmates, education is seen as the 'soft option'. It gets them out of the boredom of wing life, and removes them from the ambit of whatever workshop routines might be set-up in the prison. Others, less interested in information than actual outside contact, can use the very presence of an independent, non-officialdom orientated individual (the teacher), as a social worker/confessor/friend, in a society where such authority-provided departments are more often than not, distrusted.

But to suggest, as some do that all inmates see education and training as such a lazy-day Nirvana is to underestimate the natural instinct of humanity, even the most desperate and degraded of humanity, to find something of value, interest or even amusement in, to them, some new facet of the Human Experience.

Which brings us back to the problem of how to measure the success/failure ratio of prison education. Not only by the standards of outside educational institutions but with the added reality that prison based students have many extra reasons to attend such

classes, some of them almost laudable and within a system that teeters on the precipice of eternal tension, anything that can help ease the mental pressures, and divert the intrinsic boredom of everyday life in valuable experience-based directions.

These after all are full grown adults that are being taught, they may not always have seemed that responsible in their previous activities, but they are still adult students and as such, easily put-off by anyone making the mistake of treating them like naughty children.

Similarly, while many may have severe learning difficulties, and/or have little formal education, for any number of diverse reasons, they need to be encouraged not only to act like the adults they are, but to expect to be treated as such at all times.

Pride, not only in self-identification, but in everyday attitudes and responses to all forms of authority is a fragile possession, and far more easily damaged or destroyed than most outsiders often consider possible.

Within the far from munificent arms of penal authority, inmates are cajoled and confined by a system of institutional disempowerment, that directly attacks the natural decision-making and confidence enhancing reserves of the individual.

Prison education and training, if it is to be successful, must include at least some iota of inmate empowerment, if only in the form of allowing those inmates to adjust the speed and/or direction of their studies to suit their particular needs, abilities and interests.

In this way, the students becomes part of the process of progress, rather than a loose cog within a disjointed and unresponsive structure of set-texts and rigid formalities. This is not to suggest that such interest creating novelties should over-ride all curricula priorities, but that the very curricula make allowances for the self-empowerment needs of each particular individual to the best of his abilities.

There are those, prison officers, politicians, Governors, Board of Visitors members, et al. who will quite openly state that any form of education or training for inmates is a direct dereliction of authority and an insidious plot by a 'Bunch of Liberal Outsiders' to pamper and indulge convicted felons.....!

However of all the pitfalls that stand guard against successful prison based education and training program. The most difficult remains the steadfast

refusal of Governments, of all political shades and ideological intent, to accept the theory that educational endeavour is worthy of sentence review.

Never mind that some illiterate victim of the State's inability to sustain a universal education equality. Ignore the fact that he, or she, has learned to read, write consider and equate. Forget the educational achievements that were so hard fought for by individuals who have never achieved anything worthwhile before.

Consider instead the political priorities, the vote-risking backlash of an out-raged, crime frightened electorate. Panic, at the thought of screaming tabloid headlines if a day's reduction in sentence is allowed, or even thought given to allowing one of society's failures back into the maelstrom.

For that is the greatest bar to any inmates interested in educational improvement. The absolute certain surety that no matter how hard he, or she tries and even succeeds, it won't make a blind bit of difference where it matters, in the minds of over-bearing authority!

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England.

(Clive Richards is in his 7th year of a life sentence. During his time in jail he has qualified for a B.A. He now hopes to begin a post-graduate research degree this year. He has published work in the Guardian Newspaper. His study of prison education is available from him at the above address.)

MUSIC IN PRISON

Robert Browning has said that

"Who hears music feels his solitude peopled at once..." For those confined to prison, music can often create a link with the unreachable world outside and can help to relieve a feeling of loneliness. It can also be of enormous therapeutic help to somebody, apart from merely occupying much of one's spare time. I feel therefore that it is important that music continues to be taught in prison and should be given the time and the facilities to be treated seriously.

There are some major drawbacks associated with prison education in general and this is particularly true of music-teaching because it requires such a degree of self-expression and to put it bluntly, because it is such a noisy subject.

It is very difficult for somebody who has never performed in public in any way previously, to enter a room with some of his contemporaries and begin displaying his inability to play a musical instrument. It is also difficult for somebody with a considerably developed musical ear to sit in the same room for long with four or five enthusiastic novices of varying musical understanding, interest and projective subtlety. For these reasons I would consider it essential that all beginners' music classes should be conducted on a one-to-one basis only. This has not been possible in Cork Prison as yet anyway, and until it is, I do not accept that we can achieve

optimum results.

Another major obstacle in this prison has been the refusal of the powers that be to allow students access to their own instruments in situations where they already have them on the outside or when somebody is willing to buy one for them. However, in the case of one intrepid student who acquired a violin through a national radio programme, this ban was temporarily lifted. It has been suggested that by allowing prisoners to have their own personal musical instruments, this would encourage them to smuggle drugs inside the prison, concealed inside the instruments. Given that all instruments can be thoroughly checked internally and externally in a matter of seconds, this argument has never quite made sense to me.

However, aside from these setbacks it is very possible for a dedicated student to attain quite a high standard of musical proficiency within a short space of time in prison. Over the years I have seen some that I would consider to have had little aptitude for music, maintain an unrelenting devotion to the guitar or banjo for several years and leave the prison with new scope and a desire to explore further the many mysteries of the world of music.

NOEL SHINE,
Cork Prison, Ireland.

(Noel Shine is a well know musician. He plays guitar, mandolin and tin whistle. With his wife, he performs all over Ireland, in the U.S. and Europe. They have just released a CD and tape.)

EPEA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

27-29 NOVEMBER, 1992

The last weekend meeting of the Steering Committee took place, courtesy of the Scottish Prison Service, in their training college at Polmount, Scotland.

Not everyone was able to be present, but it was good to meet again with old friends and to welcome two new members; Kay Blackstock representing Scotland and Ann Morrell representing England and Wales. Ann was replacing Pam Bedford who sent her good wishes from Colorado, USA where she is on exchange for one year.

An informal meeting on the Friday evening settled the agenda and serious business began on Saturday morning with a detailed and painstaking examination of a draft constitution which had been prepared by Kevin Warner and Joy Clark prior to the meeting. Those of us who imagined that we had a reasonable command of the English language had many humbling moments when we were challenged by Agneta and Anita (Sweden) for being imprecise. Many words had to be translated into Swedish/French etc to see if they would convey the correct meaning, in translation, to our European colleagues. It was really difficult work, but we worked on every word in every sentence until we satisfied everyone (not an easy task).

By lunchtime we felt

that we needed a short rest so we drove to nearby Linlithgow, a small town which has grown up in the shadow of Linlithgow Palace, a former residence (now in ruins) of the Kings and Queens of Scotland; the most famous probably being Mary, Queen of Scots. Here we spent an hour or so pretending that we were tourists and enjoying the pale sunshine of a winter afternoon. Soon, however, it was time to return to work and reinvigorated by the fresh air we set to our task with renewed enthusiasm.

Apart from a meal break we worked steadily until late evening, drafting, amending and rewriting until we were satisfied that we had a good working document which could be understood by everyone and which would provide the sound base on which the EPEA could grow and flourish. Our efforts will be put to the test when the constitution is presented to EPEA liaison persons in Stockholm in June.

It was with great feelings of relief and accomplishment that we finished the work and our steps were light as we made our way to a nearby hotel to relax for an hour. Not unnaturally, the conversation tended to centre around our experiences in the world of prison education and as each of us told our stories, it became quite apparent that

our problems were much the same, although the solutions sometimes differed. However, removed as we were from the working environment, all the problems could be reviewed much more benignly and with that essential sense of humour which seems to keep us all sane.

Sunday morning was given over to the other matters on the agenda. Anne Cameron brought us up to date on the Conference in Estonia* in May 1992 which she had attended with Robert Suvaal (Holland) and Pam Bedford (England). Agneta had spoken to the conference about the EPEA and this created much interest, since those working in prison education in Estonia need all the help and support that they can get.

Agneta and Anita brought some queries from the organising committee for the Stockholm conference -
- would we like an EPEA office at the Conference Centre?
- would someone speak at the opening of the Conference?
- would we need conference time to present the EPEA and its new Constitution?
The answer was "Yes, please" in all cases and Kevin Warner, as Chairman of the Steering Committee agreed to speak. We are grateful to

* see report by Tessa West in this issue of newsletter.

the organising committee for making both the facilities and the time available for EPEA business.

Dominic Henry had been given the responsibility of trying to raise finance, but he had not had much success. It had been hoped that there might be some funding from the Council of Europe but this is not so readily available for organisations such as the EPEA. Various suggestions were made and are currently being pursued but if anyone knows of a likely source for some finance, please contact:

Dominic Henry,
Education Officer,
HMP Magilligan,
Limavady,
Co. Londonderry,
N. Ireland.

Kevin Warner proposed that the various member countries of the EPEA should be grouped initially into 3 regions - Northwest Atlantic, Central and Mediterranean with 2 representatives from each serving on the Steering Committee.

Finally we set about drawing up a list of tasks to be completed before the June Conference. We also made interim arrangements for the Association which would see it through its first year as a fully accredited organisation i.e. after constituting. These may be of general interest, so here they are -

1. The 'year' will run from June to June, presuming that the Conference will probably take place every second year in June.

2. The first elections will take place in 1994.

3. In June 1993 the

following appointments will be made -

- (a) Acting Chair, for 1 year.
- (b) Acting Treasurer, for 1 year.
- (c) Acting Membership Secretary, for 2 years.

Officers in an 'acting' capacity will be unelected. Three regional representatives elected at General Council meeting to serve on the Steering Committee.

4. June 1994, Elections for the post of -

- Chairperson
- Deputy Secretary
- Treasurer
- Liaison people from each country.

This brought the weekend's business to a close and we all felt that we had made good progress towards establishing the EPEA on a sure foundation. This is an exciting time to be actively involved with the new Association and all of us on the Steering Committee look forward to a successful conference in Stockholm and the public launch of the EPEA.

I look forward to seeing you all there.

JOY CLARK,
Prison Education,
Northern Ireland
Office,
Dundonald House,
Upper Newtownards Road,
Belfast. BT4 3SU,
N. Ireland.

(Joy Clark is Chief Education and Training Officer for prisons, at the Northern Ireland Office. She is EPEA liaison person for N. Ireland.)

* EPEA *

LOGO

WANTED!

A snappy logo for EPEA - one which could be inserted into the map of Europe on our leaflets but also used on its own for letter headings, pens, even T-shirts!

Perhaps you or some of your students could send designs/ideas/suggestions to EPEA secretary by the end of May for selection at the Stockholm Conference

send to:
Ann Cameron,
Education Officer,
HM Prison,
3, Edinburgh
Road,
Perth PH2 8AT,
SCOTLAND.

SPORT IN A SPANISH PRISON

This article was submitted to the EPEA Newsletter by the MINISTERIO de JUSTICIA, in Madrid. The article first appeared in a magazine called "CUERPO EN ACCION" (THE BODY IN ACTION), which deals with sport in penitentiary institutions in Spain.

LETTER FROM AN INMATE

I would like to thank the organisers of this publication for giving me this opportunity, because during my stay in these institutions, I was able to prove that the practise of any type of sport, is an activity which is most beneficial to the well-being of the inmate.

Particularly in the penitentiary centre of ALCALA II we discussed these ideas with some interesting features for this segment. The most important aspect, that with clear ideas held by the Boards of Management on this subject, and support on ground level by the labour personnel of the institution, a lot could be done to mobilise the inmates to practise and enjoy sport.

Thus, on a daily basis, throughout the year, sporting competitions take place in basketball, indoor football, handball, volleyball and many more.

These activities are most popular during the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays when the prisoners

take an academic rest in order to participate in some intensive leagues in the abovementioned sports, and some other sports which, due to the restrictions of daily life are not possible at other times. These include athletics, sprints, long distance races, various jumps and swimming.

Given that these are all internal competitions, the Management wanted to go further by setting up a basketball school with specialised training, three days a week. This was done so that the inmates could make up part of a team which participates (this is the second season that they are doing so) in the Comarcal League, composed of clubs from Alcala de Henares and other clubs from the area.

During the year of 1991, an indoor football school was set up and they also hope to compete in the Comarcal League next season.

For us, as you can imagine, the winning is not very important, it's the taking part that counts.

The most important aspect is the association with people who are on the outside, to feel that we still form a part of society, even though its only once a week. One day we will eventually have to go back into that society.

I would like to pay special tribute to one person who, having been our friend for some time, represents a prime example of the positive things which can result from the practise of sport in these institutions. Oscar N.,

while he was among us for reasons which are irrelevant here, took part in and widely promoted sport.

He did this primarily to make the endless days more bearable and less tedious, to keep himself in shape and to become more self disciplined - one of the principle foundations of any sport. Team spirit is important as its better to work as a member of a team than in an individual capacity. In this way, rules of play must be observed, loyalty is given to friends and penalisations are avoided. Thus, in this way, apart from the triumph of a game, the players can experience ecstasy.

"For us, as you can imagine, the winning is not important, it's the taking part that counts..."

He (Oscar N.) also helped sport because he nurtured the love of it among his companions and became a pillar on all the teams of which he was a member. And due to his vital contributions, we gained victories which went beyond these walls.

This reminds me of the basketball tournament we played one Christmas against the Plumillas team. This team was made up of famous professional journalists,

some of whom were, up until recently, prestigious international figures in basketball. In this tournament which was taking place for the second year running and in the presence of Federal authorities and reporters from the most important Spanish communication networks. The inmates team achieved a tremendous victory, thanks, for the most part, to the delivery, surrender, drive and indisputable quality of Oscar N.

Besides, outside the Cancha, he maintained the same sporting spirit, shared it with his friends, thus making him worthy of the appreciation and respect of everybody.

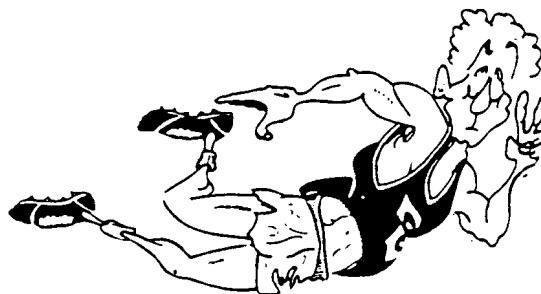
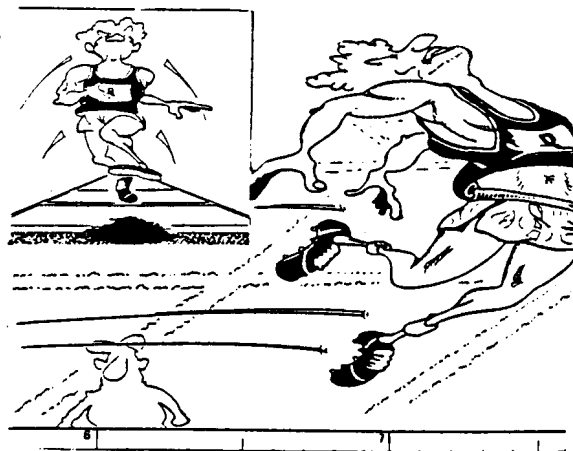
As I am writing this article I am enjoying a just freedom, and am spending my time on professional duties, study and of course, sport.

His (Oscar N.'s) passing through here was, without doubt, an important chapter in his life, which must have taught him a lot of things, but which he left, I am sure, firmly closed.

I don't want to finish without reminding those responsible in the General Secretariat for Penitentiary matters, that they can't neglect the constant support that is necessary for sport, especially in centres for young people like this one, where it is improving the rehabilitative potential through sport.

FERNANDO ROMERA,
Alcala de Henares.
Spain.

This article was translated by Grainne O'Sullivan, Spanish teacher, Education Unit, Cork Prison, Ireland.



(Illustration from
"Cuerpo en Accion")

LA SCUOLA NELLE PRIGIONI ITALIANE (Education in Italian Prisons)

La scuola nelle prigioni italiane è regolata dalla legge interministeriale del 3/aprile/1958 n.535 e da quella successiva del 3/febbraio/1963 n.72 che istituì il Ruolo Speciale per l'insegnamento negli Istituti Penitenziari. Questa legge riguarda gli insegnanti elementari e considera l'istruzione nelle prigioni ancora come una scuola popolare per adulti al fine di combattere l'analfabetismo strumentale e morale.

Da allora, nonostante siano cambiati i tempi, i detenuti e le leggi penali ed europee, la scuola carceraria, soprattutto quella elementare, è stata abbandonata a se stessa.

Nel 1974 una nuova legge italiana ha portato la scuola dell'obbligo fino a 14 anni, ma nessuno ha pensato di regolare la scuola Media nelle prigioni forse perché i giovani detenuti avevano superato i 14 anni. Fino ad oggi i professori della Scuola Media dell'obbligo non hanno ancora una legge che regolamenti il loro lavoro. Le scuole che attualmente funzionano negli Istituti Penitenziari sono da anni a carattere sperimentale e riguardano soprattutto i Corsi Professionali per detenuti lavoratori (i cosiddetti Corsi delle 150 ore) che durano circa sei mesi l'anno.

Il G.I.C.A. (Gruppo Insegnanti Carcerari) all'occasione della Conferenza Nazionale della Scuola, organizzata dal Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione dal 30 gennaio al 3/2/1990 ha chiesto la Riforma della scuola carceraria con un ruolo unico per gli insegnanti delle prigioni. Si spera che la nuova legge venga preparata dalla Commissione Interministeriale (Grazia e Giustizia, e Pubblica Istruzione) al più presto per essere inviata al Parlamento per l'approvazione.

Inoltre il G.I.C.A. ha chiesto di individuare metodi e strumenti per l'aggiornamento degli insegnanti carcerari, anche in vista del cittadino europeo detenuto; l'attuazione della legge 312/80 art. N.63 per la maggiorazione del servizio 1/3(ai) fini della pensione; la estensione dell'indennità di rischio anche ai docenti carcerari; la partecipazione dei docenti delle prigioni nella Commissione di Studio,

sia maestri che professori; lo studio di un libro di testo addato anche ai detenuti europei ed extraeuropei.

ANGELO RUGGIERI,
G.I.C.A.
Via Ezio. 80 - 04100 LATINA,
Italia.

(Angelo Ruggieri is a teacher and journalist. He has taught in prisons in Ragusa and Palermo (Sicily), and in Rome. At present he works in Latina's prison. He founded the newspaper "Humanity in Prison". He is General Secretary of G.I.C.A., the Italian prison teachers association.)

* * * * *

Education in Italian prisons is regulated by the interministerial law No. 535 of April 1958 and the subsequent No.72 of 3, February, 1963 which formulated the Special Role of education in penal establishments. This law refers to primary teachers and still considers instruction in prisons as basic education for adults in order to combat actual and moral illiteracy.

Since then, in spite of the changes in times, prisoners and penal and European laws, prison education, especially at the elementary level, has been left to itself.

In 1974 a new Italian law made education compulsory up to the age of 14 but no change was made in intermediate schooling in prisons perhaps because young prisoners were all over 14. Up till now teachers in compulsory state schools still don't have statutory regulations for their work. Education which takes place in penal establishments has for years been of an experimental nature and is mostly concerned with professional courses for working prisoners (the so-called 150 hours courses) which last about six months each year.

The G.I.C.A. (Group of Penal Educators) on the occasion of the National Conference on education organised by the Ministry of Education from 30/1/1990 to 3/2/1990 requested reform of prison education with a unique role for penal educators. Hopefully, the new law will be processed by the cross ministerial Commission (Home Office and Ministry of Education) as soon as possible in order to proceed to Parliament for

approval.

Moreover, the G.I.C.A. has requested that methods and resources be determined in order to bring up to date teachers in penal establishments; considering the European citizen/prisoner; the realisation of the law of 3/12/1980, art.No.63 for the enhancement of the 1/3 service for the pension; the extension of risk indemnity for prison lecturers; participation of prison lecturers on the Commission on study, whether teachers or professors; the study of a text book adapted both to European and non-European prisoners.

translated by
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Scotland.

EPEA UPDATE

At the International Prison Education Conference at Bergen, the Netherlands, in 1991, a Steering Committee was formed with a view to developing the EPEA, until the next such conference (in Sweden) this summer. The Committee consists of the liaison persons from 7 countries as follows:

- ENGLAND/WALES: *David Marston, Anne Morrell**
- FRANCE: *Isabelle Jegouzo, Yves le Guerrec*
- IRELAND: *Pam Lorenz, Kevin Warner*
- NORTHERN IRELAND: *Joy Clark, Dominic Henry*
- NETHERLANDS: *Jan Maarten Terweil, Robert Suvaal*
- SCOTLAND: *Anne Cameron, Kay Blackstock*
- SWEDEN: *Agneta Bergendal, Anita Johannison*

**Ann Morrell is substituting for Pam Bedford who is currently working in the USA.*

At present Anne Cameron acts as Secretary and I fill the role of Chairperson. There have been two weekend-long meetings of the Steering Committee since Bergen, one in England and one in

Scotland. At (and after) each of these meetings a great deal of hard work has been done - this may not be very apparent to members yet, but I expect it will when the results of the labour come to fruition this summer! The Steering Committee will meet once more over the weekend before the Conference in Sweden. It is planned to have a meeting of the General Council (i.e. the liaison persons from all countries) during that conference, and I hope this will prove to be a history-making event as the new constitution is adopted and some elections take place. A draft of that constitution is now being sent to all liaison persons for their views. I expect that having a constitution, and other developments such as the Networking Directory, which is being prepared, will make the EPEA feel much more REAL!

Perhaps it is a sign that our association is worthwhile, to find voices with little or no connection with the EPEA presenting themselves as representing it and speaking on its behalf. Strange as that may seem, it has been happening for some time, and happening far beyond Europe. So, a threesome (Pam Bedford, Robert Suvaal and Kevin Warner) were last year assigned to deal with external relations. We are trying to see such problems as the growing pains of a significant organisation.

I am very confident that the EPEA now emerging is going to be, increasingly, a movement representing, serving and driven by prison educators working 'on the ground' with prisoners.

"Professional development ...through European Co-Operation", one of the aims of the EPEA agreed at Bergen, is at the heart of what we are about. I believe it is really now beginning to happen.

KEVIN WARNER,
Chairperson EPEA,
Department of Justice,
St. Stephens Green,
DUBLIN,
Ireland.

(Kevin Warner is Co-Ordinator of Education in the Department of Justice, in Ireland. Previously, he has taught at second level and adult education, where he specialised in adult literacy. He was chairperson of the Council of Europe's Select Committee on Prison Education and one of the authors of that committee's report.)