

HV
9475
.I82
I59
1975

AN EVALUATION OF
PRESENT CONDITIONS AT
IOWA STATE PENITENTIARY
FORT MADISON, IOWA

13-501

2:137

STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION OF IOWA
Historical Building
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

AN EVALUATION OF
PRESENT CONDITIONS AT
IOWA STATE PENITENTIARY
FORT MADISON, IOWA

MP

A

Conducted By:

THE AMERICAN CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION

Site Visit:

DECEMBER 16 - 20, 1974

Report Submitted:

JANUARY 28, 1975

STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION OF IOWA
Historical Building
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

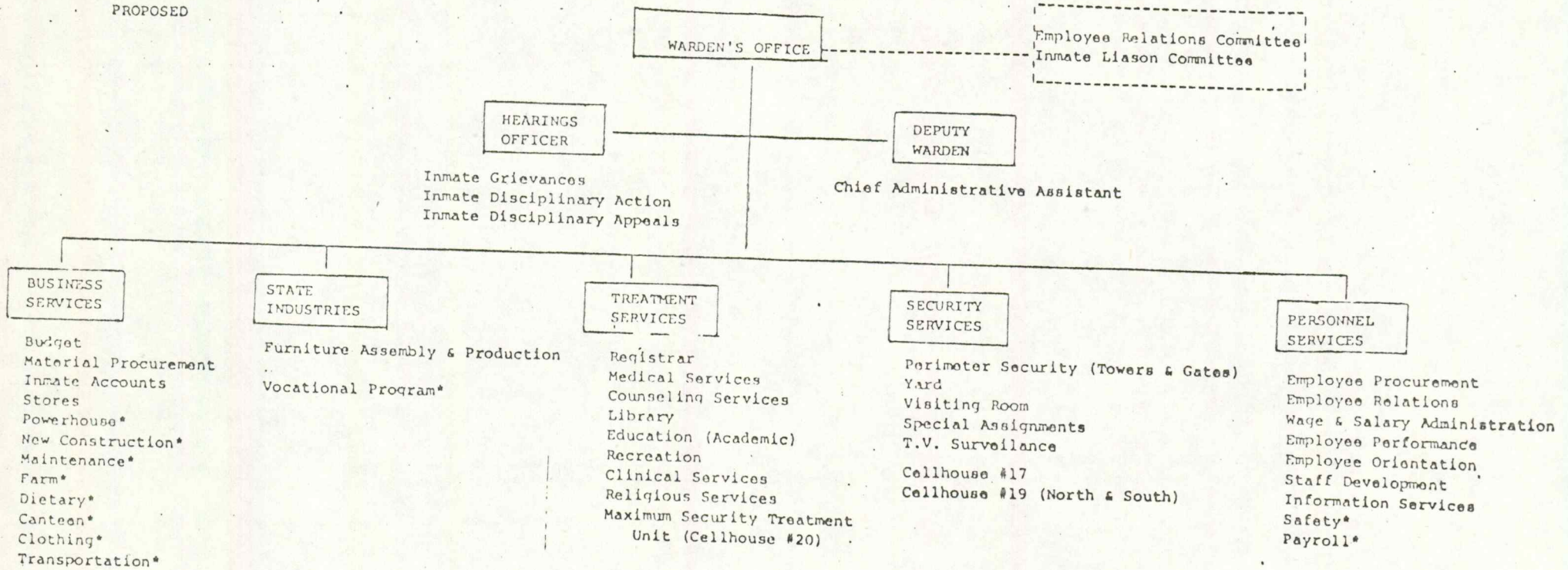
INDEX

FOREWARD

I.	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	2
II.	MEDICAL SERVICES	5
III.	PAROLE SERVICES	11
IV.	SOCIAL SERVICES	13
V.	EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING	15
VI.	RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING	17
VII.	INSTITUTIONAL EMPLOYMENT	18
VIII.	OTHER TREATMENT SERVICES	20
IX.	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS	21
X.	LEGAL SERVICES	22
XI.	DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS	23
XII.	BUILDING 20	24
XIII.	WORK RELEASE	25
XIV.	PERSONNEL	26
XV.	CANTEEN	27
XVI.	CUSTODY OFFICE ASSIGNMENTS	27
XVII.	OFFICER LOCKER AND MUSTER AREA	28
XVIII.	CENTRAL SCHEDULING CENTER	28
XIX.	CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM	28
XX.	STAFF TRAINING	28
XXI.	RECOMMENDATIONS	29

TABLE OF ORGANIZATION
(Unit - Line and Function)

PROPOSED



*INDICATES PROPOSED NEW OR REASSIGNED MAJOR FUNCTIONS

FOREWORD

The attached report to the Commissioner of Social Services, The Iowa Department of Social Services, represents an objective appraisal of the present conditions at Fort Madison Penitentiary as seen by three eminently qualified, and nationally recognized correctional leaders.

It is not a study in depth whereby countless hours were expended explaining all the reasons for comments and recommendations. But rather, an effort to provide a perspective and posture that will aid the Commissioner, the Director of Corrections, the Warden, and others in determining what steps should be taken to correct conditions at the institution.

Many of the recommendations will be easy to accept, some more difficult, and still others may be rejected. It must be emphasized that it is the intention of this report to be helpful in problem solving and not to assess blame nor to identify a scapegoat. Corrections is too complex and too encompassing a social problem to solve with easy solutions.



ANTHONY P. TRIVISONO
Executive Director
American Correctional Association

EVALUATION

IOWA STATE PENITENTIARY

This evaluation of the Iowa State Penitentiary was made by the American Correctional Association for the Department of Social Services, State of Iowa. In making the evaluation the Association provided for an on-site visit by three consultants during the week of December 16th, 1974. The consultants were:

Sanger B. Powers, Chairman
Former Administrator
Wisconsin Division of Corrections

Ellis C. Mac Dougall
Former Commissioner
Georgia Department of Corrections

Jack G. Young
Associate Executive Director
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

The evaluation was made with particular reference to the administrative, security, and treatment problems at the institution. In an interview with the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services by the consultants prior to the commencement of on-site visitation, the Commissioner indicated a special concern about the problems surrounding the delivery of health care services. He also questioned the adequacy of treatment and rehabilitative services generally, the problems which might exist between staff concerned with treatment and staff concerned with security, and any problems in the area of general administration which might contribute to staff or inmate unrest.

During the on-site visit the consultants interviewed: the Warden; the Deputy Warden; the Director of Security; the Director of Treatment Services; a Classification Administrator; the Coor-

dinator for the Southeastern Community College responsible for the educational services at the Penitentiary and other middle management personnel and randomly selected members of the line operated staff. In addition, a meeting was held with the representative of a recently formed employee group, and the Inmate Liaison Committee, a group of inmates elected by the inmate body. Further, the consultants conducted a substantial number of interviews with other inmates during the on-site visitation.

The inmate population on December 16th was as follows:

Cell House 17	272
Cell House 19 N	76
Cell House 19 S	158
Cell House 20 (Security Unit)	50
Hospital	2
Total Population	558

I. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

At the time of the consultants' visit the administrative organization was in the process of change. Prior to that change, the principle department heads (Security, Support Services, Treatment, and Industries) reported to the Deputy Warden who in turn reported to the Warden. Also reporting directly to the Warden were the Training Officer, Personnel Officer, Liaison Officer, and Business Manager.

The revised Table of Organization has five principle department heads reporting directly to the Warden -- the Business Manager, the Industries Supervisor, the Director of Treatment Services, and the Personnel Administrator. Also reporting to the Warden,

but in a staff role, were a Hearings Officer responsible for the handling of inmate grievances and disciplinary actions, and the former Deputy Warden who will function as Chief Administrative Assistant to the Warden. The new Table of Organization, that is slated to go into effect when the newly recruited Business Manager reports in January, is a substantial improvement on the former Table of Organization and will involve the Warden to a much greater degree personally with the administration of the five major operating units.

It is the opinion of the consultants that the revised Table of Organization should be made effective as soon as possible and that the Warden should take full advantage of the substantially greater visibility to both the line operating staff and the inmate body than he has experienced in the past. The consultants feel that the revised Table of Organization will provide for more direct lines of communication and thus serve to correct what was an obvious problem in this area. In the past, while the Warden, Deputy Warden, and the Chief of Security and Treatment Services knew what was going on and met regularly, the line operating staff appeared to be somewhat less informed in respect to the program, changes in the program, the effect of court decisions, and also policy changes. It is regarded as imperative that every effort be made to ensure open lines of communication and to let the line operating staff know what is going on and why it is going on. Every effort must be made to ensure good communications. This should be accomplished through in-service training , by

written policy, and via the chain of command.

Emphasis on the establishment and maintenance of these open communication channels will eliminate one significant problem that the consultants soon became aware of, namely that of concerned conscientious personnel, seemingly operating "in the dark" not knowing what their role was in the light of changes stemming from a multitude of court rulings as well as the decisions of the Division Director in Des Moines.

Yet another problem which the consultants noted and which is capable of solution is that of the Director of Treatment Services being isolated from both the inmate body and line operating staff. His office is located in the Administrative Building, outside the security area and some distance removed from both inmate contact and contact with the staff for whose supervision he is responsible. Similarly, the Deputy Warden who was then responsible for treatment of security services was also located in the Administration Building outside the security area and inaccessible to both inmates and line operating staff. Thus, the principle administrative staff had very little visibility so far as the line operating staff and inmate body were concerned, and in a sense were viewed as being a little out of touch with the problems of the personnel and the inmates in the "back end". It is the consultants' considered opinion that the Director of Treatment Services should have his office in the building which houses the treatment personnel. A planned move of the office of the Shift Captain from the Treatment Services Building should be effected at the ear-

liest opportunity and the space that is made available should be utilized to provide appropriate offices for the Chief of Treatment Services.

The consultants regard the Warden of the Penitentiary as a highly competent individual struggling to do his best while burdened with a rather severe limitation. The Warden's duties and responsibilities, particularly with reference to the time requirements involved in preparing for the many legal actions in Federal Court, have restricted him to his office to the extent that he did not, or could not take the time to become more involved with and visible to both staff and inmates. The proposed change in organization along with some personnel changes should open lines of communication and substantially improve the situation described. In the eyes of the inmates and staff alone, the administration of the prison has been viewed as being both insulated and inaccessible. Hopefully, the management team under the new Table of Organization will be able to communicate with staff and inmates, listen to their concerns and problems, and deal with them on an effective and realistic basis.

II. MEDICAL SERVICES

A serious problem facing the Penitentiary administration is the problem of providing adequate medical services. The Hospital Building is relatively new, and while it is a badly designed and poorly located facility, it can fill the need for such medical or health care services as the institution might reasonably be expected to provide.

One of the problems with the present Hospital Building is the fact that any outside medical or medical service personnel who might be recruited to provide service must go through the Administrative Building, past the major security gates to the open yard and then walk some distance before they reach the Hospital Building. If some means of access to the hospital from the outside, perhaps by a tunnel, were provided, outside medical support staff might be more willing to consider providing at least a measure of service.

The problem is not, however, totally that of the facility, but also stems from the inability of the institution's administration to recruit staff to fill the authorized medical complement. This complement, at the present time, is as follows:

one	Physician
one	Nurse III
four	Nurse I
one	Part-Time Dentist
one	Part-Time Optometrist
one	Part-Time Laboratory Technician

At the time of the consultants' visit the Nurse III position was vacant along with one of the four Nurse I positions. The part-time physician who had been calling at the institution three days weekly for sick call was to terminate his employment January 1 to re-enter the military service. This, then will leave the institution with services of two physicians from the University Hospital in Iowa City, each of whom call at the institution a half day each month -- the equivalent of one day per month.

Efforts have been made to interest local physicians or clinics

in providing medical care on a contract basis but none have shown interest. Contracts with physicians' groups are becoming a widespread and accepted practice.

One of the consultants talked to a physician and his predecessor who was available for limited emergency service via telephone. Both of these physicians indicated that the practice of medicine at the Iowa Penitentiary was singularly unattractive. One of the physicians stated that he spent the majority of his time not practicing medicine but arguing with inmates "looking for pills". Additionally, he said the physician saw the same inmates every day for the same complaints. As he put it, "no place in the world could you find as many young people with as many aches or pains or headaches, none of which could tolerate aspirin". Additionally, both physicians indicated that practice at the Penitentiary was a very risk-prone practice in view of: the ^{own}pretentiousness and the average offender today, his unwillingness to accept any sort of treatment other than what he wants, as well as the large number of actions being filed by prisoners against various staff members.

Both physicians felt that if the hospital were located outside the walls where access by people in the health care professions in the City of Fort Madison were possible, the situation might be materially improved. The alternative is the construction of an access to the present hospital, as was alluded to earlier in the report. While this approach would be both costly

and difficult, it may induce some medical service personnel from the community to accept at least limited responsibility for the provision of medical care within the institution.

At the meeting with the inmate group, one of the principle complaints concerned medical care. One inmate related that the problem seemed to be, less that of staff, than conflicting lines of authority and the fact that there seemed to be no head of the medical program. The group seemed to agree. Additionally, several inmates complained that physician's orders for prescription drugs were often countermanded or not filled, or that the quantity prescribed was cut down. This last point was checked with both physicians who said that they had no problems whatsoever with prescriptions or orders not being followed. They did indicate, however, that a limit of three or four days had been administratively placed on prescriptions for certain drugs. The prescribing physician needed to take affirmative action to see that an individual's drug supply was dispensed for a longer period of time. Both physicians said that this problem seldom occurred with them but was more apt to be a problem with respect to prescriptions given by physicians at the University Hospital or perhaps consulting physicians who were unaware of the problems the institution had with certain offenders that intended to improperly use drugs.

The Iowa State Department of Health, following an inspection of the institution in April, 1974, found that the most serious problem in the health care delivery system at the Peni-

tentiary was the lack of a coordinated system for the delivery of health care services. Additionally, the nursing service was felt to be under staffed. Recommendations were also made for the employment of a trained x-ray technician or for the provision of training for the inmate now responsible for the taking of x-rays. Further, it was recommended that a qualified medical record librarian be employed as well as a full-time hospital administrator.

The consultants feel that the nursing staff could be augmented through the employment of a hospital administrator that was trained in hospital administration, thereby releasing the nurses for nursing duties. The consultants were of the opinion that it would not be possible to find a physician willing to accept the responsibility for the administration of the total program nor were any of the nurses currently employed interested in any way in assuming the responsibility for administration of the program.

It is the consultants' view that the provision of medical care will continue to be a problem at Fort Madison unless one of two things happen.

1. That the outside dormitory be converted for use as either a hospital or a medical services facility with access to the prison yard via a secure tunnel. The building itself would, of course, have to be made secure and could then be used, at least in part, as the health care facility. Sick call could of course, continue to be in an appropriate place inside the wall. Such a plan would make it possible to attract, in the consultants'

opinion, outside medical service personnel to serve at least on a part-time basis to augment a full-time staff who might more easily be employed in this kind of situation.

2. That a detailed study take place by competent medical and correctional personnel for consideration of the use of the medical facility at Oakdale. Oakdale could become a corrections medical center. Thought would be required for those patients who are there by virtue of being mentally ill or for psychiatric observation. In this situation the other prison hospitals would then serve primarily as dispensaries, providing no hospital beds. However, this would solve only part of the problem. The institution would still have to recruit the physician and necessary support personnel willing to work in an unattractive setting.

Perhaps another alternative to #1 above might be noted -- that of utilizing a portion of Cell House 17 closest to the Administration Building for a medical center. This would require some structural conversion but would make available a facility which could be easily entered from the outside.

The medical problem at the Penitentiary is probably one of the most critical and yet it does not seem to be one which can be solved by the institution's administration acting alone. It is a problem which will require substantial help and support from the Department of Social Services, the Division of Corrections from the State Department of Health, the Iowa Medical Society and the Legislature.

Perhaps one additional suggestion should be made. Legislation should be enacted which would make the State the defendant in any malpractice action which might be brought against medical services personnel or alternately, make the State responsible for the provision of malpractice insurance for such personnel.

A word should also be said about the inadequate psychiatric and psychological services presently available. Psychiatric consultation is provided one day per week through a contract with the Lee County Mental Health Clinic, and while this is helpful, the need for such consultation is substantially greater than can be provided by one psychiatrist working one day per week. Further, two clinical psychologist positions on the staff were vacant and "frozen" due to budget restrictions. It is difficult to understand how, in the face of such emergent medical problems as do exist, that clinical psychologist positions were frozen when some other course of action certainly might have been taken.

III. PAROLE SERVICES

One of the problems singled out by both the inmate group as well as many members of the staff related to the unrest caused by the administration of Iowa's parole laws. The newly received offender is seen by a single member of the parole board after he has served six months of his sentence. This interview is primarily to acquaint the offender with the parole laws and procedures and to permit the interviewing parole board member to form

some impression with respect to the offender, his background, and his probable ultimate parole ability. At the time the offender is advised when the board will ask for a "progress report" on the offender's progress, adjustment, problems, and parole potential. Usually a minimum of 18 months must elapse between the initial visit and the time a first progress report is requested. In addition, the institution may on its own initiative, and at any time, send in a progress report with a recommendation for parole.

Progress reports are reviewed by the board in chambers and the board at that time decides whether or not to schedule the offender for an interview on the basis of its plan to parole or whether to put the matter over for another period of time. Recently the board has been advising offenders by letter at the time a progress report is reviewed, but these letters use a quoted response such as "your counselor does not recommend parole", or the "institution administration does not recommend parole". Between the time of the initial interview by one board member and the first report to the offender following the board review of a progress report, the offender is up in the air in terms of when he might expect to be considered for parole, what the board expects of him during the interim period, and what the boards' assessment of his parole ability might be.

It was apparent after talking with offenders and staff that this parole procedure contributes a great deal to inmate uncer-

tainty, unhappiness, and unrest. It may very well be that a part-time board, working five days per month could do no more than is presently being done. However, it is the consultants' considered opinion that offenders should be seen by the parole board at a formal interview no less frequently than once a year. After such an interview, opportunity should be provided for a full and frank discussion of the offender's situation as the board sees it and what it is the offender might be expected to do during his period of incarceration to improve his chances for favorable parole consideration. It is apparent that the Iowa parole procedures are in need of major review and upgrading and updating.

IV. SOCIAL SERVICES

The institution has developed reasonably adequate classification procedures to provide organized and coordinated individual program planning for each offender. Admission summaries are prepared on all new offenders. Thereafter a classification committee holds an initial meeting with the offender in an effort to develop a meaningful, individually tailored, institutional treatment plan. Reclassification meetings are held at periodic intervals. Summaries and progress reports are prepared for the parole board by the counselors and reviewed by the classification committee prior to the submission of recommendations. Offenders are advised of any classification committee recommendations to the

parole board.

The counselling program at the institution has been developed from minimal beginnings since the 1960's. At the present time a Supervisor of Counselling Services heads up a staff of two vocational rehabilitation counselors and eight institutional counselors. Three unfilled counselor positions are frozen due to budget deficits. Case loads are manageable but would be much more so if it were not for the frozen positions.

The responsibilities of the counselors have expanded in recent years from that of mere report preparation to a professional responsibility for evaluation, guidance, and counselling. Emphasis is placed on helping offenders to develop a better understanding of themselves as well as help to influence change in their own attitudes and behavior. Counselors are now aiding group therapy sessions and are also involved with some of the self-help groups. However, because of the large amount of report writing and other duties required of the counselors, the time available for counselling on a one to one basis is limited. A disproportionate amount of counselling time is spent in the approval of and monitoring of inmate telephone calls to family or friends. An inmate is not permitted to make a telephone call without his counselor's approval and then only if the counselor listens in to the conversation. This involves far too much time and another system should be found for handling the problem. In many states, once telephone conversations have been approved with selected family, the placement of the call is under the supervision of the security

ff not the counselors and calls are not monitored.

Counselors need to be released to spend more time with offenders, preferably in their living units or on their jobs. Additionally, they need to be more readily accessible than is presently the case. At the present time, their offices are in a locked building to which access may be had only by an inmate with an approved pass.

Counselors need to be integrated into the mainstream of the institutional activity to achieve a better image and to establish the credibility with both inmates and staff. An effort to accomplish this has been made within the security treatment in Cell Block Unit 20 where the administration appears to have been successful in bringing custody and treatment together into one coordinated effort. Present plans for providing offices in the cell blocks for the counselors will be a large step in the right direction and should provide improved accessibility and greater interaction between counselor, inmate, and staff. The institution should be encouraged to move with all possible haste in this direction.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The Penitentiary has attempted to develop a quality education program which is broad in scope. In doing so, a contract was signed in January, 1974, with the Southeastern Community College in Burlington, making it possible for the College to assume the responsibility for the provision of vocational education in eight areas -- machine operation, building trades, auto mechanics,

auto body, graphic arts, commercial cooking, welding, and electrical. Each core area is taught by a certified vocational instructor assisted by four academic teachers who instruct related courses in mathematics, English, and communication skills. The instructors, along with an evaluator and coordinator of education are all on the College staff rather than the staff of the Penitentiary. Vocational education is operated on a quarterly basis so that there is an opportunity for students to enroll every three months. Course requirements coincide with those of the College. The vocational program appears to be of exceptionally high quality and the administration is to be commended for the development of the existing program.

The academic portion of the institution's educational program has also been placed under the Southeastern Community College. This includes remedial and adult basic education, GED preparation, special correspondence courses, and accredited college night school courses which can lead to an AA Degree. The affiliation of the institution with the College resulted in greater emphasis being placed on college level training. There is also, however, a need to place additional emphasis on high school level academic courses as the average educational level of men received at the Penitentiary is 10.3. Obviously, high school level instruction is needed to permit inmates to complete the standard high school curriculum so that if they were to return to high school upon release, they will have had the opportunity to complete courses which could be accepted for credit.

I. RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The recreational facilities are quite adequate. A new recreation building, constructed several years ago, contains a regulation sized basketball court, weight lifting facilities, areas for card playing, side rooms for groups and television viewing. In recent years more hobby craft activities were also made available to inmates.

However, the recreational program has seriously deteriorated in recent months. The organization and leadership necessary to the success of an institutional recreational program has been missing. Two recreation positions (activity specialists) had become vacant and were "frozen" due to budgetary problems. The result has been a sagging recreational program that has had an obvious negative impact on inmate attitudes and morale. Consultants were advised that the frozen positions have recently been made available.

A word should be said at this point about the gambling which both staff and inmates indicate takes place on regularly quiet and organized scales within the recreation building during inclement weather and at outside tables during pleasant weather. Gambling is reported to involve bets payable principally in cigarettes and also cash which is reportedly circulating in the institution. Several offenders blame the gambling for the fact that so many offenders are locked up in the security building at their own request because of their fear of being beaten for failure to pay

gambling debts. One of the two inmate murders which occurred during the last year is reported to have been over the failure to pay a gambling debt. This is an area which is deserving of greater attention from the administration and it would seem that proper supervision could substantially reduce, if not eliminate, this particular problem.

VII. INSTITUTIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Correctional administrators generally agree that all able bodied inmates should be afforded the opportunity to work, particularly if they are not involved in some specific educational pursuit. Forced idleness breed trouble. Although institutional work programs are essential, they must be carefully balanced with other existing components of the total program including treatment, security, education, recreation, and leisure time. One of the major problems facing the institution at Fort Madison as the consultants saw it, is the idleness of a large number of inmates. While most of the men are assigned to some type of activity, it is too often the make work variety and for the most part, make-shift, unproductive, inappropriate, and little better than idleness. A great many institutional activities had many more men assigned than could be efficiently used. The result was much idleness throughout the institution.

At the time of the consultants visit the population was 558. Approximately 80 of these (14%) were assigned to the full-time vocational educational program and only 45 (8%) to the lone remaining industry -- the furniture factor. One hundred fourteen,

or 21% were unassigned, this included 20 new men in orientation, 21 classified as unable to work, 56 (10%) in the security unit, and another seven, which were unassigned for other reasons. The remainder of the inmate body had the variety of work assignments including food services, laundry, maintenance, shops, and miscellaneous routine institution tasks relating to the provision of services and the maintenance of property. As quoted earlier, many more men than are needed are assigned to the institutional work activities. For example, food services had 85 inmates assigned or approximately 15% of the total population.

One of the factors resulting from the current and widespread idleness is the phasing down of the prison's industry program during the last five years without adequate planning for replacement work activities. A substantial amount of excellent space suitable for any type of industrial production is available and unused.

A textile mill and shoe manufacturing industry were closed in 1969 causing a substantial reduction in the number of jobs available, and in September of 1973, a large part of the furniture industry was destroyed by fire. No replacements have been provided although the industry's fund carries a balance of approximately \$800,000, a sufficient amount to support some additional industrial activity.

The State Department of Social Services is reported to have had under study for some time, specific plans for expanding the industries' program. It may add to the metal and furniture line and establish a furniture repair activity for metal and wood

frames. A part of the metal furniture industry now located at the Reformatory may be moved to the prison.

Every effort should be made to expedite the implementation of plans for desperately needed industry programs. The department administration may very well have to accept the responsibility for a lack of decisiveness and action with respect to the development of alternative work industries at the Penitentiary and the problem of inmate idleness which has resulted.

III. OTHER TREATMENT SERVICES

The institution provides a wide variety of other treatment services which seem to be reasonably adequate. Two full-time chaplains perform a variety of functions and the overall chaplaincy service appears to be very good. The library has been recently approved and now has a generous supply of books and periodicals although a staff librarian is not provided. The library is accessible to the inmate body at reasonable hours during the day and evenings. The canteens seem to be adequately stocked and readily accessible to offenders. The pay range is comparable to other institutions; allowing from 72 cents per day to \$1.76 per day, depending on the nature of the inmate assignment.

A number of inmate organizations and self-help groups exist. The primary ones are LIFE (Living in Final Effort); Seventh Step Foundation; HELP (Help Elevate Lost People); Alcoholics Anonymous; Men in Blue; and a number of group counselling and drug groups. The prison administration appears to have gone

more than half way to endorse as well as encourage, within the limits of security, the establishment of a variety of legitimate inmate self-help groups. Such groups, however, must be carefully and continuously screened in order that their purpose and function does not change and that they do not become a threat to the operation of the institution.

One such inmate self-help group is the "Church of the New Song", an organization which the institution was instructed by court order to regard as a religion. The institution, however, seemingly over reacted to the court order and has given this particular group all of the office space and a status previously afforded the Catholic and Protestant Chaplain. There are increasing indications that the "Church of the New Song" was something more than a religion and that the institution's over reaction to the court order created a mounting security problem with this group and its "ministers".

IX. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The Penitentiary at Fort Madison is severely limited by its age, physical condition, and location within the state. Established in the 1830's, the Penitentiary was the nation's first adult prison west of the Mississippi. It is now completely inadequate if not obsolete and consideration should be given to its ultimate replacement by a smaller, modern facility nearer to the population center of the state. Two smaller institutions would be preferable to one medium-sized institution. They should

be strategically located and serve the population of the State of Iowa more effectively. They would be able to draw on the multitude of community resources which exist in the more populous areas of Iowa.

There has unquestionably been an increase in tension and fear at the institution both with respect to inmates and staff. Some of the reasons for this condition has been delineated earlier in the report, the situation does have the potential to be improved. However, it should be noted that one of the causes of the increase in security and discipline problems stems from a marked change in the character of the inmate population at the Penitentiary during the past several years. With the increased use of probation, large numbers of first offenders formerly confined are now under supervision within their communities. The result is that the prison holds a substantially larger number of offenders who are dangerous, who are discipline problems, and who represent substantial security risks. Superimposed on this phenomenon has been a number of court decisions which are not well understood and which have served to confuse the staff as to their roles, responsibilities, and potential liabilities for damages in law suits. A great and disproportionate amount of time has been spent by many of the staff worrying about this problem. The Warden has been inmeshed in a variety of litigation requiring much of his time which might have been better utilized in the institution.

X. LEGAL SERVICES

The consultants would concur with the view that an attorney

should be assigned to the institution to handle the multitude of legal problems now occupying far too much correctional staff time. In addition, this would bolster the confidence of the staff and help bring about a better understanding of exactly what court decisions mean and what they do not mean. Further, the Iowa Legislature could enact legislation to make it clear that the State will be liable for damages awarded an offender in a court of law as a result of an employee who carried out his job conscientiously. The employee should not have to accept a potential personal liability for actions or steps taken within the limits of institutional and department policy and procedure.

XI. DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS

Although this institution seems to have a relaxed atmosphere and inmates admit to a great deal of freedom inside the walls, there appears to be a breakdown in uniformity of discipline. This is occasioned in two areas. There is not a uniformed effort in the enforcement of the present rules and regulations, i.e., Playboy magazine pictures being allowed in some areas and not in others. This is further evidence of an attitude of correctional officers that they have given up on enforcing most rules. Further, they are not informed of the action or reason for actions taken by the discipline board.

The procedure for handling conduct reports is well structured and would conform to court decisions relating to an inmates' right to a written copy of the charges against him, the right to confront his accuser, and the right to other elements of due process.

Additionally, a well structured system for the processing of inmate complaints and grievances has been established and the processing of such complaints or grievances is virtually a full-time responsibility which has recently been placed in the hands of a member of the staff who has the confidence and respect not only of the line staff but the inmates as well.

The procedures utilized in the processing of conduct reports, inmate complaints, and grievances appear well structured. However, in recent months the disciplinary process has become less effective because of staff concern about their potential liability for actions in the discipline of inmates. There is a general misunderstanding among staff regarding the interpretation of rules and court decisions which has caused an over-riding fear that the enforcement of rules will result in litigation which would be personally expensive. As noted earlier, a full-time attorney assigned to the Penitentiary could assist materially in bringing about a full and complete understanding of the law, rules, and court decisions, as well as continuing on-site legal advice.

XII. BUILDING 20

Although we all recognize the necessity for such an operation especially in a facility that is understaffed, there are several items in the operation of this institution that require comment.

The consultants felt that the inmates and staff were unable to control lights, and that the quality of lighting in the cells

on the first floor are below standard. The practice of closing the outside doors of these cells without cause was questioned. Further, they were concerned about the recreation yard, its small size and nonavailability of at least basketballs or something similar to use. There appeared to be no mechanism for them to use expanding energies and frustrations and this probably contributes to the tension of such a unit.

The consultants also questioned the practice of taking visitors to this unit rather than moving the prisoners to the visitor. Visiting has long been recognized as one of the most valuable tools in reducing institutionalization of inmates.

XIII. WORK RELEASE

The work release program does not appear to be fully and completely used. The consultants question the departmental action which transferred work release to community services. Additionally, the present requirement that a member of the parole board, a member of the staff of Community Services Division, and a member of the Division of Corrections approve all work release appears to be impractical and unnecessarily ponderous. Further, it involves people (community services and parole) who have no responsibility for inmate programming.

Prior to the transfer to Community Services, the responsibility for the administration of the work release program resided in Fort Madison. The work release unit has now been closed and is utilized

by the community as an alcoholic treatment center. There are presently no work release placements in the Fort Madison area which probably has the lowest unemployment rate in the State of Iowa.

It is the consultants' opinion that the responsibility for the administration of the work release program should be returned to the Division of Corrections. This recommendation also includes the operation of the Newton Work Release facility.

XIV. PERSONNEL

The salaries of the correctional officers and other employees of this department deserve immediate attention. A personnel study which will consider their salaries, fringe benefits, and working conditions is recommended.

Even of more concern is the retirement policy of the State of Iowa. To be able to recruit and retain the kind of correctional employee that can have an impact on prisoners, correctional officials must establish competitive pay scales and a reasonable retirement program.

From many areas it is apparent that the Personnel Officer and his office is acting beyond its normal bounds. This problem is adding to the breakdown in communications between staff and the Warden. Middle management employees feel they are being both left out and circumvented, further spreading the gap with the "front". This action causes a major morale problem with employees which tends to be passed on to the inmate population. On at least two separate occasions during our visit the Personnel

Director's actions were seen as improper.

The recreation situation where he had interviewed and moved to employ two new persons (one outside the system where a present corrections officers seems to be the best choice) without the participation or knowledge of the individual who would ultimately supervise these employees. Another where he corrected an employee (admonished) on the security force rather than passing the information and facts (of which there did not seem to be many) along to the Security Supervisor.

XV. CANTEEN

There is a great deal of suspicion over canteen prices. This is true in many institutions and is a lack of understanding on the inmate's part of the costs that institutions must pay for items when they read of supermarket prices in the press.

XVI. CUSTODY OFFICE ASSIGNMENTS

The present separation of correctional office personnel seems good when we address the custody treatment dilemma, but in this instance it appears to have seriously eroded the appropriate assignment of custodial personnel. Because of the present management breakdown, there appears to be an excessive number of Captains and Assistant Wardens having office assignments and not actually supervising on-going operations. Further, because the yard and cell blocks are under separate authority, the cell blocks appear to have a sufficient number of personnel (except Unit 20 which

is separate from others, and sometimes has an over abundance of officers where others are short) and the yard, where most of the problems exist, is seriously undermanned.

XVII. OFFICER LOCKER AND MUSTER AREA

This area should be moved to the training area immediately. It is impossible, given the present location, to disperse confidential information without inmate knowledge, not to mention the fact that concentrating all officers in one room inside of the institution is a dangerous practice.

XVIII. CENTRAL SCHEDULING CENTER

Each department within the institution appears to determine their own schedules without due consideration of the total institution operation causing conflicts and uncertainty.

XIX. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM

The present over emphasized practice of searching all employees should be replaced by spot searches and a responsible intelligence system. A system with formal information gathering, reporting and interpretation.

XX. STAFF TRAINING

The consultants felt that the present training program hardly meets minimum standards for such a major institution. The course offerings do not lend themselves to teaching new employees about either inmate or human behavior. Although in every document

written by the department and institution they emphasize that correctional officers are treatment people they get little if any real training in understanding the prison population. There is also a lack of coordination of training from Central Office (Des Moines). Further, the training staff lack sophisticated instruments and tools to accomplish their mission.

XXI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the proposed and revised administrative organization be put into effect immediately. (A copy of the proposed Table of Organization is attached.)

Additionally, it is recommended that the offices of the Director of Treatment Services and the Director of Security Services be located within the security section of the prison. The offices of the Director of Treatment Services should be in the building that houses the treatment staff and the offices of the Director of Security ought to be wherever subordinate supervisory staff (captains and lieutenants) are similarly housed. Further, the Shift Captain ought to be relieved of the responsibility for monitoring traffic in and out of the treatment building and should be moving about the institution during the shift for which he is responsible, maintaining contact with the security staff assigned to the various security posts, and also in a sense, having his finger "on the pulse of the institution".

Further, the Warden and principle department heads should have more visibility among the staff and inmates.

2. In the area of communication, it is important that an intensive and continuing effort be made to ensure adequate communication between the Warden, the department heads, and the line operating staff and also that complete vertical and horizontal lines of communication be maintained throughout the administrative organization. This should be accomplished by in-service training, a chain of command, and written guidelines. It should be possible to ensure that all members of the staff know what is going on, that each member knows his role in relation to all others, and that all are "on board" with respect to the mission of the institution, its policies, and procedures, departmental policies, procedures, or rules, and any court decisions which might effect the institution.

3. It is strongly urged that immediate steps be taken to increase the amount of productive, purposeful employment available for inmates. This should be done primarily through the establishment of added prison industries, and should not simply be "made work" assignments.

4. All possible departmental and division help should be given to bring some order to the present medical situation which has been discussed earlier in the report. Failure to do this could easily result in extreme problems to the department and the division.

5. Certain key "frozen" positions, particularly in clinical psychology and recreation should be funded and filled as soon as possible.

A recreation director is needed to develop a broadly based program.

6. Each inmate should be seen in a meaningful interview by the board at least once a year. This procedure would substantially lessen unrest.

7. All rules and regulations should be announced to staff and inmates at least two weeks prior to implementation and that reasons for such action be explained.

8. All rules and regulations be reviewed by the administration and a new and revised rule book be authorized.

9. When possible and appropriate policies and new programs or changes in programs should be discussed and explained with line staff and inmates before implementation.

10. The Warden, Assistant Warden and Captains, by constant inspection, insure the uniform enforcement of all rules, regulations and policies.

11. All rules and regulations must emanate from the Warden. In instances where staff establish their own rules they be corrected and if necessary disciplined.

12. One person be designated responsibility for the operation of Building 20.

13. Control of lights on the first floor of Unit 20 should be adjusted so inmates can control individual lights but that a master switch be controlled by officers.

14. The recreation yard be adjusted where several inmates can be exercised at one time and that more appropriate equipment be obtained.

15. Visiting procedures for Building 20 should be similar to that of the normal visiting procedure.

16. The policy of voluntary commitment to Building 20 be reviewed.

17. Tear gas be used as a last resort and only on the authority of the Warden or Deputy Warden on duty.

18. Physical, educational and experience requirements should be upgraded for correctional officers. Salaries and fringe benefits should keep pace with increased job expectation.

19. In view of the physical demands of the job, a retirement system be implemented to allow correctional officers to retire at 55 years of age.

20. All security be placed under line authority.

21. All custody assignments be handled by one command and all manpower be utilized to provide good coverage for yard assignments and cell blocks.

22. Post orders should be prepared and correctional officers better trained in operation of said post orders.

23. Purchase of communication equipment receive priority both in voice command from central control to officers on yard and ad-

ditional closed circuit television be placed in the gymnasium and other such problem areas.

24. The door of the prison hospital be locked and controlled by television and electrically controlled locks.

25. Immediately relocate the Muster and Training Rooms.

26. One scheduling office be assigned where the organized operation of the institution could be coordinated.

27. Replace static shakedown procedures with spot shakedowns. Shakedown policies should vary so that inmates are not aware of scheduling.

28. A formal intelligence and investigative system should be developed internally.

29. Closer supervision of inmates leaving visiting rooms.

30. Prosecution of all participants who deal in contraband.

31. The feasibility of a suicide prevention unit be studied at this institution.

32. Ensure that each and every new employee entering the department be fully versed in not only knowing rudimentary custody matters but be as accomplished at understanding and have beginning skills at crises intervention and counselling techniques.

33. Retraining efforts be given immediate priority -- retraining, however, that fills the gap that presently exists in the orientation program.

34. Self defense training be added so that correctional officers feel more confident in their duties and be more personally secure and prepared to act with the least amount of dependence on weapons.

35. The Personnel Office be placed in its proper posture in the operation of the institution. It should be a support position rather than executive.

36. The Inmate Liaison Committee be informed of and shown canteen records, and further, their advice invited in formulating the pricing structure of the canteen.

37. A comprehensive master plan for corrections should be developed.

38. Legislative committees should have representatives experienced in the field of corrections as part of its membership.

39. Work release procedures should be reviewed giving Penitentiary staff more decision making authority.

40. An Advisory Committee for Corrections with an ongoing responsibility to be abreast of current conditions and activities is highly recommended. It should have legal status and it should relate directly to the Commissioner of Social Services.

41. The institution should have constantly available a portable television video recorder to record all incidents. Such equipment would provide for the protection of staff, administration and inmates, and serve as a training mechanism for staff. Further,

it would allow the administration an opportunity to identify the contributing factors that precipitate such incidents and move to eliminate these conditions thus protecting the life and property of those concerned.

END

STATE LIBRARY OF IOWA



3 1723 02080 5115

DUG 10 16
2252