

The Old Methods Didn't Work, But Maybe the New Ones Will

Kenneth L. Hardy, director of the District of Columbia's Corrections Department since 1967, has overseen the rapid two-year expansion of community-based rehabilitation programs. Last year, Hardy was ordered by Deputy Mayor Graham W. Watt to halt the evaluative weekend furlough program and hold all other community programs—halfway houses in particular—at their present levels. All community programs are presently being studied by a citizens committee appointed by Watt.

Our goal is to try to work with the man so that he will come out as a less hostile, bitter person—plus one who wants to live by the law.

There is no doubt that [inmates] have committed new crimes while in the halfway houses; there have been new crimes committed by people who are on parole; there have been new crimes com-

mitted by people who have been released at the expiration of their sentence.

Are we to keep the men locked up in warehouses even though they'll eventually be back on the streets? Ninety-seven per cent of our prison population will be back on the street one day.

The length of sentence is no deterrent to a man's criminal behavior when he comes out. There is nothing in research that we know of that says that a man who serves a lengthy sentence is less inclined to recidivate or commit a crime than one who serves the shorter sentence.

I believe in a very low, minimum sentence. You can wave maximum statutes goodby. If robbery is 5 to 15 years in the statute, then I say a minimum sentence of two years and that would give the correctional people or the board of parole the

opportunity to work with that man when he demonstrates that now is the time to put him into the community with controls hanging over his head for an extended period of time.

You've got to try new things. You've got to, 'cause the old way hasn't worked.

The evaluative furlough program: the staff wanted to try it despite my reservations as director. It was tried and with a 98 per cent success.

So why do they hate furloughs? Because it is known not to be legal, in the interpretation of the (D.C.) corporation counsel. It was illegal at one time to let a man out of prison except on parole. I say if it's not legal, then let's change the law.

I have a family. I live in Washington, D.C. My family is exposed to the community just like any other family



KENNETH L. HARDY
"You've got to try...."

and I'm not sitting outside the front lines of the District of Columbia and saying this should be done and that should be done. Why should I think of some scheme that's going to be a drastic threat or real threat to the safety of this community?

The pressure is most unfortunate. You just don't kill the whole program.

A Police Chief Examines Theory Of Long-Term Incarceration

Metropolitan Police Chief Jerry V. Wilson has been a consistent critic of the corrections department's community rehabilitation programs. In December, 1970, Wilson directed the major violations branch of the police department to maintain surveillance on halfway house residents and Lorton inmates coming to Washington on community outreach programs.

My own observation is that incarceration serves (a) purpose that is now being lost, and that is the purpose of preventing the offenders from committing a crime while he is incarcerated.

But the whole method of dealing with persons that are convicted of crimes has sort of taken on a tone of arguments that, one: incarceration does not serve to rehabilitate... and, two: incarceration is not dignified treatment... and, then,

three: that incarceration is not a method that is useful for compensating victims of crimes.

All of which, of course, are perhaps true. We don't know whether they're true or untrue, but I think most everyone would tend to agree that the logic has appeal.

I can't prove this, but it's my guess that if you look at persons in halfway houses, you're going to find that the problem is that a lot of them are hard-core [criminals] that I would probably argue should not be free in the community.

I think they have to be very selective in terms of what individuals you put into community corrections. The way the system's working here, according to reports I've seen... the guy gets a five-to-six-year sentence, and serves three months and he's in a halfway house. Now, I'm not

sure that I agree that that makes sense.

The studies say that men released [from prison] at 20 years of age, 70 per cent will be back in an institution in less than three years. Well, if they take men that are 30 years of age, they're going to find that very few of them get back in.

One factor [of a high crime rate] is probably the distribution of the population by age group... a very heavy population of post-World War II babies.

The second [factor]... is a great deal of drug usage, which... moves individuals to crime to obtain funds to support their habit.

If you take an individual who is committing five toberies before he is caught by police, which is statistically what happens, and then he is convicted and given probation the first time... I don't care, you know.



CHIEF JERRY WILSON
...are is a difference

But the second time he comes in, I think he ought to go to jail for three or four years, and... if he goes out and commits another crime, put him away for another three or four years and then, by the time he comes out, age will have rehabilitated him.

And at least during that period of time—the eight years he was in jail—he won't have committed crime.