PRISON WORK

IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Frances H. Simon

Department of Law, Brunel University

September 1999

ABSTRACT

Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional concept, but for most people an important component of social inclusion is work, meaning paid employment. The harshest form of social exclusion is imprisonment. Yet prisoners are required to work, which raises the question of the relationship between prison work and social exclusion or inclusion.

Historically the purposes of prison work have been shifting and various, and in recent decades have been the subject of confusion and ambivalence. Empirical research on prison work in the 1990s suggests that underlying the confusion is the tension between opposing pressures: for social inclusion and social exclusion. In some respects prison work resembles normal work, and some prisoners receive training leading to qualifications which should help them get employment on release. Yet in other respects the prison's requirements to keep the workers captive and to maintain the system prevent inmates' work and training from being a socially inclusive experience. Other matters, like the funding of prisoners' training, reinforce a sense that prisons are separate from the rest of society.

Efforts by the Prison Service since the Woolf Report to make prison regimes aid inmates' rehabilitation, i.e. their eventual social inclusion, have been hamstrung by the reappearance of three constraints which dogged progress in former years: an increasing prison population, preoccupation with security, and lack of money. These have arisen from public and political pressure for the social exclusion of offenders. Since 1997 the Labour government has initiated wide policies to promote a more inclusive society, has shown interest in restorative justice, and has given prisons more money for constructive regimes. Yet Labour has also endorsed measures which perpetuate offenders' social exclusion, like the Crime (Sentences) Act and the proposal to allow employers to demand criminal record certificates from all job applicants. Thus the conflict between pressures for social inclusion and social exclusion continues, and the tension is well illustrated by the issues surrounding prison work.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 3: Other Studies of Prison Work (continued)

CHAPTER 8: Vocational Training for Prisoners (continued)

CHAPTER 11: Final Discussion (continued)

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is submitted for examination as having two main components:

(1)   An account of some empirical research on prison work, carried out by the writer and colleagues at Brunel University; and

(2)   A discussion, by the writer alone, of the research findings with reference to the concept of social exclusion.

These matters will now be explained.

The Brunel research

The Home Office funded project

Late in 1990 Frances Simon learned that the division of the Prison Service then called Prison Service Industries and Farms (PSIF) would like a study to be undertaken of the work PSIF provided for adult prisoners, with the aim of informing the development of PSIF.   During 1991 FS and Claire Corbett held discussions with the Home Office (PSIF, the Research and Planning Unit, and other sections) on the possible shape of a study of adult prisoners' work and work-related training, to be funded by the Home Office, and eventually agreement was reached on a design broader than PSIF's original interest.   The Home Office funded this for 22 months, beginning in April 1992, and its methods are described in Chapter 4.   The study had no theoretical basis, apart from being broadly conceived as an evaluation in two senses: (1) an assessment of how prison work operated in practice, judged against the objectives set for it by Prison Service HQ; and (1) an account of how prisoners perceived and experienced it.

FS led the project, with advice from John Ditchfield of the RPU and under the oversight of a committee (comprising representatives of the RPU, PSIF, several other divisions of the Home Office concerned with prison regimes, the Employment Department, and an outside academic adviser), which met four times between June 1992 and July 1993. The detailed procedures, including the design of the research instruments, were decided largely by FS with the support of CC, the main exception being that the Home Office negotiated access to the six prisons which participated in the study. Fieldwork lasted until November 1993 and was carried out by FS, CC and Bonny Mhlanga, FS doing more than half of it. FS and CC coded the data (FS doing most), FS decided (with advice from Professor J.T.E. Richardson) on the statistical analyses to be performed by SPSS, and for these the data entry and the majority of analyses were done by S.M.K. Tulasi, FS doing the rest. FS did all the qualitative analysis. A full report on this project, drafted by FS with help from CC, was delivered to the Home Office in November 1994. Jacquie Dexter and others provided secretarial assistance throughout, and Professor Keith Smith, then Head of the Department of Law at Brunel, was unfailingly supportive.

The full report was entitled <u>Prison Work and Training: An Evaluation</u>, by Frances Simon and Claire Corbett. It described the study, and discussed its findings in the context of the Woolf Report (Woolf and Tumim 1991) and the subsequent development of Prison Service policy on inmates' work and training during 1992-93, and in the light of published data on employment trends outside prisons. In March 1996 the Home Office published a very condensed summary of it, prepared by FS with guidance from the RPU, as an Occasional Paper (<u>An Evaluation of Prison Work and Training</u>, by Frances Simon and Claire Corbett).

The book

In 1995 FS approached Routledge (publishers) with a proposal for a book based on the full report but with more material, to which Routledge eventually agreed. During 1996-97 FS worked on the manuscript, after taking advice from Dr Silvia Casale as to what might be included. For the book FS gathered further material from five of

the six prisons, from several sections of Prison Service HQ and from other sources (see pp. 80-81), in order to update the findings from the Home Office sponsored project and set them in the context of the national prison system. She inserted a section (from published sources) on the history of prison work, and added a good deal of further argument and discussion. Throughout all this CC was constantly available to FS as adviser, critic and friend, and her suggestions did much to improve the text. The book was finally published by Routledge in March 1999 as <u>Prisoners' Work and Vocational Training</u>, by Frances H. Simon.

The book was intended as a description, for the serious-minded public, of the complexities of prisoners' work and training, and as an examination of their value for achieving part of the Prison Service's statement of purpose: 'to help [prisoners] lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.' In drafting the book FS tried (as she stated in the preface to it) to work in the spirit of the Woolf Report, and 'in the interests - according them equal weight - of the Prison Service, prisoners, and the public.' Apart from this the book, like the Home Office funded project, had no theoretical stance.

The thesis

While engaged with the Home Office funded study and then with the book, I was also reading further and working on ideas for a Ph.D. thesis, for which I had registered at Brunel. Originally this was to have been a detailed study of prisoners' attitudes to work, proceeding partly from the research already done but based mainly on further fieldwork which I hoped to carry out at prisons. At that time my supervisors were Dr Philip Rawlings and Dr Jill Peay. By 1997 Dr Peay had left Brunel, and I asked Dr Claire Corbett, as a psychologist with experience of prisons research, if she would supervise me along with Dr Rawlings. She agreed. In October 1997 Professor Betsy Stanko suggested that instead of attempting further fieldwork I should base my thesis on the material already gathered, making clear what was my work and what had been done by others. I was glad to accept her suggestion, and the thesis as now submitted is the result.

The chapters of the thesis contain between them two main ingredients. One is a presentation of the empirical research, conceived broadly as an evaluation. The other is an attempt to draw the findings together and discuss them with reference to social exclusion: to use this concept to approach an explanation of why the empirical findings came out the way they did. Social exclusion was chosen because (as well as being topical) it seemed to me very apposite to a study of prisoners' work. For most people outside prison, work (paid employment) contributes strongly to social inclusion, but the function of a prison is social exclusion: what then are the functions of prison work? This theme is pursued intermittently throughout the thesis in discussing the Brunel results.

Aside from the two main ingredients, subsidiary purposes of some chapters are: to introduce the concept of social exclusion (Chapter 1); to survey other studies of prison work, which between them addressed many aspects of that complex subject which were relevant to the Brunel study (Chapter 3); to provide a historical perspective for the Brunel study, since the latter refers to prison work in the 1990s (Chapter 2); and to use the Woolf Report, and subsequent developments in the Prison Service, to set the scene for presenting in detail the main empirical undertaking (Chapter 5). At the end of Chapter 1 is a plan (pp. 11-14) indicating the content of each of Chapters 2-11.

Much material from the book is reproduced here (often in condensed form), chiefly in Chapters 2 and 4-10. Chapter 1 is new, and so is Chapter 3 although the book occasionally refers to a few of the studies surveyed. Nearly all Chapter 11 is new, and among its various topics I am grateful to Dr Claire Corbett for suggesting the inclusion of restorative justice, and to Professor Kevin Stenson for suggesting I consider the Labour government's policies.

Chapter 11 comprises the final discussion pulling together all the issues, but some discussion relating prison work (and especially the Brunel research findings) to social exclusion occurs at many points in earlier chapters. The thesis is intended to be self-contained and can be read without actually referring to the book. But in case the reader may wish to see the book, a copy is supplied.

Acknowledgements

Motiuk and R. Belcourt, 'CORCAN participation and post-release recidivism' (Forum on Corrections Research, 1996, 8, 1: 15-17); and from W.G. Saylor and G.G. Gaes, 'The effect of prison employment and vocational/apprenticeship training on long-term recidivism' (Forum on Corrections Research, 1996, 8, 1: 12-14); the Department of Corrections, New Zealand, for an extract from K. McLaren, Reducing Reoffending: What Works Now (1992); the Penal Affairs Consortium for extracts from Prisons - Some Current Developments (1996); Mrs M.J. Wurr for an extract from HMP Holloway Board of Visitors, Annual Report 1995; the Reader's Digest Association for an extract from D. Ramsbotham, 'Why we need to reform our prisons' (Reader's Digest, January 1997); Sir Stephen Tumim for an extract from his foreword to Frances H. Simon, Prisoners' Work and Vocational Training (Routledge, 1999); Butterworths Division of Reed Elsevier (UK) Ltd for extracts from N. Walker, Sentencing: Theory, Law and Practice (1985) and from M. Wright, 'What the public wants: surveys of the general public, including victims' (Justice of the Peace, 1987, 151: 105-107); the Prison Reform Trust for extracts from Lord Bingham (Lord Chief Justice), The Sentence of the Court (1997); Sweet and Maxwell for an extract from A. Ashworth and M. Hough, 'Sentencing and the climate of opinion' (Criminal Law Review, 1996: 776-787); Waterside Press for extracts from M. Wright, Justice for Victims and Offenders: a restorative response to crime' (1996); and Ashgate Publishing Ltd for extracts from G. McIvor, Sentenced to Serve (Avebury, 1992).

Frances Simon

Centre for Criminal Justice Research
Department of Law
Brunel University

September 1999

INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL EXCLUSION, WORK, CRIME, AND IMPRISONMENT

Introduction

This thesis is a study of the work that prisoners do in prison, discussed with reference to the concept of social exclusion. It relies largely on research carried out by the writer and colleagues on prison work in England and Wales, and it summarises and discusses the findings in a context provided by the idea of social exclusion, a term which in the last ten years or so has come to prominence in Britain.

The first main section of this chapter introduces the concept of social exclusion by a brief mention of its history and a review of various meanings that have been given to it. The second section links social exclusion with the idea of work, meaning paid employment, showing from other studies that lack of work is a significant contributor to exclusion. The third section cites four studies addressing the connections between social exclusion and crime, and again shows the importance of work. The fourth section narrows the focus down to imprisonment, which can be seen as the severest form of social exclusion, and points towards the central topic of the thesis: the meanings of the work done by prisoners. Finally there is a small section indicating the plan of the remaining chapters.

Social exclusion

Since the mid 1980s, use of the term 'social exclusion' by policy makers and researchers has been growing. Beginning in France in the 1970s, it then spread through western Europe, and several writers have described its history. De Haan (1998: 11-12), after observing that among French sociologists exclusion has always been a key concept, traces the origin of the phrase 'social exclusion' to René Lenoir, Secretary of

State for Social Action in the Chirac government in 1974, who wrote that one French person in ten ('les exclus') were denied access to employment-based social security provision. From then onwards, says de Haan, 'social exclusion' was used increasingly in France to refer to various kinds of social disadvantage.

Room (1995: 1-9) links the spreading use of the term with the history of poverty studies which the European Commission sponsored in several member states from the late 1970s, and he discusses the different intellectual traditions involved. On the one hand were analysts accustomed to the British tradition of poverty research, which is rooted in the 19th century liberal view of society as a multitude of individuals competing in the marketplace. On the other were researchers working in the continental (particularly the French) tradition of solidarity, which sees groups in society as bound together by sets of moral rights and obligations. The concept of social exclusion derives from the latter vision, and it gradually came into more general use, spreading to Britain early in the 1990s. Room describes how in 1990 the EC set up an 'observatory' (an international network of researchers to monitor and report on national trends and policies) on social exclusion, and the topic is written into the Maastricht Treaty. European Union funds continue to support studies and action programmes related to it. Since the mid 1990s it has been applied in studies of developing countries too. (See, for example, the volume of papers edited by Rodgers, Gore and Figueiredo 1995.)

Social exclusion as a concept has no single definition. Many writers have virtually equated it with poverty, while others have used it when examining concomitants of poverty like bad housing, meagre education and poor health. Such treatments characterise the collection of papers published in 1997 by the Child Poverty Action Group with the title <u>Britain Divided: the growth of social exclusion in the 1980s and 1990s</u> (Walker and Walker 1997). Much discussion addresses social exclusion primarily in terms of unemployment and exclusion from the labour market: examples are McGregor and McConnachie (1995) and the policy papers critically reviewed by Levitas (1996). In December 1997 the new Labour government set up a Social Exclusion Unit, whose introductory leaflet (Social Exclusion Unit 1997: 1) included the following explanation:

'Social exclusion is a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown. The Government has policies that are targeted at reducing all of these individually, but Government programmes have been less good at tackling the interaction between these problems or preventing them arising in the first place.

The purpose of the unit is to help break this vicious circle and coordinate and improve Government action to reduce social exclusion by:

- *improving understanding* of the key characteristics of social exclusion, and the impact on it of Government policies; and

- *promoting solutions*, encouraging cooperation, disseminating best practice and, where necessary, making recommendations for changes in policies, machinery or delivery mechanisms.'

The leaflet stated that the new Unit 'will not cover issues which are of interest to one department only, or duplicate work done elsewhere'. But the breadth of the government's concern was shown by the simultaneous setting up of a 'Ministerial network on social exclusion' representing nine government departments, including among others: Environment, Transport and the Regions; Social Security; Education and Employment; Health; and the Home Office. Social exclusion was thus seen as relevant to many areas of government policy.[1]

De Haan (1998: 12) points out that, while the meaning given to social exclusion can vary according to the traditions of social and political thought which influence the writer, all definitions have three features in common. First, social exclusion is the antithesis of social integration, of being part of society. Second, the concept is multi-dimensional, referring to several arenas of deprivation - economic, social and political. Third, it can refer both to the state of being excluded and to the processes by which that happens.

3

An attractive and comprehensive definition of social exclusion was put forward by Commins (1993: 4) in the course of reporting on the application in Ireland of the European Community's Third Poverty Programme. Commins wrote:

'If we are to understand the process of exclusion we need to look at the processes of integration: exclusion occurs when there is a breakdown or malfunctioning of the processes, or mechanisms, of integration. What are these processes or mechanisms? They can be seen to comprise four systems which are important for personal identity and integration.

- the democratic and legal system, which promotes civic integration;

- the labour market, which promotes economic integration;

- the welfare state system promoting what may be called social integration; and

- the family and community system which promotes interpersonal integration.

One's sense of belonging in society depends on all four systems. Civic integration means being an equal citizen in a democratic system. Economic integration means having a job, having a valued economic function, being able to pay your way. Social integration means being able to avail oneself of the social services provided by the state. Interpersonal integration means having family and friends, neighbours and social networks to provide care and companionship and moral support when these are needed. All four systems are therefore, important. ... In a way the four systems are complementary; when one or two are weak the others need to be strong. And the worst off are those for whom all systems have failed, the poor and the isolated who are the most marginalised, the most excluded.'

As Berghman (1995: 19) observed, Commins' framework for defining social inclusion has affinity with Marshall's classic definition of citizenship in terms of three kinds of rights: civil, political and social. And in regard to the first kind Marshall said:

4

'In the economic field the basic civil right is the right to work' (Marshall 1950, in Marshall and Bottomore 1992: 8, 10).

The significance of work

From much of the above it would seem that for most people the opportunity of work, meaning paid employment (including self-employment), is a necessary and important component of social inclusion. In 1982 Jahoda propounded the influential thesis that most people have deep-seated needs for certain categories of experience: regular activity, a structuring of time, social relations outside the home, participation in a collective purpose, and a sense of social status and identity; and that in modern industrial societies employment automatically provides these experiences in addition to its vital function of enabling the worker to earn a livelihood (Jahoda 1982: 84-85). A major British research programme carried out in the changing economic conditions of the late 1980s found that unemployment (and other forms of labour market insecurity) did indeed cause psychological ill-health (Burchell 1994); that for the unemployed this effect occurred partly through reduced access to the 'Jahoda experiences', independently of other variables such as loss of income (Gershuny 1994); that the unemployed were at greater risk of marriage break-up (Lampard 1994); that unemployed people's social contacts tended to be with other unemployed, in relatively segregated networks which offered weaker support in times of material and psychological difficulty (Gallie, Gershuny and Vogler 1994); and that the unemployed and others precariously placed in the labour market suffered cumulative disadvantages including money problems, reduced living standards, lower quality housing, and poorer health both psychological and physical (Gallie and Vogler 1994). Summing up the findings of the research programme two of the principal researchers said: 'The evidence marshalled in this volume suggests that the unemployed form a distinctive group at the bottom of the social heap, who experience recurrent difficulties.' They also observed, from the evidence, that this 'underclass' could not be held responsible for its own situation (Gallie and Marsh 1994: 29-30).

Is the link between unemployment and social exclusion inevitable? And what about unpaid work, much of which is carried out by women?

Pahl (1988: 744) has suggested that whether an activity is 'work' depends on the social relations in which it is embedded: the worker may be paid or unpaid, and perform the task from any of a range of motives, expected satisfactions, and relationships with other people. Traditionally, much of society's unpaid caring work has been done by women - as housewives, mothers, and volunteers in charities. Gallie and Vogler (1994) found that women losing paid jobs tended to suffer less psychological stress than men, Gershuny (1994) found the link between psychological health and access to the 'Jahoda experiences' to be smaller for women than for men (though still significant), and Gallie and Marsh (1994: 18-19), commenting on such findings, suggested that the effects of job insecurity 'may be mediated by expectations and by household gender roles'.

Levitas (1996) argues that much of the discourse of social exclusion equates it with exclusion from the labour market and therefore devalues unpaid work. Pateman (1988) said that definitions of citizenship like Marshall's which incorporate paid employment do not take sufficient account of women: women have historically been treated as dependants of men rather than citizens themselves, and even today they have less access than men to well-paid jobs and are expected to do much unpaid welfare work. She argued that to achieve full citizenship for both sexes the concepts of independence, work and welfare needed to be recast, and suggested that one step towards this would be to pay all adults, employed or not, a guaranteed social income.

However in Pixley's study <u>Citizenship and Employment</u> (1993) this proposal was investigated and rejected. Her project was to look at post-industrial societies of the late 1980s, with their apparently chronically high levels of unemployment, and enquire whether full citizenship is possible without the opportunity of paid work. From theoretical and historical considerations, and contemporary practical evidence, she concluded that it is not. Experience in OECD countries of proposals for guaranteed income schemes, communes and worker co-operatives showed that such programmes weakened citizens' rights and marginalised the unemployed. Women, in order to be independent of men and of the state, and to argue that domestic tasks and the care of children should be equally shared, need access to paid employment. Pixley concludes (p. 5): 'In the light of the evidence, it seems that those [men and women] who are

6

excluded from mainstream work become more powerless and experience a more meaningless life than those who are included.'

So it seems that the opportunity for employment is essential for social inclusion. The present writer's opinion is that unpaid socially useful work should be equally valued, but this appears to be an impractical ideal. The Labour government's enthusiasm that everyone who can shall take a job, and its apparent refusal to allow that the word 'work' can apply to the tasks of parenting small children[2] reinforce the view that, in general, social inclusion requires people to contribute through paid work to the community in which they live.

Social exclusion and crime

This was the theme of a special issue (in December 1997) of the journal <u>Social Policy and Administration</u>, and points from four of its articles will now be mentioned.

Donnison, writing on 'Creating a safer society', says that in a period of increasing crime and public fear of it there is pressure to exclude convicted offenders from the rest of society, resulting in a large prison population. But this does not solve the problem. To improve public safety and allay anxiety requires action of several kinds. Especially in poor neighbourhoods, which are the most likely to be vulnerable to crime and incivilities, worried people must be consulted about their specific troubles, and those who cause the trouble must be involved in the consultation too so that local solutions can be explored. It must be recognised that in deprived areas whose residents are in effect excluded from mainstream opportunities - where young people have little hope of a job and families struggle to make ends meet - there is anger. The anger tends to be resolved in one of three ways: depression and apathy, or delinquency and then serious crime, or mobilisation of energy which has the potential for creative action. Civic leaders must draw on the latter to support local communities: employment must be created, families helped, local services provided. Outlining these and other measures Donnison says, 'crime and the fear of it play an important part in dividing society by encouraging hostile, uncaring, punitive feelings between groups, neighbourhoods and social classes', and 'any response ... must include an attempt to rebuild a stronger sense

of community'. In the same article he points out that the workplace is a main site of socialisation. 'If people have no work at all, then they have no opportunity to participate in one of the principal settings where standards of behaviour have in the past been forged and passed on to succeeding generations' (Donnison 1997: 12, 10).

Murie in his paper 'Linking housing changes to crime' reviews the processes by which many council estates have come to house disproportionately high numbers of offenders and victims. Up to the 1950s most council housing areas comprised stable neighbourhoods of employed working-class families, and were not particularly associated with crime. But then gradually, as the private rented sector shrank, the poorest people were increasingly housed by councils, while residents with more choice moved away from the least attractive estates. This process of differentiation has gathered pace in the last two decades, exacerbated by the 'right to buy', by allocation practices which distinguished between 'rough' and 'respectable' tenants and, fundamentally, by the lack of investment in council housing. Murie says, 'Council housing has shifted from housing for the working class to housing for the non-working class and those who are marginal to the labour market. In the economy of the 1980s and 1990s this marginal group has had much longer periods outside employment, with much greater benefit dependency, and there is the growth of a generation with very limited experience of employment' (Murie 1997: 27). The poorest estates thus became concentrations of multiply disadvantaged people where crime could flourish. Although estate management schemes like the Priority Estates Project (Foster and Hope 1993, as cited by Murie) made strenuous efforts to improve residents' lives they had only partial success. The real solution, says Murie, lies in new investment in housing 'set in a wider regeneration framework with action to address issues of employment, schools, local services, policing and housing management' (Murie 1997: 35).

Part of the purpose of Pitts and Hope in their paper 'The local politics of inclusion: the state and community safety' is to contrast the different ways of thinking in Britain and France about economically marginalised communities, as illustrated by their policies for the prevention of youth crime on deprived estates. In Britain the approach has been to promote co-operation and 'partnerships' between the various local agencies supplying services to residents, but these agencies traditionally have enjoyed a good deal of autonomy, with their own goals and ways of doing things. The

Conservative government from 1979 set them performance targets and required them to compete with one another for resources, while at the same time it weakened the power of local councils through which voters could express their wants. In France, on the other hand, a clear political channel was established between local residents and the national centre. In 1983 the French government set up a National Council for the Prevention of Delinquency, chaired by the prime minister, to which came most of the town mayors. At regional and local levels corresponding councils were established, with the town mayors playing a strong role. Their working groups studied local problems and channelled central government funds to them through a network of local youth workers, one of whose tasks was to help the young unemployed by training and advice. Thus, say Pitts and Hope, in France 'direct, vertical links, organisations, and communication mechanisms were established from the grassroots to the centre of national politics' (Pitts and Hope 1997: 44). The difference in outcomes was striking. Whereas in 1981 Britain and France had roughly similar levels of recorded crime, by the end of the decade the British level was rising to nearly double while the French level had dropped; and in Britain's poorest neighbourhoods the crime rate increased most while in those of France its decline was clearest. Pitts and Hope describe the British approach between 1979 and 1997 as 'the market project' and the French approach as 'the solidarity project'. Their paper is a clear illustration, in the context of crime prevention, of the different responses to social exclusion.

In the last paper to be mentioned here, 'Probation and social exclusion', Smith and Stewart say, 'A sense of the exclusionary forces working on many (officially known) offenders is important if the social and personal context of offending is to be understood' (Smith and Stewart 1997: 97). From their own and other research they describe what these forces are. Offenders known to the probation service are much more likely than the general population to be unemployed, struggling on low incomes, and in debt; to have been excluded, or to have excluded themselves, from opportunities for education and training; to be have been deprived of a stable caring family life; and to suffer from poor health (including addictions). The authors say, 'Most of the people with whom the [probation] service works can be thought of as excluded from the full range of goods associated with citizenship, not only by virtue of their status as offenders but through other experiences of marginalisation and deprivation' (Smith and Stewart 1997: 96). They also say there is little evidence that young offenders have

values and aspirations very different from the rest of society; 'given the opportunity and the support, which they will often need, they are capable of being socially included' (Smith and Stewart 1997: 105).

At this point it may be noted that the 'exclusionary forces' which Smith and Stewart found to have been acting on offenders known to the probation service are even more typical of offenders who are sent to prison. (Of course there is a large overlap between the two groups.) The National Prison Survey (Dodd and Hunter 1992) found that, compared with the general population, people in prison were far more likely to have been unemployed, to have truanted from school and left below the age of 16, and to have been in local authority care.

Smith and Stewart discuss several ways in which the probation service could promote offenders' social inclusion. One is to persuade courts to impose fewer custodial sentences, and this referent of 'social exclusion' is considered below. Another way is for the service to co-operate with others in crime prevention programmes by contributing its expert knowledge of offenders' lives and the stresses acting on marginalised social groups, so that they are not further alienated through practices of 'zero tolerance'. A third way is that the probation service should work with others to help young offenders improve their education and training and thus their prospects of employment. Here the authors say (Smith and Stewart 1997: 110): 'The supportive network needs to include a range of employers willing to participate in the reintegration of offenders and the restoration of their community membership.'

Between them the four papers considered in this section show very clearly the links between offending and the kinds of social disadvantage set out in the introductory papers of the government's Social Exclusion Unit. And recurring throughout, as well as in the literature discussed earlier, is the significance of employment - of *work*.

Imprisonment

In most of this introduction so far, the term 'social exclusion' has been taken to refer to various kinds of social deprivation and the processes leading to them. But it

can have a narrower and harsher focus: namely, imprisonment. Braithwaite (1989: 179) has written, 'Prisons are warehouses for outcasts', while Smith and Stewart (1997: 106) say that prison 'is the most definitive form of social exclusion which the law allows'. Whatever the philosophy of imprisonment, the undeniable immediate function of a prison is to exclude its inmates from society. Prisoners are segregated from the outside community, and within the prison walls they must do as they are ordered; they lose many of their civil rights; their contacts with family, friends and other people outside are limited and controlled.

Yet most adult prisoners serving sentences in British prisons are required to *work*, and they are paid (usually very small sums) for their labour. So in the context of imprisonment, what is the function of work? Is it to contribute to *prison* society, i.e. to help maintain the system which excludes them from society outside? Or is it to prepare them for integration into that society when they are released? How far does prison work resemble ordinary work outside, so that prisoners might, perhaps, perceive themselves as still part of the working world despite the prison walls? How far does the work to which a prisoner is assigned take account of his or her previous skills (if any), or aspirations for future employment, so that work in prison might be felt as part of a continuous experience leading ultimately towards social inclusion and away from crime?

Such issues are explored in this thesis, which rests largely on empirical research funded mainly by the Home Office and carried out by the writer and colleagues at Brunel University between 1992 and 1997. Most of the findings have been published elsewhere (Simon and Corbett 1996a, b; Simon 1999). Here some material from Simon (1999) is repeated and other parts are summarised; all the findings are discussed within a framework of ideas concerning social exclusion.

Plan of the thesis

This first chapter has introduced the concept of social exclusion and shown its relationship to work, crime, and imprisonment. Chapters 2-5 are intended to set the scene in various ways for the main Brunel research which is presented and discussed

in Chapters 6-10. Chapter 11 is a final discussion pulling all the issues together. Specifically:

Chapter 2 is a brief sketch of the history of prison work, looking at the various forms it has taken and the purposes that have been put forward for it, and noting especially how far the purposes have included the aim of rehabilitation (or, in up-to-date terms, helping prisoners towards social inclusion on release). The chapter is a backdrop for considering present-day prison work, and it covers the period from the late 18th century up to 1989, i.e. just before the riots which led to the landmark Woolf Report (Woolf and Tumim 1991). (Woolf's consideration of prison work, and developments following the Report, were studied as part of the Brunel research, so the narrative from the 1990s is resumed in Chapter 5.)

Chapter 3 is a literature survey, covering nearly 30 studies of prison work carried out in English-speaking countries since the 1960s. Between them they address many aspects of prison work, of which all can be seen as relevant to social exclusion and nearly all were included in the Brunel study.

Chapter 4 describes the methods of the Brunel research. The main components were: visits to six large prisons where work and training processes were observed, documents studied, and staff and prisoners interviewed; follow-up interviews with released prisoners; comparison visits to outside employers; discussions with Training and Enterprise Councils; comparison visits to outside training schemes; and the study of published material bearing on prison work and training, together with other material from Prison Service HQ which enabled the findings from the fieldwork to be put into a national context.[3]

Chapter 5 is intended to depict the immediate context of the main Brunel research. It looks at Woolf's recommendations about prison work, and at the Prison Service's response by its development of policy and practice in the early 1990s. Then follows a description of other changes since Woolf which could affect prisoners' work and training for both good and ill, with illustrations from the six prisons participating in the Brunel study.

Chapters 6-9 present the main results of the Brunel research, and each chapter contains some discussion with reference to social inclusion and exclusion. Chapter 6, after an overview of the national provision of prison work in 1996, compares work at the six prisons with that seen in the visits to outside employers. Topics examined are mainly factual: the recruitment of workers; processes and products; workplace organisation and relationships; workers' responsibilities; and their pay and perks.

Chapter 7 deals with perceptions of work. Findings are presented on prisoners' attitudes to ordinary work, their preferences and satisfactions regarding prison jobs, the roles of their instructors, and the views of both staff and prisoners on prison work compared with work outside. The last main section of the chapter examines perceptions by staff and prisoners of the purposes of prison work, and finds evidence that both groups are confused; it is concluded that underlying this state of affairs is the tension between the objectives of social exclusion and social inclusion.

Chapter 8 concerns vocational training for prisoners, describing first the national provision and then what was available at the six research prisons. Topics include access and selection, facilities, trainees' satisfaction, continuity (or lack of it) of training and work experience, and how much training prisoners actually received. Comparisons are made with outside training schemes, and the chapter ends by arguing that prisons have good potential, as yet largely unrealised, for delivering vocational training.

Chapter 9 considers release from prison. After summarising the ways in which prisons prepare inmates near release for the transition, especially in regard to looking for work, the chapter uses material from the follow-up interviews to discuss the ex-prisoners' jobhunting experiences, their financial situations, further offending, and how in retrospect they viewed their time inside.

Chapter 10 considers practical implications of the Brunel research. After arguing that the primary aim of prison work should be to promote inmates' prospects of employment on release, thus aiding their social inclusion, the chapter considers current trends in the outside world of work. It recommends that prisons should make substantial alterations to practice, in a system (here termed 'employment throughcare') which would incorporate 'what works' principles into arrangements for prison work.

Chapter 11 is a final discussion of the main issues in relation to recent and contemporary events, showing how prisons and prisoners are subject to conflicting pressures for social inclusion and social exclusion. Efforts since Woolf to develop constructive regimes, including work, have been jeopardised by public and political pressures for the social exclusion of more and more people by prison sentences. Since 1997 the Labour government has worked for social inclusion in many of its policies, including changes to the criminal justice system and some endorsement of restorative justice, but it has also shown tendencies in the opposite direction. The chapter ends by referring to David Garland's discussion (1990: 292) of the moral contradiction inherent in punishment.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. By June 1999 the Unit had published five reports: on school exclusion and truancy, rough sleeping, deprived neighbourhoods, teenage parenthood, and 16-18 year-olds not in training, education or employment (Social Exclusion Unit 1999).

2. The writer has had extensive private correspondence on this topic with the Secretary of State for Social Security.

3. All interviewees were assured of confidentiality. Where chapters include case examples and quotations, anonymity has been preserved by giving most informants a number preceded by R (for respondent). These numbers were used only for the research and have nothing to do with any others.

CHAPTER 2

NOTES FROM THE HISTORY OF PRISON WORK, 1770s - 1989

Introduction

A main object of this thesis is to relate the concept of social exclusion to the work done by prisoners (in England and Wales) in the 1990s. This will entail exploring a number of issues, including: the nature and content of prison work; the purposes officially stated for it; the extent to which it fulfils those purposes; the ways in which prison staff and prisoners perceive it, and what purposes they think it has; the similarities and differences between work in prison and work outside; and, most importantly, the extent to which prisoners' work helps them - or does not help them - to prepare for inclusion in ordinary society once they are released from prison.

But although the term 'social exclusion' as currently used is of recent origin, imprisonment, as a sentence for convicted offenders which largely cuts them off from society outside, has been used in Britain for more than two centuries, and the requirement on sentenced prisoners to work has been in practice for nearly as long. So as a preparation for considering how prisoners' work in the 1990s is related to social exclusion, this chapter glances back over the history of prison work, noting the various forms it has taken, the purposes which have been officially advanced for it, what some critics have said about it and, especially since the 1950s, how certain constraints operating on the prison system have affected it. In regard to the purposes of prison work, it is of particular interest to note how far these have included the aim of helping prisoners on release to take (or resume) a place in normal society: i.e. the aim of rehabilitation (or, in up-to-date terms, social inclusion).[1]

Before Gladstone

In the 18th and 19th centuries work was one of the three chief elements seen by the authorities as making prison regimes both reformative and deterrent, the other two being religion and (for most prisoners) solitary confinement. But the relative importance of work, its rationale, and the forms it took, varied with time and place. John Howard believed that the prison cell should induce reflection and repentance, aided by the discipline of labour ('of the hardest and most servile kind' according to the 1779 Penitentiary Act which he helped to draft - Harding et al. 1985: 117). At Gloucester Penitentiary in the 1780s work was given to prisoners as a relief from the rigours of solitary confinement (Harding et al. 1985: 124). From the 1820s prison regimes became harsher as a response to rising crime and increasing numbers of prisoners, and many prisons used the treadwheel, the bread and water diet, and the rule of silence (Ignatieff 1978: 176-179). William Crawford, one of the first prisons inspectors, wrote in 1834 that work was a comfort to prevent insanity (Harding et al. 1985: 148). At Pentonville in 1842 the typical prisoner spent 23 hours a day alone in his cell, eight and a half of them working at his cobbler's bench or loom to make prisoners' boots or cloth for their garments (Ignatieff 1978: 308).

From 1848 public works prisons, gradually replacing transportation, received the minority of prisoners who were sentenced to penal servitude. Here the work, while still hard labour under strict discipline, could be more varied and healthy. In much of it the convicts worked together, and among the types of work were projects of public utility (including building new prisons), farming, land reclamation, and manufacturing industries, as well as domestic and maintenance tasks. Du Cane, first chairman of the Prison Commissioners after 1877, wrote that the purposes of convict labour were deterrence, reform (by instilling good work habits and a knowledge of honest trades), and - fortunately accompanying the first two, he said - helping to make the prisons self-supporting (Du Cane 1885: 170).

However most prisoners, whose sentences were of weeks or months rather than years, served all their time in local prisons. In the 1860s the locals had between them a diversity of work: Ruggles-Brise (1921: 134-135) describes how while some relied on the treadwheel and oakum picking others were vigorously engaged in manufacturing,

including the use of commercial travellers to sell the goods. But the Prison Act of 1865, following a crime wave and official views that prisons were too soft, led to increasing severity and emphasis on punishment (Harding et al. 1985: 157-60). In the 1880s (by which time the 1877 Prison Act had brought all prisons under central government control, and the prison population totalled about 18,000) the work being done by most prisoners was intended as mainly punitive and deterrent (Du Cane 1885: 73, 174). First class hard labour, to which nearly all male prisoners were put for at least the first month of their sentence, typically comprised the treadwheel or the crank, and as the majority of sentences did not exceed one month such labour would have been many prisoners' only experience of prison work. Those serving longer in local prisons would eventually be given other work such as picking oakum, making mats or mailbags, sewing prison clothes, or domestic and maintenance tasks. Female prisoners were typically employed in picking oakum, knitting and needlework, or washing and mending clothes. Except for the treadwheel and the laundry most work was done by the prisoner alone in his or her cell, for between nine and ten hours daily. The oppressiveness of prisons in late Victorian years was eventually lightened by the reforms resulting from the Gladstone Report of 1895 (Departmental Committee on Prisons (the Gladstone Committee) 1895).

So up to the end of the 19th century the purposes of prisoners' work, as officially perceived, varied with time and place. Punishment and deterrence were often to the fore, particularly when there was concern about rising crime. But work was also seen as promoting repentance for sin, or alternatively as relieving the pains of solitary confinement. It was thought to reform prisoners morally by instilling the virtues of labour, and of course it was part of prison discipline. In practice prisoners' labour helped to maintain the establishments which, however meagrely, kept them fed and clothed; it could contribute to public works; and in manufacturing industries it could produce goods for trade which brought in revenue to subsidise prison costs.

The Gladstone reforms and the new century

The Gladstone Committee said in regard to prison work:

'In consideration of this question we start from the principle that prison should have as its primary and concurrent objects, deterrence and reformation. It follows, therefore, that it is desirable to provide labour which in conjunction with the general prison discipline does not impair the one, and which does include the other' (Gladstone Report 1895: 18-19).

Notwithstanding their continued regard for deterrence the Committee's report led to the substantial amelioration of prison conditions, including those of work. During the next two decades treadwheels, cranks and oakum picking were replaced by workshops where prisoners worked together, staff were paid extra for instructing them, and some power machines were installed. There was a drive to obtain industrial work, largely from other government departments. From 1902 trade training was given to some young prisoners, while at the local prisons inmates increasingly spent more of their working hours in association and fewer alone in their cells. The Prison Commissioners' views on the purposes of prison work at this time may be gauged from the following passage from their 1906-07 Annual Report:

'Every effort is made ... to obtain means of employment, which shall not only be remunerative, but shall furnish in its execution the occasion of teaching some sort of industry to the prisoner which, if it may not directly conduce to his employment in that particular trade on discharge, will, at least, give him the habit of applied labour, the absence of which quality is the principal predisposing cause to a life of crime' (Annual Report 1906-07: 30).

The above quotation implies that, as well as supporting the prison system, prisoners' work was seen as aiding reformation by teaching good work habits. But in practice sufficient work was not always readily procured, and the majority of prisoners were thought capable of only simple tasks. Mailbag sewing was heavily relied on, especially for work in cells; in 1908 the Comptroller of Accounts and Stores, referring to the Post Office, said, 'That great Department is, without doubt, our sheet anchor in the matter of prison employment' (Annual Report 1907-08: 34). World War I brought prisons plenty of work making war supplies, but from 1920 it was a different matter as orders declined. In 1931 the daily hours of associated labour, which had been rising

to around seven, dropped because government economies during the slump forced a reduction in prison staff, but even so there was not enough cellular work (mainly mailbags) to keep all inmates occupied.

The 1932 inquiry and later

By 1932 concern over the state of prison work led to the setting up of a Departmental Committee 'to review the methods of employing prisoners and of assisting them to find employment on discharge, and to report what improvements are desirable and practicable.' Their report (Departmental Committee on the Employment of Prisoners 1933) indicated a thoroughgoing inquiry. Though sympathising with the prison authorities' difficulties in employing unskilled short-term inmates ('this incompetent and changing crowd of workers') they were firmly of the view that the primary aim of prison work should be the reformation of the prisoner: '... in making our proposals we have borne in mind that the main object of prison employment should be, not the exploitation of prison labour so as to secure a return to the State, but the rehabilitation of the prisoner' (para. 131). This was an interesting shift in emphasis towards rehabilitation over other aims.

But the Committee thought it not practicable to teach more than a very few prisoners trade skills for use on discharge, nor to pay wages anything like those in outside industry,[2] so those two ways in which prisoners' work might have helped their reintegration into society were rejected. Instead the Committee recommended the vigorous pursuit of industrial efficiency, and over the next five years many changes toward this end took place in prison workshops (see Simon 1999: 5-6). World War II prompted further changes, including the sub-contracting of prisoners' labour to private employers engaged in war work (Simon 1999: 6). Such arrangements brought some prisoners closer to the world of work outside prison, but the difference in pay, which fundamentally discriminated them from other workers, remained.

Thus during the first half of the 20th century punishment and deterrence as aims of prison work faded, as did the belief that it would induce penitence for sin. But the authorities hoped it would aid rehabilitation, at least by imparting good habits. In

practice prisoners' labour continued to maintain and subsidise prisons, and in wartime it contributed to the common effort.

Prison reforms in the 1950s: treatment and training

The spirit of reconstruction and optimism which followed the end of World War II was expressed, for the prison system, in Rule 6 of the Prison Rules (1949): 'The purposes of treatment and training of convicted prisoners shall be to establish in them the will to lead a good and useful life on discharge and to fit them to do so.' According to the Prison Commissioners the basis of inmates' training was personal influence on their characters by prison staff, and the material basis of training was work (Annual Report 1955: 20). Fox, the chairman, quoted with approval Grunhut's statement 'the object of prison labour in a rehabilitative programme is twofold: training for work and training by work' (Fox 1952: 179, quoting Grunhut 1948: 20). Thus prison work was seen as having a central place in the lofty purpose of preparing prisoners to take their place in law-abiding society.

In the central and training prisons work opportunities expanded, with new industrial workshops offering a full working week, and vocational training courses growing. Other developments included pre-release courses (to advise inmates on coping with life after discharge, including employment matters), and the starting of pre-release hostels where a very few selected men in the last stage of a long sentence went out daily to ordinary jobs. (At this time the average prison pay was about three shillings a week.) These improvements (and many others in prisons) were aimed at rehabilitation.

But in the local prisons, which contained the majority of prisoners, there were severe problems. The post-war growth of the welfare state had engendered expectations that the (recorded) crime rate, which had risen during the war, would then decline. But this did not happen, and after some fluctuations it rose even more steeply from 1956 onwards (Bottoms and Stevenson 1992: 4-6). The greater numbers of people convicted led to an increasing prison population, which doubled its pre-war level and passed 27,000 by the end of the decade (Home Office 1959: 1, 2), and although the number

of Prison Service establishments rose from 40 in 1946 to 70 in 1956 the locals were seriously overcrowded (Home Office 1959: 13-14). In regard to work the pressure was exacerbated by a shortage of staff, insufficient workshop space, a decline in government orders, and trade union opposition to prisoners working outside the walls as they had done during the war (Home Office 1959: 16). In 1952 the working week in local prisons rarely exceeded 22 hours. The problem was seen as the perennial one of getting enough work to occupy the majority of prisoners, who because of short sentences, perceived lack of aptitude or other reasons, would not receive industrial training. Thus the difficulties of 1931-32 seemed in large measure to have recurred, and the government's response was similar: another inquiry into prison work.

The 1960s: another inquiry, and more problems

At the end of 1959 an Advisory Council was appointed, chaired by an industrialist (Sir Wilfred Anson), 'to advise on the organisation and management of industries in prisons and borstals, including the supply of sufficient and suitable work; the development of other forms of employment for inmates; the industrial training of inmates; and related questions.' The Council's guiding principle was their belief that 'suitable work, if properly organised, is a most valuable part of a prisoner's training' (Advisory Council on the Employment of Prisoners (Home Office and Scottish Home Department) 1961: 7). Like their predecessor of 30 years earlier they emphasised industrial efficiency, which they felt was essential to good training, and they criticised the prison authorities' approach as uncertain and half-hearted. While acknowledging the difficulties of local prisons, they nevertheless thought much could be done to give the great majority of prisoners training for industrial work. 'Most jobs in modern industry which may be open to prisoners on discharge are jobs requiring not so much specific skill in a trade as general experience in modern industrial techniques and conditions' (ACEP 1961: 8). They thought that prison workshops should be run like modern factories, and they made extensive and detailed recommendations to that end. But prisoners' pay was to stay at pocket money levels, and of course the workshops remained under prison discipline.

During the 1960s the Prison Department made substantial efforts to implement the Council's recommendations. Industrial workshops were rationalised, their managements restructured, and incentive schemes introduced. Private firms were invited to set up in them (paying for labour, space and a share of overheads). And a new prison building programme made extensive use of prisoners' labour, employing men who had passed through the recently introduced short training courses in construction skills. Trade unions helped a few of these men, and others, into work on discharge.

But these endeavours were soon overshadowed by concerns about security. Between 1964 and 1966 several notorious long-sentence prisoners escaped, and after the Mountbatten Report on the matter (Mountbatten 1966) the Prison Department became preoccupied with security measures. In 1967 there was some curtailment of inmates' activities, outside working parties and education classes were reduced, and three pre-release hostels were closed (Annual Report 1967: 5). Mountbatten's recommendation for a new maximum-security prison to hold Category A prisoners was referred to the Advisory Council on the Penal System (ACPS), whose subcommittee under Radzinowicz advised instead that Category A inmates should be dispersed among others in several high security establishments (ACPS 1968), and after much debate the latter policy was decided on. Ten years later King and Elliott concluded that 'there can be little doubt that the recommendations [of the Advisory Council] led to the raising of the coefficient of security in all the closed prisons of the country' (King and Elliott 1978: 20-21).

And the prison population, fuelled by the apparently relentless increase in crime, continued to mount, reaching 35,000 in 1967. Overcrowding caused great concern, with 9,000 inmates housed two or three to a cell (Home Office 1969: 104). The Criminal Justice Act 1967 attempted to reduce the pressure on prisons by various measures including the suspended sentence and restrictions on courts' power to remand in custody (Home Office 1969: 16, 17), and for a short time this appeared to be succeeding, as the prison population fell in 1968 to 32,000. But then it climbed again, passing 34,000 in 1969, and (as the May Report later observed) (Home Office, Scottish Office and Northern Ireland Office 1979 (the May Report): 55) the activation of suspended

sentences led eventually to their introduction producing the opposite effect from what had been intended.

In local prisons in 1969 mailbag sewers were still the largest employed group, at 18% of all male workers and 28% of those engaged in prison industries. The Radzinowicz sub-committee of the ACPS, which had spent some time considering prison work, expressed the view that British practice in this regard was generally far below the best overseas, and said that while recent efforts and current planning were impressive actual progress was slow. 'We are convinced that the prison service as a whole is still not paying enough attention to prison industries' (ACPS 1968: 40).

In 1959 the Prison Commissioners had said in their White Paper <u>Penal Practice in a Changing Society</u>, 'The task of the prison is to train the whole man', with work as part of the basis for that (Home Office 1959: 15). By 1969, however, an uneasy note had crept in. The White Paper <u>People in Prison</u>, published that year, summarised the aims of the Prison Service as follows:

> 'First, it is the task of the service, under the law, to hold those committed to custody and to provide conditions for their detention which are currently acceptable to society. Second, in dealing with convicted offenders, there is an obligation on the service to do all that may be possible within the currency of the sentence "to encourage and assist them to lead a good and useful life"'

and the first task was referred to as 'humane containment' (Home Office 1969: 7).

'To do all that may be possible within the currency of the sentence' is considerably less ambitious than 'to train the whole man'. Nevertheless during most of the 1960s some official optimism remained in the higher reaches of the Prison Service. Rule 6 had been raised in 1964, with a slight change in wording, to pre-eminence as Rule 1, the authorities still looked forward to guidance from a large research programme (Home Office 1969: 52-59), and in this context it was stated that the most important aim of the current developments in prison work was 'that offenders in custody shall be given training and experience that will fit them to get and keep jobs on discharge' (Home Office 1969: 25). Rehabilitation was thus still the official aim.

The 1970s: disillusion

But in the 1970s optimism shrank. Research on penal treatments, especially the reviews by Lipton, Martinson and Wilks (1975) and Brody (1976), gave rise to the belief that 'nothing works'. The prison population was still rising, passing 42,000 in 1979. A large prison building programme begun in 1971 was later reduced through government restrictions on public spending (Annual Report 1975; May Report 1979: 143, 150). Overcrowding in local prisons continued, and many of the old establishments were in a bad state of repair (May Report 1979: 125). In 1975 the Prison Department spoke of 'a more flexible view of penal treatment' (Annual Report 1975: 14) and the following year it said frankly that the primary aim of prisons was 'humane containment' (Annual Report 1976: 16).

Despite continuing improvements in some prisons, the decade saw repeated demonstrations and violent disturbances by inmates, and unprecedented industrial action by prison officers which was largely prompted by budgetary restrictions on overtime (King and Morgan 1980: 5, 7). These convulsions led to the setting up of the May Committee, whose report in 1979 expressed the view that 'confusion about objectives has been a significant cause of the present malaise'. They thought that 'the rhetoric of "treatment and training" has had its day and should be replaced', though without changing 'all the admirable and constructive things that are done in its name', and they proposed instead the concept of 'positive custody'. They saw the primary purpose of prison work as keeping inmates occupied for at least eight hours a day (May Report 1979: 61, 67, 70, 72).

In these circumstances the managers of prison industries struggled. Efforts were made to raise the quality of workshop products and to sell more on the open market. In 1971 the industrial workshops showed a profit for the first time (farms and gardens had always been accounted profitable) and they managed it again in 1972 and 1974, but otherwise they ran at an increasing loss. The 1977 Annual Report contrasted Category C training prisons, which offered inmates a diversity of semi-skilled employment and a full working week, with local prisons where orders were hard to get, officers were often called away to other duties, inmate turnover was rapid, and mailbags were still relied on as 'pick up and put down' work. The May Committee said that workshops:

'...are operating at less than half capacity. Space, plant and equipment, as well as industrial staff, are being seriously under-used, orders for work are being turned away or lost and a deficit of about £4 million is being incurred...The working week is on average little more than 20 hours and for many workshops is far less than this....This is not a new phenomenon....[We] think that headquarters, most governors and the majority of prison staff beneath them have adopted a fatalistic and defeatist attitude towards this aspect of prison regimes' (May Report 1979: 69, 70).

The comments of King and Morgan, who had given evidence to the May Committee, were even more trenchant:

'In spite of valiant efforts to introduce work-study and incentive earnings schemes in recent years, the fact remains that most prisoners are under-employed, on tasks of little real value, in conditions that are a parody of the outside world. Productivity remains low, and earnings are pitiable. Education classes, like vocational training schemes, reach only a minority of the prison population' (King and Morgan 1980: 15).

The 1980s: searching for direction

Following the May Report the Prison Service tried to redefine its objectives, at a time in penal philosophy when the 'treatment model' had given way to 'just deserts' (Mott 1985: 1-15). In 1983 the Prisons Board made a statement of the task of the Service (Home Office 1984) which, while not formally replacing Rule 1, was more narrow and managerial in tone, focussing on the efficient use of resources to keep prisoners in custody, to provide for them as full a life as possible (including among other things work, education and training), and to enable them to retain links with the world outside. Ian Dunbar's influential report <u>A Sense of Direction</u> (Dunbar 1985) held that a good prison system should be based on treating staff and inmates as individuals, good inter-personal relationships, and keeping inmates active; but it did not say what should be the aim of the inmates' activity apart from implying that it would aid security and control.

And the prison population went on rising, with an average of 46,000 in 1985. This occurred in spite of attempts by the Home Office, the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice to persuade courts to use imprisonment less (Mott 1985: 5), of various measures including restrictions on custody for young offenders, and the increasing use of community service orders (Vass 1990: 21, 23). Factors contributing to the rise were a decline in the use of fines (Crow et al. 1989: 20-21), a greater number of remands in custody, and a general trend towards imposing longer sentences (Vass 1990: 22). In 1988 the population of prisoners averaged nearly 50,000, and despite another large new building programme overcrowding in local prisons was such that more than 1,000 inmates were accommodated in police cells (Home Office 1996a: Table 1.5).

Prison industries were beset by troubles. The middle of the decade revealed the Prindus scandal, in which £20 million had been lost through mismanagement leading to a corruption inquiry (Simon 1999: 9-10). Reorganisation and tightened financial control reduced the number of workshop employment places for inmates during 1986-87 from 14,204 to 12,863, but even so only 66% of those places were taken up, a proportion which remained much the same in the next two years. In 1987 the National Audit Office reported that good progress was being made towards controlling losses, but that big differences existed in management and workshop efficiency even between prisons of the same type, and that the Home Office lacked a long-term plan for prison industries (National Audit Office 1987).

Lack of planning for prison work had already been illustrated two decades previously by the remarkable muddles over Albany Prison, opened in 1967 (King and Elliott 1978: 113-119), and in the mid 1980s similar confusion was apparent at Coldingley. Coldingley Prison had been intended as a pilot industrial prison following the Anson recommendations (see pp. 21-22), and when first started in 1969 its regime had given inmates a full working week without interruptions in well-equipped workshops. But by 1986 things were changing: the population was more mixed, fewer prisoners were working, there was pressure to reduce the 40-hour week, and inmate workers lacked motivation. Several years later matters were worse, and the Inspectors reported (in 1993) that the concept of an industrial prison had not been followed through (Simon 1999: 10-11).

In 1985-87 King and McDermott studied conditions and regimes in a representative range of adult male prisons and compared them with what they had seen 15 years previously. They found that, although some aspects had improved, the core regime elements of time out of cell and hours spent in work had deteriorated badly, not only in local prisons but also, and especially, in the higher-security training prisons (dispersal and Category B). They described their findings as revealing 'the ever-deepening crisis'. And their comment in regard to security may be noted here: 'There seems little doubt that, rightly or wrongly, the quest for greater security and control in the dispersal system has led to massive increases in staff and major curtailments in regimes' (King and McDermott 1989: 124).

However, in 1989 the prison population showed a welcome decline, which continued (with some fluctuations) until early 1993 when the total was about 42,000. This was due mainly to changes in sentencing and procedure under the Criminal Justice Act 1988, to provision for non-custodial measures following the publication of the Home Office Green Paper Punishment, Custody and the Community in 1988, and to the major changes made by the Criminal Justice Act 1991 (Home Office 1996a: 3-4). Matters since 1990 will be discussed in later chapters. It may be remarked here, however, that by the end of the 1980s the annual reports of the Prison Service and the Inspectorate, read together, were giving a mixed picture of what was happening in prisons. A major development was the implementation from 1987 of Fresh Start, the new staffing scheme which the Home Office hoped would lead to industrial peace. Another event was the adoption from 1988 of the now well-known statement of purpose: 'Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.'

And some good things were happening. Daytime education had expanded, more vocational courses were running, and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) were slowly being introduced into prisoners' training in several kinds of work. Physical education was enabling more inmates to gain certificates which might help some find jobs on release. More establishments (80 in 1988-89) were running officer-led pre-release courses, and prisoners were increasingly involved in voluntary work and other activities which kept them in touch with community groups outside.

But a principal finding by the Inspectors in 1988 was the considerable variation between individual prisons, even between some of the same type, in their provision for inmates: in many aspects of regimes there was great inconsistency. On work, the Inspectors noted the under-use of workshops, large differences in the quality of work provided, the short working hours, interruptions for other purposes, and variable procedures for placing inmates in work. In summing up (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1989: 15) they said:

'All of these problems - the lack of enough work in the prison system, staffing problems, unrealistic workshop criteria, the failure to make the best use of inmates' skills, the daily interruptions - reflect the ambivalence with which the role of work in prisons is seen.'

Final comments

'Ambivalence' was an apt word. The last four sections have shown how from the 1950s prisoners' work was a subject of 'treatment and training' rhetoric eventually admitted to be unrealistic; how the mass of inmates in local prisons got very little worthwhile work while some in training establishments had valuable opportunities; how efforts to provide steady work were bedevilled by management failures and lack of planning; and how the perceived purposes of imprisonment, which were the context for inmates' work, were shifting and confused. Moreover, good intentions were hampered by problems of money, security and above all the recurrent pressures of a rising prison population, and later it will be seen that these three constraints were repeated in the 1990s.

Altogether, from the late 18th century up to the beginning of the 1990s, a multiplicity of purposes has been put forward for prison work. They include: redemption from sin; an aid to discipline; teaching the virtues of labour; maintaining prisons; running them as profitable factories, or at least reducing their costs; alleviating the rigours of incarceration; building public works; punishment; deterrence; imparting good work habits; imparting trade skills; 'treatment and training'; and just keeping prisoners occupied. In the 20th century redemption from sin, punishment and deterrence have faded from the list, but the others recur under

various labels, and the idea that prisons should fit inmates for employment on release (which in up-to-date terms would contribute to their social inclusion) appears from time to time along with others. As Chapter 7 will show, the Brunel study found that most of the purposes listed were still salient in the minds of prison staff and prisoners in 1992, leading to some contradictions and confusion.

And every two or three decades there has been an official inquiry into prison work, or into the wider prison system in which it takes place. The Gladstone Committee of 1895, the Departmental Committee of 1932, the Advisory Council of the early 1960s, the May Committee in 1979 - not to mention other critics like the National Audit Office or the Prisons Inspectorate - have all deliberated on the problems of prison work, within the other complexities of imprisonment and the shifting currents of penal philosophy.

Chapter 5 will resume the story of prison work from the time of the Woolf Report, including the use of a little material from the Brunel study (whose methods are described in Chapter 4). Before that, however, Chapter 3 offers a review of other studies of prison work.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. For the section on the 18th and 19th centuries the chief sources have been: Harding, Hines, Ireland and Rawlings (1985), especially chapters 5 and 6; and Ignatieff (1978), especially chapters 3, 4 and 7. From the mid 1880s onwards the sources of factual information on the content of prison work, prison conditions, the prison population and related matters are, unless otherwise stated, the annual reports of the Commissioners of Prisons/ Prison Department/Prison Service, and for simplicity they will be referred to as the Annual Reports, and usually not cited specifically except in support of direct quotations. Other sources, and references for specific points, are cited separately.

2. By 1938 average earnings by prisoners doing piece-work were about seven pence a week (Home Office 1945: 10).

CHAPTER 3

OTHER STUDIES OF PRISON WORK

Introduction

This chapter looks at nearly 30 studies of prison work which have been carried out (in English-speaking countries) since the early 1960s. None of them refers specifically to social exclusion (which was not a term in general use when most of them were done), and it is not intended in this chapter to link them directly with it (except as on pp. 41 and 45). Instead, together they serve to show what a complex subject prison work is, and between them they address many aspects: the aims and purposes of prison work; its organisation and content; perceptions of it by prison staff and inmates; management matters and constraints; vocational training for prisoners; the resemblance of prison work to outside work, and the consequences of involving outside firms with prisons; and the extent to which prison work and training may help a person find employment on release from prison.

All these aspects can be seen as relevant to social inclusion, and almost all were included in the Brunel research. Some of the studies surveyed here are parts of wider studies of imprisonment; some are reviews and discussions of other authors' work; and a few could be characterised as well-informed journalistic comment. Few have any clear theoretical stance: those with most are Dawson (1975), Legge (1978), Lightman (1979, 1982) and Dobash et al. (1986).

At this point, before proceeding to look at the studies, it is appropriate to consider briefly the possible relationships between prison work, ex-prisoners' employment and recidivism.

In Chapter 2 it was seen that prison work has often been justified by its supposed contribution towards making prisoners less likely to continue in crime after their release. Leaving aside questions of punishment and deterrence, it has been assumed that the reformative influence of prison work will occur through its efficacy as training in good moral character, and/or through its training of prisoners for subsequent employment, either by teaching them specific trades or at least by instilling a work ethic and good work habits. This second part of the reasoning - about the value of training for subsequent employment - rests on the assumption that ex-prisoners who get jobs are less likely to reoffend.

There is in fact a great deal of evidence that having worthwhile legitimate work reduces the likelihood of a person's further involvement in crime. Braithwaite (1980: 12, 23-24) said, 'There have been many studies in Great Britain and America which show with a remarkable degree of consistency that prisoners who find stable employment upon release have about half (and sometimes less than half) the probability of being reconvicted compared with releasees who have a pattern of unemployment,' and cited 14 such studies. Crow et al. (1989: 79) said, 'In one study after another it has been shown that probationers, ex-prisoners and others are significantly more likely to re-offend at some later date if they are unemployed,' and cited ten British studies of which only two were also on Braithwaite's list. Andrews and Bonta (1994), after a large review of research looking for predictors of criminal behaviour in individuals, included 'an unstable employment record' in the set of 'major risk/need factors' which they regarded as well established. Motiuk (1996) described further recent research with similar findings.

It is not asserted here that there is a simple link between being unemployed and committing crime. On the contrary, unemployment is one factor in the complex picture of connections between social exclusion and crime (see pp. 7-10), and the Brunel research found that for ex-prisoners the link between having a job and avoiding reoffending was not simple (Simon 1999: 175-177). But in general terms the link is well established. As to reasons for it, a little may be said here. Braithwaite (1980: 14-15) suggests that, at least for property crime, the best explanation is rational choice:

the person with no job (or with a badly paid and unfulfilling one) may decide that there are better rewards, both economic and personal, to be had from crime. Another explanation, which does not necessarily involve the offender's conscious decision, is suggested by the following passage in Maguire, Peroud and Raynor (1996: 71-72):

> '...lack of social integration could be regarded as a criminogenic need. This would be consistent with control theories of delinquency (Hirschi 1969) which point to various dimensions of social integration as effective restraints for the potential offender: in Hirschi's formulation the key factors are attachment to others, commitment to shared norms and interests which would be endangered by crime, involvement in non-criminal occupations and belief or acceptance of non-criminal norms.'

Considering now the 'Jahoda experiences' provided by employment (see p. 5), one can see that for a person who has a satisfying legitimate job the workplace can be a main source of Hirschi's control factors. So work, which is (for most people) a main component of social inclusion, can counteract inclination towards crime.

The assumptions that prison work is training for good character, or that it enhances prospects of post-release employment, have been tested in several studies of prison work by incorporating a follow-up of ex-prisoners. This enquires whether their post-release work experiences, or their further offending (if any), showed any relationship with the work (or vocational training) they did in prison. Such a follow-up, then, is one of the most important themes among the studies now to be reviewed.

....

It was not found possible to classify the studies neatly along just a few dimensions. In this chapter they are grouped, or treated singly, according to a variety of movable criteria including the themes mentioned above, chronology, size, and type of writing (e.g. review or empirical investigation). Several are cited under more than one heading. Perhaps the difficulty of grouping them reflects to some extent the complex nature of prison work and the issues associated with it.

Early studies

Cooper and King (1965)

Cooper and King's study 'Social and Economic Problems of Prisoners' Work' was prompted by the recommendations of the 1960s Advisory Council on the Employment of Prisoners (see p. 21) that prison industries should aim at industrial efficiency. They categorised the main aims of prison work under two heads: penological aims (preventing mischief by keeping inmates busy, building character and responsibility, instilling good work habits, and teaching vocational skills); and economic aims (which included that prisoners should contribute to their keep, support their families, and reduce their 'debt to society', and that economic resources should not be wasted). All the economic aims depended on prison industry being efficient and profitable. The authors then analysed empirical data, gathered largely from records (especially at Maidstone Prison which was considered an example of 'good' prison work), and including a tiny follow-up study, to examine how far the aims were being realised. They concluded that it was very doubtful whether any of them were, and that 'at the root of this unhappy picture is the confusion of ends which is to be found throughout the Service' (Cooper and King 1965: 172).

The problems and issues of prison work have been examined more closely in later studies, but Cooper and King's conclusion that the aims of prison work were confused has been echoed by many writers since. The Brunel study, as Chapter 7 will show, found that it was still true in the 1990s.

Glaser (1964)

The massive research project carried out by Daniel Glaser and his colleagues into the US Federal prison system in the late 1950s and early 1960s (The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System) included an examination of prison work and a follow-up of released prisoners among its components. Most of the data was quantitative. When the Brunel study was planned it was considered that the circumstances of prisoners' work and their post-release employment opportunities in USA in the 1960s were too

different from those in Britain in the 1990s for Glaser's findings to be taken as a basis for Brunel. But his research suggested a number of useful topics to pursue, such as the constraints on prison work, inmates' prior work records and their motives for working in prison. Also noted was Glaser's conclusion (Glaser 1964: 259) that work supervisors' personal influence on prisoners could be an important factor in their rehabilitation. The Brunel findings likewise highlighted the role of work instructors, and in Chapter 10 this topic is discussed with reference to recent Canadian studies on improving prisoners' employability (see below).

Major studies with several themes

Dawson (1972, 1975)

In 1972 Sandra Dawson, an industrial sociologist, studied industrial workshops in three English training prisons. At that time Prison Service HQ still aspired to provide rehabilitative training through industrial efficiency (see p. 22), Coldingley Prison (which was not in Dawson's sample - see p. 26) had recently been established, and industries in training prisons typically worked a 35-hour week. Dawson's purpose was to look at the assumptions and consequences of prisons' attempting to imitate an outside work environment, and she spent four months in ten workshops altogether, observing processes, analysing records, attending meetings, and interviewing inmates, work instructors and prison managers.

Dawson's main report (1972, unpublished) includes detailed descriptions of the ten workshops' activities and the levels of skill at which their inmates worked. She gave much attention to the instructors, exploring how they perceived their roles, what they would have liked to aim at, and their position within the organisational structure of the prison. She asked the inmates how they saw their work, what satisfactions it gave them, and how it related to their outside working lives. In her analyses she discussed the characteristics and meanings of ordinary work outside prison and considered the severe constraints on their applicability to prison work. She proposed ways of arranging prison industries so that different workshops, with inmates at

different stages of sentence, might pursue just one of the aims of maintaining the prison, commercial production for profit, and rehabilitating prisoners.

Much of Dawson's report makes gloomy reading. Workshop products were of poor quality, while inmates worked irregularly and with little interest. Instructors were uncertain of their roles and sceptical about the value of prison work. In the only publication issuing from her study (1975) Dawson discussed some of her results in terms of power relationships, finding (among other things) that work instructors had very little power, both in relation to other staff groups (custodial officers, treatment specialists and administrators) and in relation to motivating their inmate workers for production. Judging by later events in prison industries (see p. 26) her proposals for improvements had little lasting effect.

However, Dawson's research gave much food for thought when the Brunel study was being planned. Many of the topics she included were addressed, though not necessarily in the same way. As will be seen, the Brunel research found that while some of her conclusions were still apposite 20 years later other aspects were more cheerful, especially in regard to quality, workshop atmosphere and the growth of prisoners' vocational training. These matters are reported in later chapters.

King and Elliott (1978)

King and Elliott's engrossing account of the early years of Albany Prison (Albany: Birth of a Prison - end of an era) included the inmates' work among many other topics. Planning for Albany began in the early 1960s, and was then overtaken by concerns for security following Mountbatten and the Radzinowicz sub-committee's deliberations (see p. 22). When the prison opened in 1967 it began with Category C inmates but building continued, and by 1970 it was a dispersal prison with high fences, TV surveillance, electronic controls and dogs. King and his colleagues studied Albany from its inception and its first year (when it was publicised as a show-piece of enlightenment) through to 1972-73 (when there were riots and other troubles, and it 'had become the most difficult prison in the country' - King and Elliott 1978: 305).

The researchers examined Albany's development and its continually changing regime in several ways: by analysing HQ policy decisions, the aims and management structures of the prison's successive governors, the perceptions and activities of staff and inmates, background influences and other variables. 'There is no simple way of understanding what makes a prison tick' (King and Elliott 1978: 332). The research team (four people) were present at Albany for their main fieldwork from May 1968 to September 1969, and returned for shorter visits during 1971-72. They began systematically interviewing staff and inmates only after being in the prison for several months, when they were known and trusted by practically everyone there. Some of their research instruments were piloted for later use in comparative studies of other prisons (King and McDermott 1989, 1995).

On prisoners' work, King and Elliott described how Albany's regime changed as security tightened and as HQ became preoccupied with decisions about what was suitable for Category A prisoners. They also revealed the astonishing muddles by HQ over providing staff and equipment for industries (and over other matters too) at the new prison. At the beginning Albany tried to offer inmates both 'social training' and 'industrial training' by operating a two-shift system in the workshops (sewing and carpentry) so that prisoners would have time for education, recreation, attention to welfare needs and so on without interruptions to work. But despite the strenuous efforts made by Albany staff, in the teeth of management problems, the two-shift system was never properly established. It was eventually abandoned, and by the time Albany became a dispersal prison industries had assumed priority.

King and Elliott also described in some detail all the kinds of work being done by Albany inmates in 1969, their popularity among prisoners, and the various perks and disadvantages attaching to them. For the Brunel study the chief points of interest in King and Elliott's book were these descriptions, the remarkable management difficulties affecting the workshops, the thoroughness of the research methods, and the influence on prison work of the looming concern with security.

John Braithwaite's Australian book <u>Prisons Education and Work</u> is, despite its title, a study mainly of prisoners' work and vocational training (rather than general education). Comprising three main parts, it addresses many topics of which those most relevant to the Brunel study are mentioned here.

In Part 1 Braithwaite begins a theoretical discussion by referring to Letkemann (1973) on the satisfactions offenders gain from criminal expertise. Having cited evidence that employment on release reduces recidivism (see p. 31), he argues from a rational choice perspective that prisoners should be trained in legitimate occupational skills which will enable them on release to get well-paid and satisfying jobs, thus diminishing the attraction of crime. Contrary to the principle of less eligibility (that convicts should receive a lower level of benefit than the lowest class of free men), Braithwaite maintains that a prisoner should have *greater* eligibility for education and job training for several reasons, as follows. (1) If he was employed before being imprisoned he will have lost his job as well as his freedom, and on grounds of equity he should be offered help to obtain one on release that is at least as good. (2) If he was unemployed before imprisonment, it would not be equitable to exclude him from help offered to others. (3) Most prisoners are people who have been disadvantaged socially, educationally or vocationally, and the balance should be redressed. (4) Even during periods of national unemployment there are skill shortages, and prisoners should be trained for such vacancies rather than their labour being wasted.

Braithwaite then reviews a large number of follow-up studies, and this section of his book is referred to on p. 31. Part 2 is a description of practice (in 1978) in Australian prisons, using data he gathered by visiting a representative sample of prisons all over the country. In Part 3 he discusses various issues arising from his own and other research. Prominent among them are the constraints on prison industry, and many in his list are familiar. Prisoners are by and large a workforce with poor skills, low motivation and high turnover. Administrators under pressure to occupy inmates put too many in the workshops, and are tempted to soak up labour rather than invest capital. Outside firms and trade unions complain of competition. Production is interrupted for other purposes, security takes precedence over productivity, and some custodial staff are

unsympathetic to prisoners' vocational development. The normal reward systems which motivate workers in outside industry can become inverted in prison (here Braithwaite refers to Legge 1978, discussed below).

Braithwaite suggests that some of these constraints, though real, can be exaggerated and used as excuses for bad prison management. Among his proposed remedies are a more vigorous commercial approach to managing prison industry, and the involvement of private employers. Lightman (1979, 1982) explored the implications of this in detail (see below), and discussion of the Brunel study also addressed it (Simon 1999: 201-202). Braithwaite emphasises the role of the work instructors, and says their duties should include helping to find jobs for their workers on release; the Brunel study recommended likewise (Simon 1999: 205).

Lastly, Braithwaite carried out a follow-up study (with the collaboration of the Australian Department of Employment and Youth Affairs). In a broad sample of prisons interviews were held with 303 prisoners near release who registered with the government employment service to obtain post-release unemployment benefit and help in jobhunting, and several months later their employment records were followed up. It was found that only 19% were known to have obtained jobs (other than very short periods of casual work), most of which were unskilled. Nineteen percent of the jobs obtained were related to some of the person's prison work experience, and 14% used skills learned during prison vocational training. Braithwaite thought this 'a surprisingly good result' and said, 'Such figures are a basis for hope that genuinely relevant work and training might have a considerable impact on job prospects' (Braithwaite 1980: 206, 207).

Lightman (1979, 1982)

Almost contemporaneous with Braithwaite's book, and largely complementary in its exploration of relevant issues, is E.S. Lightman's Canadian study <u>Industrial Work by Inmates in Correctional Institutions</u> (1979). This begins with a brief survey of the history of prison work in USA and Canada since the early 1800s. In Canada there were official inquiries into the problems of prison industry in 1920, 1930, the 1950s, and

1969, and the general picture Lightman gives for the 20th century is remarkably similar to the British one which emerged in Chapter 2. He concludes (Lightman 1979: 8): 'As with the correctional system in general, prison industries have been identified at various times with a variety of potentially conflicting goals', the principal ones being punishment, rehabilitation, and keeping down the costs of the system.

Looking then more closely at US and Canadian studies since the 1960s, Lightman distinguishes two basic approaches to prison work. The first is the 'manpower' view, likely to be held by people who emphasise the goal of rehabilitation, and in which prisoners are seen as disadvantaged members of the labour force needing motivation and skills to prepare them adequately for employment. The second is the 'industrial' view, likely to be held either by people disillusioned with the goal of rehabilitation or by those who do not believe it should be a main aim of prisons anyway. In the industrial view prison industry should be first and foremost a business run as much like outside industry as possible, and if that helps prisoners too, well and good. The manpower and industrial approaches start from different premises and are likely to result in different attitudes towards prisoners, though at a practical level they may agree that prison industries should aim to reflect outside conditions and that inmate rehabilitation is desirable. But either approach is likely to be accompanied by the pursuit of other goals of the prison system such as security, and also the operational meaning of 'rehabilitation' is often unclear. In this confusion, says Lightman, it is not surprising if in practice prison industry managers concentrate on tangible measurable goals like production quotas.

Lightman's catalogue of the constraints on prison industries as traditionally run is largely similar to Braithwaite's. An additional one he mentions is that prison industrial managers tend to identify with the rest of the prison system and to become isolated from the normal industrial world outside. On prisoners' pay, he says (Lightman 1979: 43): 'This is an important issue for it dramatically reflects the ambivalence surrounding correctional goals and indeed the entire correctional process.' He suggests two main reasons why most inmates are poorly paid: the first is the 'market' argument that prisoners' low productivity cannot support higher wages, and the second is that prison pay is not so much a wage for work as an allowance used as a disciplinary measure to control behaviour in the institution.

Lightman thinks the traditional work environment in prison is so unlike that outside that prisoners cannot develop transferable skills. 'Much of what is intended to be general training in prisons is in fact not general or transferable but rather is highly specific to the given setting' (Lightman 1979: 48). He does not elaborate on this notion, though he implies that it derives from the nature of prison work tasks. But here one may note Legge's thesis that prison work inverts normal reward systems (Legge 1978, discussed below), and the finding by others (e.g. Glaser 1964, King and Elliott 1978, also the Brunel study: Simon 1999) that prisoners value some prison jobs for their access to illicit perks which sustain the inmate subculture, a feature exclusive to prisons. However, later Canadian research on improving prisoners' employability (see p. 57) offers a more hopeful view.

The question arises, says Lightman, whether a prison industry can be restructured to make it resemble outside conditions more adequately, and he then describes and analyses three Canadian prison projects which attempted to do so. The first was Joyceville, where the federal government in 1976 set up a modern industrial programme in a medium-security prison, producing goods for other government departments. Except that inmates' pay was near the federal minimum wage (with deductions for tax etc.) the Joyceville scheme was quite like Coldingley (see Simon 1999: 10-11), and it apparently ran into comparable difficulties. Lightman comments that while Joyceville was based on the industrial (not manpower) model this was never properly implemented, and that its protagonists had a multiplicity of goals which led to confusion. 'As with all previous approaches towards prison industries, the aims may be incompatible or mutually exclusive with the result that none is really attained' (Lightman 1979: 61). However, he considers that paying inmate workers near-industrial wages was a step forward.

In the second and third projects the prison authorities induced private firms to set up industry in prison-provided workshops, employing inmates at outside rates of pay and training them. The employer's costs were heavily subsidised, by low rent for the workshops and by payments (under a general government training scheme available to other disadvantaged workers, not just prisoners) which covered the trainers' salaries and most of the inmates' wages. At one project the similarity to outside work was increased when inmate workers were accepted as members by the relevant trade union. The fact

that they received their wages from the employer, not the prison, lessened possible friction with other inmates who were on low prison pay.

Although these ventures too ran into difficulties they yielded valuable information, and in a later article (Lightman 1982) Lightman discusses the issues. He suggests that a major benefit of such a scheme to the prisoner is to normalise his work situation: as well as actually being paid much better, he can view himself (and be viewed by others) as a member of the outside labour market rather than a prison inmate. 'This definitional labelling issue may be one of the most useful results of the entire process' (Lightman 1982: 40). Another issue is the conflict between the employer's interest in pursuing profit and the prison's interest in rehabilitating inmates through good training and work experience. The two projects did not permit the employer to pay sub-standard wages, but it was found that in order to run 'efficiently' and keep down costs the firms tended to allocate inmates to the less skilled tasks and reserve the more skilled work for their own longer-serving civilian employees. Lightman sees the conflict between goals as inevitable where a private entrepreneur is engaged to employ prisoners, but he suggests that nevertheless such a scheme can be worthwhile. If safeguards can ensure a certain, even though sub-optimal, level of training, this is likely to be better than the prison itself can provide, and the overall benefit to the inmates probably constitutes 'a net positive social gain' (Lightman 1982: 47) which justifies the financial subsidy.

One can see that implicit in much of Lightman's discussion is the idea that prisoners' social exclusion (though he does not use that phrase) might be reduced by means of their work. The attempts to make prison workshops like those outside, the bringing in of outside firms which hired and trained inmates on much the same terms as their other employees, the trade union's acceptance of them as members, the realistic wages: these factors, as Lightman says, might enable inmates to perceive themselves less as prisoners and more as ordinary participants in normal working society. The three projects Lightman describes showed how difficult it may be for prison industries to move along this path.

In 1985-87 King and McDermott, with colleagues, carried out a large study whose main aim was to examine how English prison regimes were being affected by considerations of security and control. They chose five prisons - a local, a dispersal, and training prisons in Categories B, C and D - which well represented the male prison estate, and spent at least three months in each, becoming virtually 'part of the furniture' and observing practically everything that went on. They held formal interviews with over 300 prisoners and staff, and gathered data from nearly 1,500 by questionnaire.

In their 1989 paper 'British Prisons 1970-1987: the Ever-Deepening Crisis' they used some of their data to compare the regimes of those prisons with an earlier representative sample of five which they had studied in 1970-72. From quantitative measures of a number of variables, including the provision of work for inmates, they concluded that regimes had seriously worsened over the 15-year period. Prisoners had less access to work than formerly (though the provision of training courses and daytime education had improved), the working day was shorter, more prisoners were unemployed, and prisoners spent more time locked in their cells. It was not a simple matter of overcrowding (though that had got worse too). Nor could it be explained by lack of resources, since in the whole system both capital spending and the staff-prisoner ratio had greatly increased. The authors said, 'The apparent deterioration in core areas of the regime is on a major scale and has bitten deep into the training prisons' (King and McDermott 1989: 123), and they noted that in regard to time out of cell and hours spent in work the highest security prisons showed the greatest decline.

Six years later saw the publication of King and McDermott's comprehensive volume The State of Our Prisons. This used much more material from the 1985-87 research, updated to 1992 by information from regime monitoring and from reports by the five governors and the Inspectorate. The authors present this (and other research they carried out, notably on the maintenance of prisoners' family relationships) within a framework which discusses the changes in the Prison Service from the 1980s to 1994, and the goals, performance indicators and operating standards it set for itself following the Woolf Report.

Prisoners' work is included in the chapter on 'providing positive regimes'. There are concise descriptions of the work and training courses at the five prisons in 1985-87 and, for each prison, a quantitative summary of ratings made by staff and prisoners of the provision. These evaluative summaries, which allowed comparisons between prisons and between inmates' and staff's views, are paralleled throughout the book by similar ones on other topics, and the authors make several interesting observations. First, they found that the prisoners' views, on matters where they could be compared against some more objective measure, were not extremely negative (as might perhaps have been expected) but realistic. Staff, however, tended to shy away from being critical, and sometimes seemed to assume that it was enough to provide inmates with a facility without considering how well it actually worked. Some conditions in the local prison, however, were so poor that staff agreed with prisoners about their low quality. Second, on many aspects of regime including work, the trend of both prisoners' and staff's ratings tended to follow the security gradient, the ratings being lowest at the dispersal prison (and the local) and increasing through to be highest at the Category D trainer. In the Brunel study an important element was the comparison of staff's and prisoners' perceptions of work, though not between different prisons.

From their 1992 data King and McDermott found that the role of industrial workshops in regimes had greatly declined, while for training courses (and education) the picture was mixed. They criticised the Service's inclusion of all types of prison work in the 'key performance indicator' of 'purposeful activities' on the ground that prison maintenance jobs (which have to be done anyway) are not appropriately described as purposeful for inmates; and they proposed instead a composite indicator covering workshops, training courses, day and evening education, and physical education. On this measure they calculated that four of the five prisons showed in 1992 an improvement over the position five years earlier. They also discussed the growing interest in sentence planning, addressing offending behaviour, and giving prisoners responsibility. As will be seen, these topics as well as work and training were addressed in the Brunel study.

Overviews

Several studies reporting empirical research on prison work include a general overview of the subject, as do some other works on imprisonment as a whole. Examples of the former are Braithwaite (1980) and Lightman (1979, 1982), both discussed above, and Legge (1978) discussed below. Among the latter is the history of imprisonment by Harding et al (1985) which was drawn on for parts of Chapter 2. (See especially Harding et al: 218-221.) A substantial overview is that of Hawkins (1983).

Hawkins (1983)

In his essay 'Prison Labor and Prison Industries' Gordon Hawkins examines the circumstances which for much of the 20th century have hindered the development of efficient prison industry. From historical evidence in Britain and USA he shows the flaws in Rusche and Kirchheimer's theory that penal labour is inevitably constrained by economic forces (Rusche and Kirchheimer 1939, as cited by Hawkins 1983: 91-92). 'Throughout prison history both economic and noneconomic factors have been interrelated in an extremely complex and variable fashion' (Hawkins 1983: 94). In discussing the idleness characteristic of many American prisons he recalls the views of US penologists in the 1950s that work could contribute little of value to rehabilitative treatment, and he links this to memories of earlier decades when prisoners' labour was shamefully exploited. He examines and refutes various arguments advanced as to why prison industry must be inefficient: that prisoners are a labour force of low ability, that prison workshops are subject to short hours and interruptions, that it is hard to market the products, and so on. Such things, he says, can be overcome by competent, determined management and right priorities, and the US federal system has examples of successful industrial prisons.

Hawkins maintains that a major and long-standing impediment to the efficient and profitable use of prison labour is the principle of less eligibility. This principle 'is one of the most potent ideas to have exercised influence on penal practice' (Hawkins 1983: 98) and has had a pervasive and enduring effect on the employment of prisoners.

He traces its origin to the English Poor Law of 1834, but also notes that in 1792 Jeremy Bentham had proposed a variant of it as an aid to prison discipline. Hawkins quotes from other writers to show that throughout many decades of the 20th century public insistence on the principle of less eligibility hampered the efforts of administrators to use prison labour, and the opposition was not just for economic reasons: employers and free workers did not want to shorten the social distance between prisoners and themselves. The principle, says Hawkins, has been a strong component of public attitudes to punishment which policymakers and administrators cannot afford to ignore, and a dramatic illustration of its effect is the persistence of extremely low pay for prison work despite repeated inquiries and recommendations to the contrary (by, for example, the International Penal and Penitentiary Congress of 1950).

Nevertheless, says Hawkins, less eligibility is a relative concept and public attitudes are not immutable. The savage punishments of former times are no longer generally acceptable. Prisoners' work (like imprisonment itself) has always had several purposes, and Hawkins suggests that nowadays they should rest on three main considerations: economy, the right to work (as stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights), and rehabilitation. In regard to economy he points out that the failure to make good use of prison labour, in deference to the principle of less eligibility, actually imposes a greater burden on taxpaying citizens who are assumed to favour the principle.

The influence of public attitudes on penal policymakers is a topic discussed in Chapter 11. But it may be observed at this point that the idea of less eligibility is very close to the idea of social exclusion. Moreover, applying the principle of less eligibility to prisoners may, to use a mathematical metaphor, raise their exclusion to the third power. Many prisoners are people who experienced exclusion on the outside before their sentence started (pp. 7-10); then incarceration excludes them further; and applying 'less eligibility' to their prison conditions - whether in regard to offering them work, the type of work they are given, the pay they receive for it, or other matters - can push them even beyond the margins at which they lived before.

Comparisons between inside and outside

Two of the studies already discussed - Dawson (1972) and Lightman (1979, 1982) included a comparison of work in prison with work outside. Attention is now given to two others which specifically focused on this theme, though the second (Simon and Crow 1990) concerned mainly vocational training rather than work.

Legge (1978)

Karen Legge's paper 'Work in Prison: the Process of Inversion' draws entirely on material from other published studies, especially Dawson (1975). Her analyses use four concepts from industrial sociology: focal task (of the organisation in which the work is done); status (an individual worker's role and rank in the organisation); effort (required from the individual in terms of time, energy and competence); and reward (tangible or intangible, for the individual's work). These things, says Legge, become confused and inverted in the prison context.

The focal task of an outside business is clear, but the focal task of a prison embraces both custody and rehabilitation, which conflict and thus lead to confusion in the aims set for prisoners' work. In an outside business the individual's allocation to employment is determined by his capacity as a worker, but in prison it is decided mainly by his classification as a prisoner (offence record, security status and so on). An outside employee contributes his time and/or energy and/or competence to the organisation, but for prison workers energy and competence may conflict: should they be given simple jobs to optimise the work rate, or taught skills at the expense of productivity? 'In practice ... inversion occurs as energy effort degenerates into time effort, and the most widespread exercise of competence effort appears in the manipulation of illegitimate opportunities' (Legge 1978: 14). The outside worker's rewards include pay and prestige, but the prisoner's pay is at an infantile level and his prestige among his fellows may be at variance with the conduct wanted by the authorities. Moreover, bad work performance outside may lead to dismissal, but in prison the troublesome worker is retained while better-behaved people may be paroled. Legge draws other contrasts too, and concludes that 'the status, effort and reward

inversions that characterise prisoners' working conditions stem from the confusions generated by the potentially incompatible objectives set for work in prison ...' (Legge 1978: 20).

Comparing work inside and outside prison was a major theme of the Brunel research. While it found some of the confusion and distortions described by Legge, other aspects were more hopeful, and the researchers suggested changes that would give room for optimism. These are discussed in later chapters.

Simon and Crow (1990)

This study, entitled <u>Training Young Offenders: a comparative study of Youth Training Schemes and Youth Custody Centres</u>, was in some ways a direct predecessor of the Brunel research. Carried out in 1988 (when the authors were employed by NACRO), its aim was 'to compare current training provision in YCCs [now Young Offender Institutions] with the provision made for young offenders with the YTS [then the government training scheme for young people], and to make recommendations for improving the quality, continuity and consistency of these arrangements' (Simon and Crow 1990: 1).

The main fieldwork comprised visits of a few days to each of five YCCs and eight YTS schemes, where the researchers observed training sessions, studied documents, and interviewed key staff and a few trainees. Because time was short the data was mostly qualitative and impressionistic, and the authors describe the resulting report as 'an extended sketch'. Also included were a follow-up of YCC leavers using information from their supervising probation officers, and a small survey of NACRO YTS trainees who had been in penal institutions. Both these exercises sought to find out whether the young people's subsequent work or training bore any relationship with training they received in custody.

Many similarities were observed between YTS and YCCs in their training aims and methods, and in the care which staff tried to give the trainees. There were even parallels in some of the problems which hindered them, though for the YCCs as penal

institutions constraints were more severe. But major findings were the ignorance which each side had of the other, and the lack of progression in training or work which young people experienced on moving between the two systems. Questions of consistency and continuity received much attention in the Brunel study, which built upon the experience gained by Simon and Crow in order to explore aspects of prisoners' work and training in greater depth.

Women prisoners' work

Dobash, Dobash and Gutteridge (1986)

The Imprisonment of Women by Dobash et al. is a comprehensive study using both historical and contemporary (1980s) material. The authors trace the changing views of women's criminality: in the 19th century female offenders were regarded as fallen from the Victorian ideal, while later on medical explanations were offered in terms of their physiology, their offending been seen as pathological. In both periods women prisoners were subjected to close surveillance, and it did not seem to occur to male officials and 'experts' that their offending could be explained by rational choices in circumstances of poverty and deprivation.

Dobash et al. pay much attention to women prisoners' work, which comprised domestic tasks with the official purpose of training inmates to be good servants, or later good wives and mothers, and the actual purpose of servicing the prison. The researchers spent eight months at Cornton Vale prison (Scotland), participating in the work (sewing, laundry, kitchen and cleaning) and interviewing half the inmates. They give detailed descriptions of the work and the prisoners' opinions of it, noting that the official view of the prison as a therapeutic community (a term used also for the new Holloway at about the same time) was belied by the way it was run, the inmates being closely controlled. Most found their work boring, and few thought it would help them with future employment.

The Brunel study included women's work (at Holloway). It may be remarked here that although many female prisoners were assigned to domestic tasks, so too were

many men in male prisons; and there was evidence that views on what was proper training for women were changing.

Small studies

Jones and Cornes in <u>Open Prisons</u> (1977) studied the regimes of three closed and three open (British) prisons in an exploration of the characteristics, actual or desirable, of open prisons. Their methods included observation, interviews with key staff, and various quantitative measures of staff's and inmates' perceptions. They describe in some detail the arrangements at each prison for inmates' work and vocational training, but they do not evaluate these or relate them to other data except in brief general discussion.

Occupational psychologists in the Prison Department in the 1970s and 1980s carried out several pieces of research related to prison work and training. These studies, nearly all quantitative, focused mainly on topics like job analysis and the use of aptitude tests to select inmates for prison jobs, and most were unpublished. One of interest to the Brunel researchers was Fisher and Kelly's (1988) investigation at Highpoint Prison, since Highpoint was also in the Brunel sample. Fisher and Kelly enquired whether inmates' willingness to work in unpopular workshops could be increased by giving them better living quarters (modern single cells with toilets, etc.) than most other Highpoint inmates had at the time. They found that the better accommodation did result in improved workshop attendance and productivity; but in later years the link was lost when cell blocks for other Highpoint inmates were upgraded.

Maguire (1996) reported a study in which New York prison records were examined to see whether inmates' participation in prison industry reduced the frequency with which they broke prison rules. It is perhaps unfair to call this a small study since it involved a sample of over 1,000 cases across five prisons, and the statistical analyses were sophisticated; but it is included here because it addressed only one question: whether working in prison industry helped inmates to cope with their incarceration. The researchers found that among those who were most prone to rule-breaking, it did;

and they also concluded that 'prison industry appears to have provided a venue for well-adjusted inmates to do their time and avoid potential problems' (Maguire 1996: 42). In the Brunel study one topic of interviews with inmates was whether prison work helped them to serve their sentences without getting into trouble.

Mainly management matters

May (1988)

Chris May's study 'Prison Workshop Hours' was undertaken in England and Wales in 1986, after the Prison Service had noted that over 15 years the average weekly hours in prison workshops had declined from about 28 to 19. Six prisons, representing different types and with different working practices, were investigated to see how longer hours could be achieved and interruptions reduced. Two Scottish prisons were visited for comparison. The research found considerable variations in the ways in which workshops were timetabled, staff were assigned to them, and inmates' non-work needs (e.g. for exercise) were catered for, and not all the variations could be explained by factors like security. The study was carried out before Fresh Start revised prisons' staffing (see p. 27), and May suggested (among other things) that the change might lead to better timetabling and shift systems for officers so that prisoners could spend longer at work. A few years later both the Brunel study and the review by the Inspectorate (see below) found little evidence that this had happened.

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (1993)

Doing Time or Using Time was a special review of prison regimes carried out by the Prisons Inspectorate, the researcher being David Jenkins. For a sample comprising half the prisons in England and Wales he analysed data from daily timetables and regime monitoring to show what activities (including work and training) establishments aimed to provide, and discussions with staff and inmates revealed much about how they operated in practice. The report showed that great variations in provision existed even between prisons of the same type, and that regimes depended to

a large extent on individual governors. There was little flexibility to address the needs of inmates, and little coherence or continuity between the regimes of prisons where people served different stages of sentence. The Inspectorate recommended that, in order to facilitate sentence planning and carry out the Service's statement of purpose, regimes should be designed to cater for the needs of diverse groups of prisoners, and that governors should co-ordinate their planning. Moreover, this planned diversity should exist within clusters of neighbouring establishments so that prisoners could stay reasonably near their homes, which would fulfil Woolf's objective of community prisons (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 24-25).

Continuity of inmates' work and training was a main topic in the Brunel study. The Inspectorate's review provided many ideas which were developed in discussion of the Brunel findings, especially in regard to employment throughcare (Simon 1999: 204-207, 211-212).

Flynn (1993)

Lancashire prisons in 1992 all took part in a 'skills and training audit' carried out by Nick Flynn and a team of Apex workers supported by the two Lancashire Training and Enterprise Councils. These researchers questioned a sample of inmates about their work skills, their experiences of employment and training (outside and inside prison), and their hopes for the future. From interviews with staff they gathered data on each prison's provision of work, training and education for inmates, and they related this to TECs' information on local labour markets and training opportunities in the community. Their published report (<u>Missing Links: recommendations for productive partnerships between Training and Enterprise Councils and the Prison Service</u>, 1993) stressed several matters including: the need for prisons to take account of labour markets in developing their work and training programmes for inmates; inmates' needs for vocational guidance; the need to encourage outside employers and training providers to liaise with prisons; and the role of TECs, together with probation services, in facilitating these developments. A recurrent theme was the importance of providing continuity and realism in prisoners' work and training.

The Apex survey was carried out at the same time as the early stages of the Brunel research (and included one of the same sample prisons: Kirkham). Many of Flynn's recommendations informed the discussion of the Brunel results, especially regarding the involvement of outsiders in prison work and the development of employment throughcare (Simon 1999: 200-207).

Smartt and Vagg (1998)

Smartt and Vagg's paper 'Prison Works? Contemporary Developments in Prison Labour' appeared while Simon's (1999) account of the Brunel study was in the press. Smartt and Vagg's main purpose was to discuss the schemes for 'enhanced work' and 'workshop expansion' which the Prison Service began in the 1990s, and as background the authors touched on some earlier topics (e.g. the 1960s Advisory Council) to which this thesis refers in Chapters 2 and 5.

After outlining the role of Prison Enterprise Services (see Chapter 6) in supporting prison industries they describe in some detail the schemes for real and enhanced wages which were running in 1996, using slightly later figures than those on p. 114. They relate how PES aimed in 1996 to expand workshops' capacity to pay prisoners better wages by having longer hours, higher productivity and more input from the private sector. Smartt and Vagg express concern over several possible outcomes. Discontent may arise among inmates if larger minorities (i.e. more than the present tiny groups) have access to higher pay than the majority get. Greater reliance on private contracts involves more commercial risk. And the Treasury's requirement to remit prison workshops' income to the centre gives governors little incentive to develop profitable schemes for their own establishments, and if they do there could be pressure for prisons to generate more money towards their own budgets, which might not be in their (or the inmates') best interests (Smartt and Vagg 1998: 11-12).

Follow-up studies

The importance of follow-up studies, which look for links between a person's experience of prison work (or vocational training) and recidivism or employment after release, was discussed on pp. 30-32. Braithwaite's follow-up study, in which he thought that for 4% of ex-prisoners to have obtained jobs related to their prison work was 'a surprisingly good result', has already been described on p. 38. Now attention is given to some others.

McHutchison (1991)

Judy McHutchison's mainly descriptive study of prison industry and training in New South Wales (N.S.W. Corrective Services Industries and Offender Post-Release Employment) included a follow-up component. From prison records she took a sample of 139 men who before their release had worked continuously for at least three months in an industrial workshop (where training was given), and 69 others who had worked likewise in service and maintenance tasks. She attempted to compare the two groups in regard to recidivism (defined as conviction leading to re-imprisonment within six months) and post-release employment. There was almost no difference in re-imprisonment rates. She succeeded in obtaining information (mainly from supervising probation officers, and between one and two years after release) for only 110 of the sample. On three measures of work record there was no statistically significant difference between the industries group and the services group (though on each one the industries group did slightly better). However in a small subset of 35 people who had been in their prison work assignment for at least six months, those from industries were significantly more likely to have found a job, and found it quickly. Most people in the industries group did not get work in the same industry outside prison, though a few used their prison-learned skills for 'do it yourself' interests. (This last result was close to one of the Brunel findings - Simon 1999: 164, 169.)

McHutchison's report says nothing about any differences between the industries group and the services group in their pre-prison employment record (which might have been expected to influence their post-release one), or in their risk of recidivism. Her

results imply that steady experience in prison industries may have been an advantage, but because of the smallness of the samples and possible selection bias this follow-up study must be regarded at best as inconclusive.

Motiuk and Belcourt (1996)

This Canadian study, 'CORCAN participation and post-release recidivism', focused on a sample of 269 men who had worked continuously for at least six months in the federal prison industries programme (CORCAN) shortly before their release, and whose criminal records were followed up for between one and three years. Data for them was compared with data for the national population of ex-prisoners, most of whom would not have worked in CORCAN. Both groups were subdivided according to the type of their release, which was correlated with risk of recidivism, so to that extent difference in risk was controlled for. It was found that among people released on full parole (most of whom had been classed as low risk) the 52 CORCAN participants did significantly better than the national average, the proportions returned to federal custody being 19% as against 27%. Among people released in other ways (day parole or statutory release) the CORCAN group showed no such reduction. The authors concluded that 'uninterrupted participation in CORCAN prison industry programs immediately prior to release may have a positive impact on offender post-release recidivism, particularly for offenders released on full parole' (Motiuk and Belcourt 1996: 17). It may be remarked, however, that at 52 the sample of CORCAN participants giving rise to this inference was quite small.

Saylor and Gaes (1996)

A much larger study involving over 7,000 inmates in the US federal prison system has been reported by Saylor and Gaes under the title 'The Effect of Prison Employment and Vocational/apprenticeship Training on Long-term Recidivism'. People who while in federal prison had worked in prison industry, or had received vocational or apprenticeship training, were compared with other federal prisoners who had not, a statistical matching procedure being used to eliminate selection bias. Early results

showed that: those who had worked in industry or received training (the programme group) were 24% more likely than the comparison group to obtain outside work during a transitional stay in a halfway house before their conditional release; during the first year of conditional release 72% of the programme group found and kept jobs, compared with 63% of the comparison group; and in the first year 7% of the programme group were rearrested or had their conditional release revoked compared with 10% of the comparison group. All these differences were statistically significant. Over a very much longer follow-up period (8-12 years) it was found that men in the programme group who had worked in industry survived 20% longer than men in the comparison group before committing a new offence, while for men in the programme group who had received training the difference was even bigger, at 28%; for revocation of conditional release, however, there was no significant difference. Women had lower recidivism rates than men, but for women there was no difference between the programme and comparison groups. The authors concluded as follows (Saylor and Gaes 1996: 14):

'It appears that prison employment in an industrial work setting and vocational or apprenticeship training can have both short- and long-term effects that reduce the likelihood of recidivism, particularly for men. Although this participation does not seem to impact on long-term conditional release revocation, it does seem to reduce the return to custody for new offences. On average, offenders who receive new sentences will spend much longer in prison than those who just have their conditional release revoked. Therefore, correctional industries work and training programs could help to reduce prison populations.'

This was an encouraging result. The differences in outcome between the programme and comparison groups were fairly modest, but in such a large sample they were certainly statistically significant.

Comments

These three follow-up studies have been described in some detail because they are all recent ones, and because at least that of Saylor and Gaes showed some clear

positive findings. However, over a larger range the picture is much more variable. Maguire (1996), after citing four other US studies published since 1984 on the relationship between prison work and recidivism, describes Saylor and Gaes as 'the single exception to the generally negative findings' (Maguire 1996: 42 n. 2). Braithwaite's (1980) book includes a review of a large number of follow-up studies (carried out before 1979, and mainly in USA) to enquire whether prison work, vocational training, education, work release, or pre-release job placement reduces recidivism, and he finds the evidence to be mixed. Recidivism is a 'slippery criterion' (Braithwaite 1980: 53). Data on vocational programmes in prison is weak, and the programmes themselves are weak: it is unrealistic to expect to change a prisoner's lifetime habits by something which impinges on him for only part of the day over a period of months. Braithwaite concludes, however, that vocational programmes can sometimes reduce reoffending, and that the basic problem for prison managers is to safeguard the continuity of the prisoner's progress through recruitment, assessment, formal training, relevant work experience and job placement. 'Unless there is a continuous flow through all stages, then the program will have failed' (Braithwaite 1980: 54).

In 1992 Kaye McLaren, in her major exposition of 'what works' principles (Reducing Reoffending: What Works Now), reviewed studies of vocational programmes (as well as many others). In summing up that review she wrote (McLaren 1992: 63):

'It is clear that work interventions have shown mixed results, and that experimentally rigorous studies which report positive outcomes have been infrequent...There is clearly potential for the further development of work interventions, particularly given their present high profile in correctional planning. Application of some of the suggestions above, and of the principles of effective interventions outlined on pp. 72-84 [here she was referring to 'what works'] could well improve outcomes in this area. It may well be that the failure of vocational interventions to reduce offending on a consistent basis may have less to do with the broad intervention type than with their failure to incorporate what is currently known about effectiveness into design and implementation.'

Braithwaite's emphasis on continuity is significant, and McLaren's exposition of 'what works' principles takes matters much further. The Brunel findings stressed the importance of continuity, and discussion of them showed in detail how 'what works' could be applied to prisoners' work and training linked to employment opportunities after release. (See Simon 1999: 135-139, 204-207, 213-214; and this thesis, Chapter 10.)

Research concerning prisoners' employability

Several recent Canadian studies have addressed the question of how prisoners' experience of prison work can help them to develop 'employability skills' - not specific trade skills, but generic skills that all employers want like co-operativeness, initiative, ability to solve problems and so on. If inmate workers could gain these transferable skills they would have a better chance of finding work on release even if it was not in the same industry as they had worked in while prisoners.

Gillis, Robinson and Porporino ('Inmate Employment: the Increasingly Influential Role of Generic Work Skills', 1996) found that prison workers who rated themselves highly on a number of specific employability skills also wanted to do their prison work well for its own sake, felt it was meaningful, and took responsibility for its results: thus prison work which developed these good motivational attitudes could develop general employability. Fabiano, LaPlante and Loza ('Employability: From Research to Practice', 1996) brought together studies which showed that CORCAN workers with good motivational attitudes were highly rated on work performance by their supervisors, and that supervisors who used techniques of active leadership (in which they could be trained) developed good motivational attitudes in their workers. Also, workers with these good attitudes were less likely to express criminal ones. Thus, said Fabiano et al., prison work supervisors could play a key role in helping their workers develop generic employability skills and also reduce pro-criminal attitudes. The researchers constructed instruments for measuring employability, and recommended that prison managers should involve work supervisors closely in inmates' correctional plans.

The Brunel research included questions on inmates' motivation and acquisition of employability skills. It also highlighted the role of work instructors, and referred to the Canadian studies when recommending that instructors should be more involved in sentence planning (Simon 1999: 197-199).

Other writing

From time to time other writing on prison work appears which, though perhaps not research, offers food for thought. One example is Nick Flynn's paper 'Making Workshops Work' (1995) in which he discusses the likely benefits and problems of engaging private employers with prisons and points out that there can be no uniform approach. Another instance is Mark Davies' paper 'Prisons as Social Firms - the Way Forward for Prison Industry?' (1995), which describes the successful setting up (in 1994) of a partnership between Full Sutton Prison and a fashion company to market prison-made garments. In a discussion which has echoes of Lightman (1982) Davies suggests that the tension between the aims of profit and rehabilitation can be resolved by regarding the prison as a 'social firm': an institution which, while still seeking to operate as a business, provides realistic work experience and training for people who would otherwise be handicapped in the labour market.

Lastly, as a corrective to any unrealistic optimism about industrial prisons, one may note the views of Rod Caird in his book <u>A Good and Useful Life</u> (1974). Caird spent ten months as a prisoner in Coldingley in 1970-71 (see p. 26), and he critically discusses the extent to which, even in the first year or so, Coldingley workshops actually did match outside industrial conditions. He felt that what determined the working atmosphere was overwhelmingly the prison discipline, whose effects far outweighed features like clocking on and calling the workshop staff 'foremen' (which the prisoners never did).

Final comment

This long chapter has examined a variety of studies of prison work. They differ in size and depth, and between them they address many aspects. Of the various themes they include the most important are: the nature and content of prison work; the extent to which it resembles work outside prison; prisoners' and prison staff's perceptions of it; and, most significantly, whether prisoners' experiences of prison work contribute to their inclusion in the wider society when they are released. All these matters were addressed by the Brunel study, whose methods of research are described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

METHODS OF THE BRUNEL RESEARCH

Introduction

The Brunel study originated from an expression of interest late in 1990 by the then head of Prison Service Industries and Farms, Miss J. MacNaughton. Having read Simon and Crow's <u>Training Young Offenders</u> (see p. 47) she enquired whether the same researchers might study the work PSIF provided for adult prisoners, with the aim of informing the development of PSIF. By this time Frances Simon was at Brunel, and during 1991 she and Claire Corbett held discussions with the Home Office (PSIF, the Research and Planning Unit, and other sections) on the possible shape of a study of adult prisoners' work and training to be funded by the Home Office. Eventually agreement was reached on the design of an evaluative study covering all the main types of work and vocational training prisons provided for sentenced adults. It would be based on a sample of six prisons, make comparisons with work and training outside, incorporate a follow-up of ex-prisoners, and use both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The specific objectives of the research were agreed as follows:

(1) To describe the nature of prison work and work-related training at a sample of prisons, and to compare it with work and training in the same industries outside prison.

(2) To describe the employment experiences of a sample of prisoners leaving prison establishments, and to examine how their experiences on release correlated with the work and training opportunities offered to them during sentence.

(3) To describe how prisoners experienced and perceived the work and training they did in prison, in relation to (a) the totality of their sentence and their confinement while serving it, and (b) their work and training careers before sentence and after release.

This study, funded by the Home Office for 22 months, began in April 1992. The fieldwork was carried out by three researchers (Frances Simon, Claire Corbett and Bonny Mhlanga) and lasted until November 1993. The work was overseen by a committee (comprising representatives of the RPU, PSIF, several other divisions of the Home Office concerned with prison regimes, the Employment Department, and an outside academic adviser), which met four times between June 1992 and July 1993. A full report was delivered to the Home Office in November 1994, and in March 1996 the Home Office published a very condensed summary of it as an Occasional Paper (Simon and Corbett 1996a).[1]

During 1996-97 Frances Simon gathered more information to update the earlier material. Although the 1992-93 fieldwork had taken place since the publication of the Woolf Report and the White Paper Custody, Care and Justice which set the scene for the Prison Service's development of prison work (see Chapter 5), it was too soon for much of the new policy to have been implemented, so what the researchers had seen at the six prisons was largely a pre-Woolf picture. The aims in 1996-97 were to enquire what had changed since then, and how inmates' work and training were being affected by constraints like increased security and budget cuts; and to obtain information on the national provision in order to fit data from the sample prisons into a wider context. Both the earlier and the later work were put together for a book (Prisoners' Work and Vocational Training by Frances H. Simon, published by Routledge in March 1999).

The rest of this chapter describes the various components of the research in some detail.

Six prisons

The sample

Six large prisons participated in the study in 1992-93: Channings Wood (Devon, Category C), Highpoint (Suffolk, Category C), Holloway (London, local, female), Kirkham (Lancashire, Category D), Liverpool (local) and Maidstone ((Kent, Category B). These six, having populations of between 400 and 1,100 inmates, were chosen by agreement with the Home Office so as to include between them prisons in all security categories except dispersals, with examples of male and female, open and closed, local and training establishments, and having a broad geographical spread; and to offer a wide range of work and training courses for inmates.

Training prisons (which held roughly half of all adult males in the prison population) were over-represented in the sample, but this was not inappropriate for a study focusing on work and training. Also the four training prisons (Channings Wood, Highpoint, Kirkham and Maidstone) were officially regarded as providing mainly good rather than average training, but this was not seen as a drawback either, because if the research findings were to support that view the prisons could be held up to others as examples of good practice.

Dispersal prisons, which held about eight per cent of all sentenced adult males including those Category A people requiring the highest security, were excluded for security reasons. But when interviewing prisoners (see below) the researchers noted the experience of work or training in a dispersal which a few of them had had.

Procedures (1992-93)

Access to the prisons was initially negotiated by the RPU, and then at each one a manager assigned by the governor[2] helped the researchers to arrange their programme of work. The programme's main components (described below) were: studying documents; observing sessions of work, training and other activities; interviewing staff at all levels; and interviewing prisoners. The researchers spent the best part of three

weeks at each prison (sometimes spread over a greater period). The time and resources allowed by the Home Office contract did not permit a longer stay to enable the researchers to become 'part of the furniture' (as, for example, King and his colleagues had done in their prison studies: King and Elliott 1978, King and McDermott 1995) but they tried as far as possible to put potential interviewees at their ease. In advance of their arrival they sent the prison supplies of an information sheet explaining the study which could be posted around the buildings for anyone to read. During their first few days they sent each staff member and inmate invited for interview a personal letter explaining why he or she had been selected, assuring confidentiality (and freedom to refuse), and enclosing another copy of the information sheet. The programme was arranged so that generally the documents and observations came first, then the staff interviews (except for the governor, who was interviewed at the end), and lastly the interviews with inmates who by that time had been able to see the researchers moving about the prison.

Documents examined varied between the prisons, but among other papers they usually included: the governor's annual report (and contributions to it from managers); the management structure; the prison's daily routine; a table showing for each kind of inmates' work the number of places provided and occupied (and sometimes the hours worked, and interruptions); the education officer's return showing classes and training courses provided, number of places, entry requirements, duration and qualifications aimed at; and booklets provided for staff and for prisoners describing the prison and its activities. Also available to the researchers were recent reports of the Inspectorate for each prison.

Across the six prisons the kinds of PSIF work studied comprised seven types of workshops: laundry, leather goods, light assembly (contract services), printing, 'tailors' (sewing), weaving and woodwork; together with farm and gardens. The main non-PSIF kinds of work studied were kitchens, the 'Works' department (building maintenance), cleaning and other domestic work. Information was also gathered on other types of work employing fewer prisoners, like orderlies and stores assistants. Altogether the kinds of work studied included all those which employed at least 1% of working prisoners in the population (except for light engineering which was not carried on in any of the sample prisons: see pp. 109, 114) plus some smaller ones. Training

63

courses studied included four kinds of the construction industry training (CIT) courses run by Works departments (bricklaying, building operatives, painting and decorating, and plumbing), and eight other kinds of vocational training course which were run by education departments (business studies, catering, engineering, hairdressing, industrial cleaning, motor mechanics, office, skills, welding and sheetmetal).

Observations were made of 55 sessions of prison activities, of which 45 were work or training of the kinds just mentioned; the others were labour allocation boards and three types of provision designed to prepare inmates for release: pre-release courses, the Holloway jobclub and the pre-release hostel at Maidstone. Academic (non-vocational) education, at basic or higher level, was not part of the researchers' focus, but at each prison they noted the arrangements for providing it, interviewed the education officer, and included the topic in interviews with inmates (see below). In watching work and training sessions the researchers looked particularly at what was being done and by whom; how the work was organised; the processes and equipment used; the atmosphere and pace of work; and the quality of the products. These topics also featured in the interviews with work instructors and trainers (see below).

Interviews with prison staff

The staff interviewed were a purposive sample selected as key informants, and at each prison they included the following: the governor (or acting/deputy governor), head of inmate activities, industrial manager (except at Holloway), education officer (or deputy), a senior probation officer, a principal prison officer or wing manager, and a basic grade prison officer; supervisors of inmates in several kinds of work (here referred to as work instructors); and tutors in charge of several kinds of training course (here referred to as trainers, without any implication that work instructors did not train). In addition several other staff were interviewed at one prison or another, including probation officers, psychologists and senior prison officers. Altogether 108 staff were interviewed (and as far as the researchers were aware very few who were asked for an interview refused). In total they were believed to comprise a fairly representative sample of informed opinion on inmates' work and training, though it should be mentioned that the 38 work instructors among them were somewhat over-weighted by

the inclusion of eight from the tailors' and woodwork shops at Channings Wood, several of whom had specially asked to be interviewed. All the staff interviews were semi-structured and tailored to the respondent's role, and they included various rating scales so as to yield quantitative as well as qualitative data on the arrangements for inmates' work and training and the respondent's perceptions of such matters.

With each work instructor the chief topics covered were (as well as those addressed during observations): how inmates were recruited for his or her workforce, and whether any of their previous skills or future plans were taken into account; allocation of tasks to inmates, and opportunities for them to exercise power or responsibility; inmates' working hours and pay; inmates' incentives, and scope for a sense of achievement; inmates' opportunities (legitimate and illegitimate) for satisfaction from the work; training of inmates in good work habits and general employability skills; training in vocational skills; methods of keeping order in the workplace; the respondent's aims as a prison work instructor (a list of nine items, each to be rated for importance on a 5-point scale); his or her own training and qualifications, and contacts with the same industry outside prison; similarities and differences in this work as between prison and outside; knowledge of the labour market; and how (if at all) he or she helped inmates prepare for their release.

The main topics discussed with each trainer were (as well as those taken into account in observations): the skills and qualifications the course offered inmate trainees, and the levels of skill they reached; the duration of the course and the number of places on it; how trainees were selected from inmates who applied, and whether there was a waiting list; links between the course and trainees' previous experience or future plans; links between the course and prison work; the respondent's own training and qualifications; knowledge of the labour market; and ways in which (if at all) he or she helped trainees prepare for their release.

Topics for the other members of staff interviewed were mostly selected from the following (each of which was asked of several people at each prison): the prison's philosophy, general atmosphere and ways of applying the Service's statement of purpose; how prisoners' work fitted into that; the reasons for the various types of work existing at the respondent's prison, how far they matched outside labour markets, and

any plans or hopes for changes; contacts with local employers and the local Training and Enterprise Council; whether the prison had an overall plan for bringing together inmates' work, training and education (with reference to Woolf's proposal for a 'constructive mix' - see p. 89); sentence planning; how inmates were assigned to prison occupations; contacts between different groups of staff concerned with inmates' activities; links between inmates' training courses and prison jobs; inmates' pay; work instructors' own training, and contacts with outside; the respondent's view of inmates' attachment to the work ethic, and the popularity among inmates of various prison jobs; comparisons between prison work and work outside; and ways in which inmates were helped to prepare for release.

In addition, the industrial manager and the head of inmate activities were asked to rate (on a 4-point scale) each kind of work at the prison for its value in (a) helping inmates to serve their sentence calmly and (b) increasing inmates' chances of getting or keeping a job after release; and wing managers and prison officers were asked the same questions about kinds of work of which they had particular knowledge. Discussion in the governor's interview centred on the aims and philosophy of his or her prison, ideas for developing prison work, and comparisons between prison work and work outside. Holloway staff were interviewed in exactly the same way as those at male prisons, and were also invited to give their opinions on what work and training should be provided for women prisoners and whether it should be any different from provision for men.

Most interviews with prison staff lasted over an hour, but some were shorter and not all topics could be covered. The last item to be included, for the 97 staff who had time to do it (34 work instructors, 11 trainers and 52 others), was a set of three forms designed to explore the respondent's perceptions of the aims and purposes of prison work from three points of view. The forms, with verbal explanations from the researchers, asked in effect:

(1) Why do you think the Prison Service provides work for inmates, as the system is at present?

(2) What, in your opinion, would be good reasons for providing work for inmates?

(3) What do you think are inmates' reasons for working in prison?

Each form offered a list of 14 or 15 possible reasons for prison work. These had been derived from considering history (see Chapter 2), from general knowledge, and from suggestions made by staff and prisoners during the pilot study (see below). Lists (1) and (2) were identical, while list (3) included seven items from (1) and (2) (with slightly different wording) and eight others. With each form the respondent was asked to rate the importance of each reason on a 4-point scale. All the items are shown in Appendix 2.

At the end the interviewee was handed a personal letter from the researchers thanking him or her for the interview and saying what would be done with the results.

Interviews with inmates

A total of 178 inmates in the six prisons were interviewed, being those who consented (and were available) out of 251 who were asked. The people asked were selected from the prison records to include all those serving sentences of between one and ten years and who were within one to three months of release, and a random selection of others who were near the middle of a sentence of between four and ten years. Priority was given to those near release so as to yield a pool large enough to achieve a good sample of follow-up interviews later (see below), and long-termers were included to give some representation of people whose release dates were some years off. People serving sentences of less than a year were excluded because of their probably limited experience of prison work or training during the current sentence, and those serving over ten years were also excluded, as were people due to be deported. Except for 12 in the pilot study (see below) the interviewees were not chosen according to their prison work assignment. Response rates ranged from 44% at Holloway to 80% at Liverpool, the overall rate being 71%. The final sample of 178 comprised 134 prisoners near release and 44 long-term ones.

These 178 people included 14 women and 27 people of ethnic minorities. Fifty-five percent were under 30 years old and 83% were under 40. Forty-one percent had been imprisoned for acquisitive crime (burglary, theft, fraud etc.) and 35% for violence or robbery. Eleven percent had been sentenced for drugs crime, but interviews with some of the burglars revealed that their activities had been drugs-related too. Thirty-seven percent were serving sentences of no more than 18 months, 34% between 18 months and four years, and 29% over four years. Two thirds had had at least one previous custodial sentence and 37% had had at least three. As regards occupational background, 37% were classed (by the researchers) as skilled workers, 43% as semi-skilled, and 20% as unskilled. Each of these skill groups contained some people who had been unemployed before coming into prison; altogether 41% of the sample had been wholly or largely unemployed during the previous 12 months.

Various comparisons were made to test how far the sample represented the adult sentenced prison population generally, using data mainly from Prison Statistics 1991 (Home Office 1993) and the National Prison Survey 1991 (Dodd and Hunter 1992). In regard to age and the proportion of ethnic minority inmates there was a fairly close match. The sample had a higher proportion of women prisoners than the population due to the inclusion of Holloway, but at 8% they were still a very small group. In regard to sentence length the sample, through being weighted in favour of people near release, had rather more with sentences of 18 months or less than the population, and there was a corresponding difference in the types of offence for which they were imprisoned: the sample contained relatively fewer people imprisoned for violence and sex offences and more imprisoned for burglary, theft or fraud. Nevertheless all the main types of offence were represented in the sample. And as in the National Prison Survey a majority of the research sample had some degree of occupational skill. At the time of interview 150 of the inmates in the sample were assigned to various kinds of prison work, 13 were in vocational training courses, and 15 were in other daytime education classes.

Like the staff interviews, those with inmates were semi-structured and included several checklists and rating scales. For people assigned to prison work at the time of interview the main topics were as follows (though not presented in this order). (1) *Prior work history* outside prison. (2) *Skills acquired (anywhere) prior to starting the*

current sentence. (3) *What (if any) choice of occupation* was offered to the respondent in this prison. (4) *The respondent's occupations in all prisons during the current sentence:* what they have been; whether any has used a prior skill, built on a prior skill or imparted new skill. (5) *What are this prison's most and least popular jobs,* and which inmates get them. (6) *The respondent's current prison job:* what it comprises; the extent to which it gives (a) a sense of achievement, (b) interest, and (c) scope for power or making decisions; working pace and hours; relationships with staff and workmates; pay; unofficial perks; how far it helps in getting through the sentence. (7) *Comparisons between work in prison and work outside,* in general terms and on several specific points from (6). (8) *Future plans and preparation for release* (for near-release inmates): whether the respondent hopes to avoid further crime, and if so what things would help (free response, and then a list offering 10 items); value of prison work experience for getting a job outside (a list of six items referring to vocational and employability skills). (9) *The respondent's general attitude to (legitimate) work* as a livelihood.

For interviewees in a vocational training course or in general education most items were the same as the above, with appropriate modifications. A further question was why the respondent had chosen the particular course or class, and how long he or she had had to wait for it. The few people who were unemployed at the time of interview were first asked why that was, and then the interview proceeded on the same lines as others, modified where necessary to refer to the interviewee's most recent prison occupation.

One of the chief quantitative measures derived from the inmate interview was a 'satisfaction score', based on three factors which can contribute to a person's job satisfaction: feeling a sense of achievement, finding the work (or training) interesting, and feeling some sense of power or control over events. The interviewee's answer to each of these questions was scored at 0 points (for 'no' or 'don't know'), 1 (for 'maybe a little') or 2 (for 'yes, definitely'), and then the points were added so that the maximum obtainable, by an inmate who said 'yes, definitely' to all three questions was 6 points. A mean satisfaction score was calculated for each type of work occupying more than a handful of inmates in the sample.

With most inmates the interview lasted about an hour, but some (especially at Liverpool) had to be shortened because of the prison routine. The last item for people who had time to do it was an exercise exploring perceptions of the aims and purposes of prison work in the same way as had been done with staff. Unless the interviewee had had no prison job lasting more than a few days during the current sentence, he or she was asked to reflect on all his or her experience of prison work (not training courses or education) and then to complete two forms. Altogether 134 inmates did so (106 near release and 28 long-termers).

The two forms, with verbal explanations from the researchers, asked in effect:

(1) Why do you think the prison authorities provide work for inmates in prison, and expect them to do it?

(2) What are your own reasons for working in prison?

Form (1) offered 13 items, most of which corresponded to those on the first and second lists for the staff (see pp. 66-67), while form (2) offered 16 items of which nearly all reflected the third staff list, and the inmate rated the importance of each on a 4-point scale. Appendix 2 shows the lists of items.

At the end of the interview the inmate was given a personal letter of thanks in the same way as for staff. Lastly, those near release were asked if they would consent to another interview during the follow-up phase, and this is described on pp. 75-77.

As well as the interviews with 178 inmates, brief chats about prison work and training were held with 139 others during some of the activity sessions, and this material contributed to the findings.

Pilot of the prison procedures

In May 1992 a pilot study was carried out at Highpoint, involving documents, observations, interviews with a good many staff, and interviews with 12 inmates who

were chosen largely according to their prison occupations (including five kinds of work). For the main study (which began at Channings Wood in July) it was decided that the interview guides and rating forms needed so little revision from the pilot that the pilot data could be included in the whole. In January 1993 (when the fieldwork at four other prisons had been done) the researchers returned to Highpoint for more data, including interviews with 35 inmates.

Experience in the pilot showed that it was not worthwhile to interrogate prisoners' files for information on, for example, employment history or experiences of prison work or training. On such topics (and many others) most inmates' files were at best sketchy and hunting through them took far more time than could be spared, and after the pilot it was decided that the only way in which inmates' records would be used was to select the sample to be asked for interview. During the selection process a small number of factual items was noted for each person, including age, ethnic group, type of offence, sentence, and dates relating to length of stay in that prison; and all these were checked with the inmate early in the interview (see below).

The modifications made to research instruments after the pilot resulted in some variation in the numbers of people who answered particular questions: for example, in the two forms asking inmates about the aims and purposes of prison work the minimum number rating any one item was 123. Variations in the totals caused by this and other matters (like shortened interviews) were taken into account in the statistical analyses.

Comments on the prisoners' interview data

Most of the data on individual inmates came from what they themselves said in confidential interviews. Apart from the minimal use of prison records as mentioned above, the researchers did not look at people's files, nor did they seek or check information on individuals from any other sources. As well as saving time this was felt to be important for obtaining both the views and the trust of inmates, and (for those near release) enhancing the likelihood of a successful follow-up (see below).

71

This meant that the interview data was of variable quality. The primary topic - prison work and training - was relatively non-threatening. Many inmates seemed glad of the opportunity to talk to the researchers: they answered with apparent frankness and some were reflective and thoughtful, offering insights and suggestions which were taken into account in the study. Other people were more reticent. In the course of conversation some interviewees talked about other aspects of prison life, and no doubt some were trying to impress while other matters were concealed.[3] Some biographical data was probably subject to selection, exaggeration, distortion or failures of recall, but prisoners are not alone in this respect. Probably some prison staff too were circumspect in interviews.

A topic on which, in regard to facts, the research data may perhaps be less reliable than others is the degree of prisoners' occupational skill. The researchers asked people about training and jobs they had had before coming to prison, and used their own judgement about skill categories. When inmates were asked about their current prison work one question was whether they felt they were learning any vocational skill, and a positive answer contributed to the variables used in some analyses. It was not feasible to check whether people obtained the qualifications they said they did, and some people were not sure what certificate they had received or were still hoping for. These various uncertainties affected some of the analyses (see Simon 1999: 140-141, 165).

On the other hand, to the extent that the researchers' gained interviewees' confidence, they obtained material which would probably have been unobtainable in any other way. A main objective of the study was to learn about prisoners' own perceptions of their experiences in regard to work and training, and these were explored in interviews. The National Prison Survey (Dodd and Hunter 1992) also relied on interview data.

Another point of doubt is how far some inmates' responses to written items may have been affected by literacy problems. Each written checklist (to be completed by ticking a space or circling a number on a rating scale) was administered individually by a researcher who offered plenty of explanation, and help as required, but some people may have felt shy about revealing a reading weakness and instead just marked

items inaccurately. Some inmates with reading problems may have eliminated themselves at the selection stage by refusing an interview after receiving the researchers' letter of invitation; if this happened the interview sample (with its response rate of 71%) would have been biased in favour of better readers. On the other hand Tessa West, an experienced prison teacher, has said that most prisoners are capable of reading a tabloid newspaper even if they have difficulty in writing (West 1997: 140), so perhaps the Brunel results were not greatly impaired by unadmitted reading weakness. The researchers had no way of telling. Another point, discussed below, is that none of the research instruments was tested for reliability.

Among the various measurements which may have been affected by such doubts, perhaps the most interesting are the scales rating inmates' perceptions of the aims and purposes of prison work. These and the staff's ratings together contributed much to the researchers' conclusion that the Prison Service is confused about what the purposes of prison work are or ought to be (Simon 1999: 125). It would be valuable for other researchers to take this matter forward by re-examining and perhaps building on the Brunel instruments.

Brief notes on the six prisons

Finally in this section it may be remarked that, as well as encompassing the variety indicated on p. 62, the six prisons each had their own character and philosophy, stemming partly from the prison's function and security classification but also from its locality, history and tradition. Simon (1999: chapter 2) gives a description of each, as it was in 1992-93 and then in 1996 (when the research was updated: see below). The following brief notes taken from those descriptions are intended here just to give a flavour of each prison, focusing on the emphasis given to work and training and the ways inmates could participate in them.

Channings Wood provided a good range of work and training courses, though the latter generally had waiting lists. Managers felt the regime was positive, and inmates were expected to go about unescorted and get themselves to wherever they needed to be. There was always pressure for production in the tailors' and wood

assembly (furniture) workshops. But after his first three months, if not earlier, an inmate could choose his occupation from any that had a vacancy, and managers made some efforts to link people's work placements with their past experience or future plans. During 1992-95 the prison ran an unusual training scheme funded by the local Training and Enterprise Council (see pp. 159-161).

Highpoint's range of work and training courses was comparable to Channings Wood's. But the organisation of activities suffered from a split site, a high turnover of short-stay prisoners, and in 1992 a history of inmate under-employment which in 1996 was threatening to recur because of budget cuts. However the labour board was fairly sympathetic to inmates' requests and, as at Channings Wood, a majority of inmates interviewed for the research were by then in an occupation which they had chosen from among those available.

Holloway in 1992-93 provided, besides work and training courses, many other activities for prisoners centred on education and personal growth. No inmate was required to work or train but all were strongly encouraged to participate in some daily occupation. The management's emphasis was on treating the women as individuals and steering them towards activities which could help them in personal development. In 1994-95 the regime deteriorated badly due to a variety of problems, and the prison received much unfavourable publicity (see pp. 106-107). By mid-1996 it was beginning to recover.

At *Kirkham*, which had extensive farm and garden operations as well as industrial workshops, the emphasis was very much on work. In 1992 education and training courses played a minor part for most inmates, but by 1996 access to education had increased. Normal working hours were seven a day (in contrast to the other five prisons where they ranged from four to five and a half). Sixteen of the 26 Kirkham inmates interviewed for the research in 1992 said they had no choice about the work they were then doing. By 1996 Kirkham's version of the national incentive scheme (see pp. 101-102) gave about one sixth of the prison's inmates the opportunity to earn higher pay than most others.

74

Liverpool had a variety of industrial workshops (as well as the usual domestic tasks). Few inmates were offered a choice of work, most being placed according to where their labour was needed. The prison was a big local one with strict security, cramped Victorian buildings, and a very high turnover of prisoners, but the general atmosphere was lightened by good relationships between staff and inmates. There were enough workplaces for nearly all sentenced prisoners as well as some training courses and education, and by 1996 the daily hours of work for most had increased from five to five and a half.

At *Maidstone* the regime was generally agreed to be relaxed and liberal for a Category B prison. Nearly all inmates were serving long terms, and the population was (compared with those of the other five prisons) relatively stable and predictable. In 1992 men usually had a free choice between industrial workshops and daytime education, though (as elsewhere) they might have to wait for a place on a training course. For several inmates in the research sample an occupation at Maidstone had been planned to link with some previous experience. From 1996 Maidstone's incentive scheme allowed prisoners to a large extent to devise their own programmes of work, education or training from the wide range of activities available.

Three of the prisons - Channings Wood, Liverpool and Maidstone - had a Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (VPU) for inmates segregated under Rule 43.[4] The range of occupation available to these people was very limited: in most cases to the laundry, one other workshop, or general education. At Channings Wood and Maidstone the VPU was a regional centre for the Service's national sex offender treatment programme which by 1994 was well established.

Follow-up of released prisoners

This was a major component of the research. The 134 people interviewed in prison near their release date were asked if they would grant the researchers a second interview three months after coming out. All but five were willing in principle, but the number targeted was then reduced by 11 for various reasons: the respondent left no address or contact, or would be too far away (e.g. abroad) (6 cases); the follow-up was

not attempted because of doubts about the researcher's safety (2); the respondent was not released as expected, but kept in prison on further charges (2); the respondent absconded from prison (1). This left 118 people targeted for a follow-up interview. All at the end of the prison interview signed a consent form giving an address and also particulars of someone else through whom they could be contacted.[5] A week or so before the inmate's release the researcher wrote to him or her with good wishes for the future and a reminder of the follow-up arrangement. Then three months later the visit was attempted.

By this time many people were scattered far and wide in England and Wales, and often the researchers had to make repeated efforts to reach them. Eventually 88 follow-up interviews were achieved, 77% of them at between three and four-and-a-half months from the date of release. (The longest interval - two cases - was eight months.) Three people were then back in custody, and for them the data referred to the period up to their re-arrest. Two others were special cases.[6] Respondents in the follow-up interview were paid a fee of £10.

Thus the follow-up sample was 66% of the 134 near-release people interviewed in prison. A comparison between them and the other 46 suggested that the 88 were perhaps slightly 'easier' cases, but not much: for example, although those followed up included more first-time prisoners (35% compared with 13%), in both groups over 60% had had five or more previous convictions and over 40% had had three or more previous custodial sentences.[7]

The follow-up sample contained just five women. Compared with released adult prisoners in general[8] the 88 were fairly representative in respect of age and gender; their distribution of broad types of offence was fairly similar except that they included more people who had been imprisoned for burglary and robbery, and fewer imprisoned for offences like motoring crime and criminal damage, owing to the exclusion from the inmate sample of people sentenced to less than one year.

Like the earlier one in prison the follow-up interview was semi-structured, and the main topics were as follows. (1) *Any change in prison occupation* or qualifications gained between the prison interview and the date of release. (2) *Preparation for*

release: whether at the time of leaving prison the respondent had wanted to obtain work, training or education; what was done by him or her, or anyone else, before the date of release, towards that end. (3) *History of jobsearch and employment since release*: actions taken by the respondent or anyone else to help him or her into employment, training or education; problems encountered; kinds of work sought; details of any obtained; use of pre-sentence skill; use of skill acquired in prison; interest in further training or education; experience of unemployment. (4) *Financial and domestic circumstances* since release. (5) *Illegal activities* since release. (6) *Retrospective views of this last sentence*: whether the respondent felt any aspect of the stay in prison had benefited him or her, in any way, since release (free response, and then a list of six items offered); and what, ideally, he or she would have liked the prison to offer.

The follow-up interviews were usually more relaxed than the prison ones, with many of the respondents talking very freely (even when, as occasionally happened, other family members were present). Some people may not have remembered all that was said to them by, for example, staff at jobcentres or probation offices, so that the findings possibly understated the service actually offered by various agencies. On the topic of further offending some interviewees were naturally reticent, and later it was decided to omit from analyses using that variable 24 cases in which it was felt that the interviewer had not gathered sufficient information on it. On the other hand a few people volunteered information on offending even before the interviewer had raised the matter, while others seemed relieved to talk about it once the topic had been broached. Although supplementary data on some matters occasionally came to the notice of the researchers from various sources they took no steps to check any of the personal information given in interviews, feeling that to do so would be a breach of trust.

Visits to outside employers

Twelve outside employers were visited, corresponding to ten of the main kinds of prison work studied: a laundry, a leather goods factory, a printer, a clothing factory (to correspond with prison 'tailors'), two weaving mills, a furniture factory (to correspond with prison woodwork shops), a farm, two gardens (a vegetable grower and

a plant nursery), a hospital kitchen, and a building site (to correspond with prison Works departments). The majority of these firms were selected, and visits to them facilitated, with the help of the local Training and Enterprise Council. An industry training college helped with the arrangements in three cases and a trade employers' association in one. Three firms were approached independently by the researchers. At each visit the researcher observed production processes and interviewed at least one manager (usually more than one). Shopfloor employees, who may be considered as outside counterparts to inmates, were not interviewed.

The purpose of these visits was to learn about the industry, as exemplified by the particular firm, to compare with what had been studied in prisons. The observations and interviews with managers covered many of the same topics as had been explored with prison staff (especially work instructors): the processes and products; the organisation of the work, and conditions for basic grade workers including hours and pay; recruitment methods and expectations of new recruits; training given to basic grade workers and levels of skill acquired; opportunities for responsibility; incentives, motivation and discipline; and the labour market in that industry. Managers were also asked whether they would employ ex-prisoners. Additional background information on work in farms and gardens, and in the leather and clothing industries, was obtained from training colleges and a trade association.

The 12 employers were a haphazard sample having only one or two of each kind. (Within the research timetable no more would have been practicable.) It is not possible to say how representative they were (for example, on the employment of ex-prisoners). Nevertheless the visits yielded valuable data to compare with prison work. It happened that at least six of the firms (in leather, printing, gardens, furniture and kitchen work) were noticeably high-class examples, which was no bad thing for the research in view of the emphasis in prison industries on high quality (see p. 117).

Visits to Training and Enterprise Councils

A discussion was held with senior staff of the local TEC nearest to each of the six prisons, and with one other London TEC. All but one of these discussions was

face-to-face (the other being by telephone). Topics included the kinds of work and training being done at the prison, how far these matched the labour market, the provision of training outside, and any involvement of the TEC with the prison. Documents were gathered on local employment trends and training schemes.

Visits to outside training schemes

To compare prison training courses with some of the training going on outside, visits were made to four organisations which, funded through TECs, provided training for unemployed people under the government's Training For Work (TFW) scheme. They were selected for the research (with the aid of the TECs) as schemes particularly sympathetic to unemployed people with 'special needs' (though they had other trainees too). One would expect them to be more geared than the average scheme to the training needs of ex-offenders, and thus they were particularly interesting as comparators for prison training.

The four schemes were all large ones with between 125 and 300 trainees. Two were run by voluntary organisations and two by private companies, and each was within the 'catchment area' of one of the six research prisons. Their trainees included some young people (doing Youth Training) but most were adults, and at three schemes most were men, the fourth having men and women in equal numbers. All four accepted ex-prisoners along with other people, and recruited applicants through jobcentres, other agencies including the probation service, and direct by press advertising or word of mouth. Under the government rules adult trainees received £10 a week on top of their DSS benefit, plus help towards the costs of travel and (if appropriate) of child care.

Interviews were held with staff at each scheme and (briefly) with a few trainees at two of them, and descriptive documents were collected. Research interest focused on: the content of vocational training provided, and its relevance to labour markets; qualifications trainees aimed for, and levels of skill they attained; provision for helping trainees needing basic education or social skills; employability and jobsearch skills; integration of training with work experience; and trainees' success in moving into employment.

Updating and other information

The fieldwork so far described took place in 1992-93. During this time and later, the researchers also studied various publications bearing on prison work and training: relevant parts of the Woolf Report, the White Paper <u>Custody, Care and Justice</u> (Home Office 1991), the report <u>Employment in Prisons and for Ex-Offenders</u> (House of Commons Employment Committee 1991), Prison Service annual reports and statistics, other Prison Service papers (e.g. the periodical <u>Briefing</u>) and so on, as well as reports by the Prisons Inspectorate and critical comment from other quarters. The main sources of published data on national economic and employment trends, discussed in Chapter 10, were the Institute of Employment Research (Warwick University) and the Skills and Enterprise Network (Department for Education and Employment).

During the spring of 1996 a further visit was made to each of the five male prisons in order to update the research. These were shorter visits: the researcher did not talk with inmates or observe work sessions. But she held long interviews with senior managers responsible for inmates' work and training, and talked with other staff including education and probation officers. Much documentary material was gathered, and some supplementary discussions took place by telephone. Interviewees were told of the 1992-93 findings for their prison, and were asked what had changed since then, especially in regard to the arrangements for work and training but also on related topics such as sentence planning and inmate development programmes. Among other things the researcher looked for any impact of certain factors which had become prominent since the earlier fieldwork: tighter security, rising numbers, privatisation, incentive schemes, and budget cuts. Holloway Prison was not included in these updating visits, but some information was gathered from published sources.[9] All this updating information, together with reports of the Inspectorate, was drawn on to supplement and modify, where relevant, the earlier data.

Additional material for the research was supplied in 1996 and 1997 by various sections of Prison Service HQ, especially in relation to regime monitoring, the development of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), the work of Prison Enterprise Services, pre-release provision, sentence planning, and offending behaviour programmes. This enabled data from the six prisons to be put into a national context,

so that although many of the research findings were based on what was learned from them indications could also be given, at appropriate points, of the general provision for inmates' work and training throughout the system.

Analyses

Methods

In fieldwork the researchers had used, among other things, 17 different semi-structured interview guides, 12 structured questionnaires and rating scales, and a number of other structured recording forms. Then for quantitative analysis much of the data was coded numerically, and the analyses comprised frequency distributions and two- or three-dimensional cross-tabulations, with tests of statistical significance where appropriate.

Qualitative analyses were used for much of the material from the interviews and observations. They involved the systematic extraction and summarising of data on particular themes, making cross-comparisons, and looking for patterns. The interviews with work instructors and trainers were analysed by a modified version of the indexed chart method recommended by Ritchie and Spencer (1994: 182-193).

A note on the follow-up interval

It had been intended that the follow-up interview should take place three months after release, but in practice (as is probably inevitable in follow-up studies) the interval varied and most were longer than that (see p. 76). A principal focus of the follow-up was the ex-prisoner's employment situation. For all but nine of the 88 people in the sample there was very little difference between the employment picture at exactly three months and what it was at the date of interview. So in the analyses, for convenience and to make the best use of the data, the whole follow-up period was used as the reference period for some topics (e.g. jobhunting efforts), and the date of the follow-up interview as the reference point for some others (e.g. sources of income).[10]

Various comments on the Brunel methods

It had been decided at the outset (see p. 60) that young prisoners (i.e. those under 21) and prisoners on remand (or awaiting trial) would not be included (except in so far as they were part of the total prison population whose size was one of the constraints on prison regimes). Young prisoners, who comprise approximately 15% of the total, had been a focus of the previous study by Simon and Crow (1990). Remand prisoners (who are approximately 25% of the total) are not required to work, although local prisons try to provide some occupation for them, as the researchers noted at Holloway and Liverpool.

Privately managed prisons were not included in the Brunel study. In the year it began (1992) there was only one private prison (Wolds, which at that time was for remands), and by 1996 when the main updating work was done there were only four, which between them held 4% of the total prison population. But the possible effects on public prisons' work and training of the contracting out of certain functions, and of competition from the private sector, were briefly considered (Simon 1999: 19-20).

The research did not treat women prisoners' work separately from men's, apart from the description of Holloway as one of the participating prisons (Simon 1999: 42-45). Women were only 8% of the sample of inmates (they form 4% of the prison population) and there were only five women in the follow-up sample. Resources did not allow the Brunel research to focus on a larger number of women. But throughout the study women contributed to the total picture and furnished case examples. (See, for instance, Simon 1999: 110, 167. See also note 3 on p. 143 of this thesis.) Other recent studies have called attention to the special needs and problems of women in prison - e.g. Morris, Wilkinson et al. (1995), HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (1997b) - though these do not examine work and training in the same detail as the Brunel study did for prisoners generally. Specific research on work and training for women prisoners, linked to a study of their careers after release, would be valuable.

The Brunel research instruments were not pre-tested (except some by the pilot study as explained on pp. 70-71). No other studies of prison work known to the researchers before they started had suggested any specific instruments which could be

82

used. Time constraints, the conditions of the interviews (e.g. inmates being taken out of workshops to see the researchers)[11] and small sample sizes did not allow reliability to be checked by re-testing or splitting groups in half. As for validity, apart from objective facts (like workshop opening hours) where there was little reason for the researchers to doubt what they were told, it is difficult to see how the validity of people's perceptions could have been tested. One of the subsidiary objectives of the study was to compare staff's and inmates' perceptions of the same things (e.g. the differences between work in prison and outside, or the purposes of prison work). The follow-up study depended entirely on self-report, and some points of inadequacy there have already been noted (p. 77). But self-report data has a respectable place in criminology (see, for example, Hirschi et al. 1981: 473-488; Graham and Bowling 1995: 6-9), and the National Prison Survey also relied on interview data. The Brunel researchers hoped, by integrating what staff, inmates and ex-inmates said with what they themselves observed, to produce a balanced picture of prison work and training using both quantitative and qualitative data.

Some of the statistical analyses rested on small numbers, so while they revealed interesting differences in the Brunel sample they should not necessarily be taken as a basis for generalisation. But confidence may be placed in findings which were consistent with those of other studies. Examples are: (1) the proportion of inmates who felt that prison had given them skills or work habits which might help in getting a job on release - about 20% in both the Brunel study and the National Prison Survey (Simon 1999: 120); (2) the financial troubles of people recently released - a correspondence between the Brunel results and those of Hagell et al. (1995) (Simon 1999: 173); and (3) the statistical link between lack of work and further offending - found in the Brunel study like many others (Simon 1999: 175; this thesis p. 31). Such consistency between the Brunel results and other studies on topics common to both suggests that it would be desirable for further research to seek to replicate, or build on, the Brunel findings on other topics explored for the first time: for example, staff and inmates' perceptions of the aims and purposes of prison work (as already suggested on p. 73), or the various factors which qualitative analysis suggested were significant in ex-prisoners' attempts to use prison-acquired skill (Simon 1999: 166-169).

King and McDermott's <u>The State of Our Prisons</u> (1995) is a study of prison regimes (and much else) over time, with comparisons over a 15-year period and then more recently, all set in the context of changes in the Prison Service up to 1994. The Brunel research was both less ambitious and more detailed. It focused on just one field of study - prisoners' work and vocational training - but examined this more minutely, and included comparisons with work outside, a follow-up of released prisoners, and discussion of prison work and training in the light of contemporary employment trends (Simon 1999: 185-196). The 1996 updating visits to prisons were made in order to see how far the pictures of work and training obtained in 1992-93 were still generally true, and the overall impression was that they were. So the Brunel study is really a snapshot of prison work and training in the early to mid 1990s. The historical notes in Chapter 2 form a backdrop for considering the present-day purposes of prison work and, in this thesis, of its relationship with social exclusion.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. Some details given in this chapter of the research methods of the 1992-93 fieldwork have been taken from Chapter 1 ('Introduction and research method') of Simon and Corbett (1996a) rather than Simon (1999), with additional details included here.

2. Throughout this thesis 'governor' refers to the prison's governing governor (or deputy). Other governor grades are referred to by titles when appropriate (e.g. head of inmate activities), or else as managers of the prison.

3. For example, a few inmates hinted at information about the use of drugs in prison, a matter of major concern to the Prison Service. But this and many other topics were not raised by the researchers, whose focus was on work and training.

4. Now Rule 45 (<u>Prison Rules 1999</u>).

5. Probation officers were sometimes named as contacts, and in several cases were

helpful in facilitating interviews. (They did not take part in them.) But most people in the follow-up sample were not under supervision after release: the majority had been sentenced before the Criminal Justice Act 1991 took effect in October 1992, and there were not many on parole.

6. One was of a man who had been released later than expected and whom the researcher found herself interviewing only four weeks after release instead of three months as planned. Attempts at a second follow-up interview were unsuccessful. The other case was of a man who died two months after release and whose family offered the researcher an interview at the three months point. In both these cases it was felt that the amount of data gathered justified their inclusion with the other 86 cases in the follow-up sample.

7. Some people who had agreed in prison to a follow-up interview had a history of involvement with drugs. Several of these could not be found later, and the researchers suspected their activities were continuing. But others with a drugs record were successfully followed up.

8. The comparison used data from Prison Statistics 1991 (Home Office 1993) for receptions under sentence in 1991, which was the best available group to compare with the sample of discharges.

9. A request for an updating visit was made to Holloway in the same way as to the other five prisons. But in 1995-96 Holloway was beset by troubles which came to public notice in December 1995 when the new Chief Inspector of Prisons pulled his team out of Holloway in disgust at the deteriorating conditions. Months of adverse press publicity followed (especially about the shackling of maternity patients). In this situation Holloway staff in 1996 were too busy trying to put things right for the Inspectors' return to spare time for research interviews. Information on Holloway after 1993 was gleaned from the 1995 Board of Visitors' report, from press reports, and from writings by the Chief Inspector. (See Simon 1999: 239.)

10. The nine exceptions were: three people who at follow-up were back in custody, one interviewed only one month after release, and one who died two months after release (see p. 76, and note 3 above); three who during the follow-up period had had jobs but lost them; and one who took a long holiday between jobs. For the three who had returned to custody and the one who died, the reference point was taken as immediately before that event.

11. The researchers had offered to come to the prison in the evenings so that inmates asked for interview would not lose time from their daytime occupation, but prison staff apparently did not think that would be practicable. However, inmates interviewed did not lose pay.

CHAPTER 5

THE WOOLF REPORT AND AFTER

Introduction

Chapter 2, noting points from the history of prison work, ended just before the disturbances of 1990 which led to the Woolf Report (Woolf and Tumim 1991). The Woolf Report was a landmark for the Prison Service, forcing it to plan radical and coherent reforms including (among many other things) matters relating to prisoners' work and training. The Brunel study was conceived in 1991 and began in 1992, after Woolf but when it was of course too early to expect many changes to have been implemented (except in so far as trends which fitted the Woolf reforms might be continuing). So the fieldwork of 1992-93 resulted in a largely pre-Woolf picture. The gathering of later material, and especially the updating visits of 1996, were intended to explore how far that picture was still generally true, and what factors in 1996-97 might be assisting, or hampering, prisons' efforts to put Woolf into practice.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to discuss the Woolf Report or later developments with regard to social exclusion. Rather, the intention here is to use parts of Woolf, Prison Service policy, and subsequent events to form a context for the detailed presentation and discussion in later chapters of the Brunel empirical study. This chapter includes some factual data from the study as contributions to 'scene-setting'. (Chapters 6-10 focus on the Brunel material and include discussion of social exclusion. Chapter 11 attempts to draw all the main issues together.)

This chapter begins by summarising the Woolf Report's recommendations about prison work in the context of its discussion on the role of the Service. The next sections describe the Home Office response, and how policy and practice on prison work were developed by Prison Service HQ during 1992. Following that is a brief section summarising provision at the research prisons in 1992-96, and then come two sections describing other changes since Woolf which could indirectly affect inmates'

work and training, for good or ill, with illustrations of their effects as noted during the research. It will be seen that, despite the hopes generated by Woolf and the Prison Service's positive response, prisons' efforts continued to be dogged by the same three problems which had impeded progress in earlier years: money, security and increasing numbers of prisoners.

The Woolf Report

The disturbances of April 1990 which led to the Woolf Report were described by its authors as 'the worst series of prison riots in the history of the British penal system'. A basic cause, they said, was uncertainty springing from 'insufficient clarity about what the Prison Service should be doing and how it should do it. This affected the way prisons were run.' Discussing what the role of the Service should be, the authors saw it as one part of the criminal justice system, sharing with other parts 'a special responsibility for maintaining law, order and justice in society.' In prisons, they said, security, control and justice were fundamental, interdependent and must be kept in balance. Justice required humane conditions and fair dealing with the prisoner. And since one implicit purpose of the criminal justice system was to reduce crime, 'the Prison Service should therefore, as part of its role, be seeking to minimise the prospect of the prisoner re-offending after serving his sentence' (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 1, 239, 241-242).

The authors endorsed, for sentenced prisoners, the Service's statement of purpose. They made it plain that they were not advocating a return to the 'treatment model' of imprisonment, but that 'the prison system ... should give each prisoner every opportunity to serve his or her sentence in a constructive way....We must ensure that the Service makes proper use of the time which a prisoner spends in prison, and the best use of the money available for keeping him or her there. The aim must be to reduce the likelihood of prisoners re-offending after their release.' A prison regime should, among other things, encourage the offender to take some responsibility for himself in prison, give him an opportunity to obtain skills towards future employment, enable him to keep links with his family and community, and prepare him properly for his return to society. The Report's recommendations for dealing with prisoners

amounted, said the authors, to 'a substantial agenda for reform' (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 372-373, 381, 386, 400-406, 431).

Woolf on work

The Report dissented from PSIF's view (stated in evidence to the Woolf inquiry) that it should run like a business aiming at a profit. 'We propose that workshops should instead be seen primarily as part of a planned programme of activities and opportunities for prisoners ... the choice of industry and the capital invested should be strongly influenced by the need to provide constructive and purposeful employment in farm and workshop for as many prisoners as can usefully be deployed. It should be influenced also by the need to find work which is likely to assist the prisoner to find employment after release' (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 388).

Work opportunities should cater for a range of abilities among inmates, and domestic work should not be used as a long-term assignment. There should be a greater variety of arrangements for providing work: outside employers and Training and Enterprise Councils should be involved as advisers (as was already happening in some prisons); local firms might be invited to set up in prison workshops; there should be schemes (as some prisons already had) for inmates to produce goods for charity. Moreover, the Report proposed that 'education should be given an equal standing to work within the activities of the prison'; prisons should have a planned programme which 'should bring together work, training and education in a way that provides the most constructive mix for the prisoners who are to be involved in it' (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 384, 388-390).

Governors should have the freedom and responsibility to provide and manage work at their own prisons, with PSIF withdrawing to a role of central adviser, consultant and supervisor. Prisoners' working hours should be more like those normal outside. On pay, the Report recommended that inmates should be able to earn more in order to meet some of their obligations and needs. Initially the Service should aim to raise average weekly pay from the current £2.65 to £8, and in the longer term rates should be much higher, so that prisoners could help maintain their families, contribute

to the support of victims, perhaps pay towards their upkeep, and obtain extra facilities for themselves. 'A realistic wage would be a way of ensuring that the prisoner takes greater responsibility for himself in prison and outside' (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 388, 390-391, 393-394).

The Home Office response to Woolf

This was set out in the White Paper <u>Custody, Care and Justice</u> (Home Office 1991), published seven months after the Woolf Report. Woolf was broadly accepted:

'The Government... has examined closely each of the 12 central recommendations in the Report and all of its 204 supporting proposals. The Woolf Report describes the recommendations as signposts setting the direction for the Prison Service in the years ahead. The Government has accepted the direction set by those recommendations. It has accepted the principal proposals which identify the route to follow' (Home Office 1991: 5).

The White Paper aimed to provide 'a coherent and consistent strategy for the Prison Service', and reading it shows that the Home Office planned to adopt a great deal of what Woolf had advocated, though they warned that it would take years to achieve and would depend on the resources available. They accepted Woolf's view of the Prison Service as a part of the criminal justice system, and in relation to the statement of purpose they saw the Service as having three central obligations, stated 'in order of priority, and indeed of ascending difficulty': to implement the court's decision (to imprison the offender); to provide a positive regime in prison; and to prepare the prisoner for release. Chapter 7 of the White Paper was devoted to 'Programmes for Prisoners', setting out intentions for giving all prisoners 'an active day' (Home Office 1991: 5, 12-13, 69-88).

Here the White Paper's emphasis was somewhat different from Woolf's. While stating that programmes should aim 'to produce as full a range of activities and opportunities as the available resources will allow', it did not agree that education and work should have 'an equal standing'. Para. 7.25 said in part:

'The activities must be relevant to the prisoner on release and create as normal a working life as possible. It follows that work should have a central place in the life of the prison and that convicted prisoners should normally be expected to work. ...Daytime education should focus on providing basic education and skills and on encouraging and providing vocational training. Prisoners in full-time education should be enabled wherever possible to complete their courses. Other education activities must not be seen as alternatives to these provisions or to participating in available work' (Home Office 1991: 78, 80).

Thus the Home Office opinion was that for most prisoners work was a fundamental requirement. Para. 7.22 set out the official view on the purposes of prison work:

'Work has a central role in the prison regime. It ensures that convicted prisoners contribute to the cost of their upkeep by helping with the running and maintenance of the prison and by providing goods and services in prison industries and on prison farms. The prison day needs to be arranged to make best and fullest use of the work available. Workshops allow industrial skills to be practised; farm work offers externally recognised qualifications. The pace and type of work should be closer to work in the community. Experience of regular work in prison can be a useful preparation for seeking a job on release' (Home Office 1991: 78).

One may note here the order in which these purposes were stated. First mention was given to prisoners' helping to maintain the prison system; then came skills and qualifications; then the desirability of prison work resembling outside work; and lastly preparing prisoners to seek employment on release. However in its policy statement

the following year which set out detailed criteria for judging prison work (see below) Prison Service HQ implied different priorities, with emphasis on making prison work like work outside.

It was intended, said the White Paper, to improve quality in prison workshops by introducing British Standard 5750; to consider pilot schemes increasing the involvement of private employers; to enable governors to improve the management of their workshops and to identify potential local sources of work; and to extend considerably prisoners' access to National Vocational Qualifications through workplace training, education and other activities. On pay, the Service would initially aim, when resources allowed, at Woolf's suggested average of £8 a week, and would explore ways of funding higher pay levels from workers' increased productivity (Home Office 1991: 78-79, 81-82).

The House of Commons Employment Committee

In mid 1991 the House of Commons Employment Committee, inspired by the Woolf Report (which had been published in February) considered prison work and employment for ex-prisoners, taking evidence from a range of concerned organisations including the Prison Service. By the time the Committee reported in November Custody, Care and Justice had been published, and the Committee took this into account in their own report. Their recommendations emphasised several themes, among which were: the importance of sentence planning and focusing on prisoners' needs; increasing working hours and pay to more realistic levels; the importance of giving prisoners training, whether by education or work ('ideally, there should be no place in the prison system for work which exists merely to pass the time'); more help to prisoners to move into jobs or training on release; and that the Prison Service should set target dates for their intended improvements (House of Commons Employment Committee 1991: xvi-xviii).

Replying to the Committee's report, the Home Office and the Employment Department largely reiterated the relevant proposals of the White Paper and indicated current progress (Home Office and Employment Department 1992).

Developing policy and practice on prison work

From 1992 Prison Service HQ was active in developing policy and practice. In the middle of that year a policy statement issued to Governors (HM Prison Service 1992: 2-3) on the nature and balance of regime activities included among other key points the following:

'All prisoners should take part in constructive activity. For convicted adult prisoners this should be work for most of their sentence. Therefore a substantial majority of daytime activity places - for adult sentenced prisoners - should be work based.'

Criteria for prison work

The policy statement set the following criteria for judging prison work:

Is the work experience realistic compared with that likely to be found outside, in terms of: acceptance of responsibility; hours of attendance; production processes/technology; interaction with others (supervisors, workmates); incentives for good work/penalties for poor performance; chances of the inmate getting that kind of job outside; the pace of work?

Does the work fit the aptitude of the prisoners concerned (demanding enough, but not too demanding)?

Does the work teach specific trades or skills which are sought after by outside employers? Is there opportunity for those who gain such skills to acquire qualifications and can skills already possessed be maintained and accredited?

How much does the work contribute to the upkeep of the establishment or of the prison system (net cost or contribution per place of the work activity concerned)? (The assessment needs to take into account the extent to which the activity concerned makes cost-effective use of existing assets.)

Does the work generate earnings which the offender can use: for the upkeep of his or her family; to pay compensation to the victim of his or her offence?

Can the products of the prisoners' work be used to support charitable causes?

What other positive regime activities are available to make full use of the prisoners' day, and how does their cost compare?'

Later a PSIF document (PSIF 1993: 12), repeating this list of seven criteria, said it was in descending order of priority, thus implying that the degree to which prison work is like outside work, and the extent to which it prepares prisoners for outside jobs, were seen as more important than its contribution to maintaining the prison system. This relative emphasis is an interesting contrast to that implied in para. 7.22 of the White Paper, which gave first mention to contributing to the cost of the system and last mention to preparing the prisoner for employment on release. The order of the criteria, and its endorsement by PSIF, suggest that in 1992-93 Prison Service senior managers truly hoped that prison work could be made to help prisoners feel they were like members of the ordinary labour force, and prepare them for joining it on leaving prison. That is to say (though the Prison Service did not use the term) prison work might contribute to offenders' social inclusion. (Prison pay, however, remained a major sticking point.) The Brunel study used several of the criteria in evaluating work at the six prisons, as will be seen later.

Practice

The Prison Service annual report for the year ending March 1993 described existing practices and several new developments which were in line with the recommendations of Woolf or the House of Commons Committee, including the following (Annual Report 1992-93: 20-21, 24-25, 32-34):

- a new pay scheme from December 1992, raising the average prison pay from about £3.30 a week to £6;

- pilot schemes at selected prisons, paying selected inmates more realistic wages with deductions for board, savings and tax;

- pilot schemes for involving private firms directly in employing inmates;

- co-operation, at several prisons, with Training and Enterprise Councils for the benefit of inmates;

- the increasing availability in prisons of NVQs for various kinds of training;

- schemes to allow prisoners near release to work outside in ordinary jobs;

- several schemes, including prison jobclubs funded by the Employment Service, to give prisoners more help in moving into work or training upon release.

In addition to all this, responsibility for providing and managing work was gradually devolved to individual prisons, with PSIF, later renamed Prison Enterprise Services, offering central advice and support as Woolf had recommended.

....

Such, in brief outline, were the Prison Service's hopes and intentions for prison work, in the year or so immediately following the Woolf Report, and of course there were plans for many other things too, several of which are mentioned below. As the White Paper had warned, much of what Woolf had recommended would take years to achieve. But in 1993 there were grounds for cautious optimism. At the beginning of the year the prison population at 42,000 was lower than at any time since 1985 (much of the reduction being due to the effect from October 1992 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 - Home Office 1996a: 4). This gave the Service a breathing space to adjust to its new status (from April 1993) as an executive agency and to the accompanying flurry of managerial changes: a three-year corporate plan, an annual business plan, new goals, performance indicators and so on. Derek Lewis, the new Director General appointed in January, said to his senior managers: 'I have a broad and simple brief to continue - and I hope accelerate - the reforms recommended by Woolf and outlined in the

<u>Custody, Care and Justice</u> White Paper. And to improve value for money' (HM Prison Service 1993a: 2). By November Ian Dunbar, addressing the annual Prison Service conference, said that the Service had found a sense of direction and that Woolf had been a turning point. 'Following Woolf and the White Paper, we have never had such a pragmatic programme and such a profound sense of direction. ... We do have a very much better Prison Service now' (HM Prison Service 1993b: 1).

At the research prisons

The provision of work and training during 1992-96 was of course a major focus of the Brunel study, and the main findings are discussed in later chapters. Here it will be simply noted that at the five male prisons the provision of work and training places for inmates was largely sustained, and in some cases improved, over the period. (At Holloway it was a different matter, as will be seen later.) Channings Wood in 1992 had, besides the domestic and maintenance jobs common to all prisons, four workshops and eight training courses, and by 1994 most were offering NVQs. In 1996 one of the courses had stopped but a new workshop had opened. Highpoint in 1992 had three workshops and nine training courses; in 1996 there was one more workshop. Kirkham in 1992 had, as well as extensive farm and gardens work, four workshops, a construction industry training course and several other very short courses; in 1996 one shop and the CIT course had been closed but other work activities seemed to be flourishing. Liverpool in 1992 had seven workshops and six training courses; in 1996 one course had stopped but there was one more workshop, there were altogether more occupational places, and daily working hours had increased from five to five and a half. Maidstone in 1992 had four workshops and five courses; by 1996 there were two more workshops, and the prison was getting in more contract work which allowed inmates' wages to be slightly increased. (Details of these matters are described in chapter 2 of Simon 1999.)

Now attention is turned to some other developments during the same period which had the potential to affect, for good or ill, inmates' work and training opportunities. Illustrations from the research prisons will be given.

Developments with potential for good

Privatisation

The complex and controversial issues of prison privatisation have been discussed by others (e.g. James et al. 1997) and will not be aired here, except to note the view of the Prisons Board in 1993 that competition from the private sector would be a stimulus to improve standards across all the prison system. 'The Board is committed to securing continuous and lasting improvements in standards, quality and value-for-money across the whole of the prison system in England and Wales ... Carefully managed, operating to a common code of standards and measured by the same performance indicators, private sector involvement can provide constructive and creative competition which will be to the ultimate benefit of the prison system as a whole' (HM Prison Service 1993c).

One form of privatisation noted during the research was the contracting out of prison education services, which include a good deal of the vocational training prisoners receive. Until 1993 classes for prisoners' education were provided by colleges of further education through contracts with local education authorities. But after that year, for each prison any interested body could tender direct for the supply of prisoners' education, and while some contracts were let to the same providers as before others went to different ones. At both Kirkham and Liverpool it appeared that the change had been beneficial, the new education department being more proactive in the prison and catering for more inmates than previously (Simon 1999: 46, 50, 51).

Sentence planning

Assessment by prison staff of a new prisoner's needs, followed by efforts to help him or her address them during sentence through whatever facilities the prison could offer, had been going on for many years in some prisons, for some prisoners. But from 1992 the Prison Service tried to put it on a regular basis by a national scheme of sentence planning, in response to proposals of the Woolf Report (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 451) and to the new sentencing structure brought in by the Criminal Justice Act 1991. Sentence planning was introduced in October 1992 for all sentenced Category

A prisoners and for all others who were sentenced to four years or more from the first of that month, and in autumn 1993 it was extended to all prisoners sentenced to a year or more.

The aims of sentence planning, in the words of the Prison Service, were:

'to make the best use of the time people have to spend in custody, to reduce the risk of their re-offending and to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release. It links work on helping prisoners to tackle their offending behaviour with planned experience of work, training and education. It provides opportunities to review the prisoner's progress throughout the sentence. It is also the mechanism for co-ordinating work done in prison with work done with prisoners who will have a period of compulsory supervision after release' (Annual Report 1992-93: 28).

Sentence planning therefore had the potential for improving prisoners' opportunities for work and training, as well as other things. At the four training prisons in the research sample in 1996 most prisoners serving at least one year had a sentence plan, often started (or re-started) after their arrival. It usually focused on slotting people into offending behaviour courses (see below), though in some cases it facilitated acceptance for vocational training. But it seemed at that time that sentence planning had very little connection with decisions about what kind of prison work an inmate would do.

In 1997, following a review two years earlier (HM Prison Service 1995d) which had found the working of the national system to be very patchy, Prison Service HQ introduced a revised scheme of sentence planning (HM Prison Service 1997; for a brief description see Simon 1999: 209). It focused on the concept of risk, and aimed at the integrated management of a person's sentence throughout the stay in prison and the subsequent period of probation service supervision. But because it targeted only people who would be supervised after release it covered only a minority of prisoners. These comprised nearly all young offenders, but only about one third of adults: those who after being sentenced had at least six months still to serve in prison. (For an explanation of this point see Simon 1999: 247 n. 52.) Most adults, whose expected stay

was shorter, were not required to have a plan (though they like others were subject to initial risk assessment, security categorisation and allocation). And even for people who did receive a plan there was no assurance that the needs identified during their assessment would actually be addressed; it would depend on the resources available. Special attention, however, was given to offending behaviour programmes, as mentioned below.

Offending behaviour programmes

Para. 7.1 of <u>Custody, Care and Justice</u> expressed the intention to 'give sentenced prisoners every opportunity to acquire the skills and resolve necessary not to commit further crimes' (Home Office 1991: 69). Of course in earlier decades probation officers, psychologists and psychiatrists in some prisons worked with small numbers of inmates towards that objective, as did counsellors from outside agencies (especially in relation to alcohol and drugs abuse), and increasing numbers of prison officers were being trained to participate. But in 1991 the Prison Service began a substantial effort to expand and co-ordinate such work and to encourage a multi-disciplinary approach to it by prison staff. That year saw the introduction of the nationally-devised treatment programme for sex offenders, and by 1992 other courses had been developed in anger management and in cognitive skills. Growth continued in subsequent years, and the 1995 review of sentence planning found that prisons were running courses on a great variety of subjects thought pertinent to offending.

This growth was reflected in the five male research prisons. Channings Wood and Maidstone were regional centres for the national sex offender treatment programme, and by mid 1996 both they and Highpoint, Kirkham and Liverpool had a programme of several courses on various other topics, mostly co-ordinated by the probation department. New prisoners were assessed to see what they were thought to need, and then (if willing) were fitted in as vacancies occurred. Channings Wood, Highpoint, Liverpool and Maidstone usually had waiting lists, as provision was not yet enough to meet the demand. Pre-release courses (see Chapter 9) could also include components on social skills and avoidance of further offending.

The sex offender programme was always substantial, comprising a core course (which in 1997 took about 90 two-hour sessions) and a booster (of about 30). But many of the other offending behaviour courses being run by prisons in 1995-96 were very short: typically about seven sessions over three to five days. Some probation staff viewed them as 'tasters' (Simon 1999: 210-211). In 1996 Prison Service HQ, concerned about this state of affairs, began to promote much longer and more intensive programmes 'accredited as effective in reducing re-offending',[1] and establishments were set a new 'key performance indicator': the number of completions of such programmes by inmates. By mid 1997 two kinds of accredited programmes were running in some prisons: the sex offender one and two courses in cognitive skills. Accreditation of others, especially on drugs, was under way.

But the accredited courses were available to only a minority of prisoners. Prison Service HQ considered that because of their length they would be appropriate only for people sentenced to more than 18 months who could be sure of having time to complete the course. Not all such prisoners would be willing or judged suitable to attend: the existing courses were intended mainly for people who had committed violent, sexual or drug-related offences. It was aimed to provide 4,000 places a year, and in 1997 there were approximately 2,500. Accreditation did not mean that other offending behaviour courses would necessarily be dropped, but one would expect that prison managers with an eye on the performance indicator might feel under pressure to give the accredited programmes priority. Thus again the majority of prisoners, especially people serving shorter sentences, would be likely to miss out.

The reason for mentioning offending behaviour programmes in the present context is that it will be argued in Chapter 10 that work and vocational training on the one hand, and help to address offending behaviour on the other could, *if* adequately provided, be mutually reinforcing in helping ex-prisoners to avoid further crime.

Incentive schemes

In 1995 the Prison Service announced a 'national framework for incentives and earned privileges' (Annual Report 1994-95: 26), which had been piloted in several

prisons. It set three levels of facilities which prisoners could earn 'through responsible behaviour and participation in hard work and other constructive activity'. These were: level 1 (basic), the minimum to which all inmates were entitled (unless removed as a punishment for indiscipline); level 2 (standard); and level 3 (enhanced), which carried extra rewards for superior conduct.

The three levels were linked to four main kinds of facilities or 'key earnable privileges': access to private cash; extra or better visits; eligibility to take part in enhanced earnings schemes; and opportunities, for certain groups only, of community visits (i.e. going with their visitors outside the prison). Additional 'earnable privileges' were wearing one's own clothes and having time out of cell for association. The aims of the national framework were stated as follows: 'To ensure that privileges generally are earned by prisoners through good behaviour and performance and are removable if prisoners fail to maintain acceptable standards; to encourage responsible behaviour by prisoners; to encourage hard work and other constructive activity by prisoners; to encourage prisoners to progress through the prison system; and to create a more disciplined, better controlled and safer environment for prisoners and staff'.

Individual prisons were required to devise their own incentive schemes within the national framework, so there was room for local variation. It can be seen that a scheme might relate to prisoners' work and training in two ways. Inmates' motivation to work, at whatever task they were set, might be encouraged by hope of promotion to a higher level; and access to particular kinds of work, or training courses, could be one of the incentives in a local scheme.

Variations on the national theme in regard to work were seen at the four training prisons in the research sample in 1996. (Liverpool and Holloway had no scheme then.) At Channings Wood and Highpoint, both Category C prisons, men at level 1 were given no choice of work while those at level 3 could apply for any kind, but neither prison had facilities for paying enhanced wages. Kirkham, at Category D, did: three workplaces carried enhanced pay, and men on levels 2 and 3 could be considered for them. At Maidstone, which being Category B gave inmates less freedom to move around the prison, level 3 men could apply for jobs having a little more than most. But Maidstone's distinctive feature was the 'Options' arrangement (for a description see

Simon 1999: 55). This allowed men on levels 2 and 3 to make their own personal timetables of work and other activities from the range available, provided that they worked for at least two thirds of the time. (Men on level 1 had to work for all of it.) At all four prisons inmates' levels were regularly reviewed, and factors taken into account for promotion or demotion included diligence at work.

At the time of the researcher's 1996 visit the incentive schemes at those prisons were still settling down and no assessment of them was attempted. Most managers describing the arrangements were optimistic about them. It seemed that at Channings Wood, Highpoint and Kirkham one advantage of the scheme was to remove the previous tendency for one workshop to be used as a 'sin bin' for disaffected prisoners, as now the basic regime served that purpose. All four prisons had very few inmates on level 1, the majority were on level 2, and up to 35% (at Maidstone) were on level 3.[2]

Changes likely to cause harm

The previous section has described developments since the Woolf Report which could potentially benefit prisoners' work and training. Now attention is turned to three other changes occuring during the same period which threatened the progress the Service was trying to make. These were: the increasing prison population, tightened security, and budget cuts. They will be noted in turn, followed by some examples of their impact on the research prisons.

Increasing prison population

Between 1988 and 1992 the prison population, while fluctuating, showed on average a declining trend, and dropped below 43,000 at the end of 1992. But from early 1993 it rose spectacularly, averaging 61,100 in 1997 and repeatedly outstripping Home Office predictions (Home Office 1998c: 6, 16; Home Office 1995, 1996c). The rise was due mainly to the increasing use from 1993 of custodial sentences by the courts, and this will be discussed in Chapter 11. Women prisoners, while only about

4% of the total, increased in numbers much more quickly than the men: between 1992 and 1996 the male prison population increased by 20% but the female one by 43%, while the annual number of receptions rose by 24% for males but 44% for females (Home Office 1997b: Tables 1.2, 1.11). This had particular implications for Holloway Prison, as will be mentioned below.

It is obvious that such rapidly increasing numbers must put a great strain on the Service. In almost every month in 1994, 1995 and 1996 the total number of prisoners exceeded the total number of prison places available (Home Office 1997b: 8), and in September 1995 the chairman of the Prison Governors' Association said: 'Prison overcrowding destroys positive regimes. In an overcrowded prison, staff and management time is devoted to basic survival' (Penal Affairs Consortium 1996: 2). One would expect the adverse effect on work and training to be worst at local prisons, but there could be consequences at other prisons too, if staff had to cope with a greater turnover of prisoners because of the pressure to find spaces somewhere in the system for the swelling numbers.

Tighter security

From the beginning of 1995, following the escape from Whitemoor in September 1994, the heavily critical Woodcock Report on that matter in December (Woodcock 1994), and the escape from Parkhurst in January, the Prison Service turned attention and resources towards preventing further escapes. Prisons had more fences built, both round the perimeter and internally between sections of them, as well as investing more in other hardware and dogs; staff spent more time counting and searching prisoners; staff training emphasised greater security awareness; other procedures were stepped up. In December 1994 the Director General had set 'security first and foremost' among the Service's priorities for the coming year, and the 1994-95 annual report said: 'We have refocused our attention and energies so that security is *the* key area for both immediate and future concern' (HM Prison Service 1995c; Annual Report 1994-95: 19).

Pressure to concentrate on security became even greater after the publication in October 1995 of the Learmont Report on prison security (Learmont 1995), which like

Woodcock was in many parts severely critical. Amid public uproar the Home Secretary (Michael Howard) sacked Derek Lewis as Director General, and eventually Richard Tilt, a former prison governor who had been the Service's director of security, was appointed in his stead.

Clearly, if prisoners' movements are restricted and staff are pre-occupied with surveillance, opportunities for work and training in prison may be diminished. In addition, from April 1995 the arrangements for allowing certain prisoners temporary release on licence were replaced by more restrictive ones which reduced the number of licences granted by 40% (Annual Report 1994-95: 28). This would be expected to decrease inmates' opportunities, for example, to have work experience or training courses outside the prison.

Budget cuts

In its <u>Corporate Plan for 1995-98</u> (HM Prison Service 1995b) the Prison Service had planned to reduce unit costs by 8.6% between 1994-95 and 1997-98, apart from spending on security measures to implement the Woodcock Report. However, following the Chancellor's Budget statement in November 1995, prison governors were told at the end of that month that, after allowing for spending on Woodcock and a new programme for tackling drugs, they had to reduce costs by an average of 4% to 5% a year, or about 13.5% altogether, in the three years from April 1996. The Prison Governors' Association immediately issued a statement saying: 'The budgetary settlements announced by the Prison Service today clearly indicate that there will be insufficient money in 1996 for Governors to deliver effective regimes ...' (Penal Affairs Consortium 1996: 2-3.)

The Director-General, at a conference in December 1995 of governors and senior managers, stressed 'the importance which I attach to maintaining the balance between security and control on the one hand and rehabilitation and justice on the other, and the importance of supporting continuity and stability in the system', and said that cutting regimes should be the last resort in the effort to reduce costs (HM Prison Service 1995a: 1). But despite such official determination and optimism, it is hard to believe

that inmates' work and training might not suffer from the financial constraints, especially when these pressures came on top of those caused by the rising population and the increased concentration on security. One of the cost-cutting measures in 1996 included a plan to lose about 1,500 prison staff posts by voluntary redundancy and early retirement, in which the officers most likely to be paid off were among the longest-serving and most experienced (HM Prison Service 1996: 1-3). Moreover, the budget cuts were imposed at a time when, following Woolf (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 296), individual prisons were gradually being given more financial autonomy (Annual Report 1994-95: 32). As a result each governor had the freedom to decide, within limits, how to achieve the required saving at his or her own prison, and one of the consequences could be that some prisons cut provision for inmates' education or training while others did not.[3] In 1996 the Chief Inspector was severely critical of this unplanned, piecemeal approach to economy (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1996: 2).

Some consequences at the research prisons

At the four training prisons it seemed in 1996 that the Service's traditional practice of shielding the training estate from population pressures had continued. Liverpool, too, was actually less overcrowded than it had been four years previously (mainly because it no longer had to take the overspill from Manchester Prison during the latter's reconstruction). Holloway, however, was a different story, as mentioned below.

All the male prisons had visible signs of increased security, but the one where it seemed to make most difference was Highpoint. Here in 1996 staff routines for watching and escorting inmates in the main section of the prison ('South') were more detailed and much tighter, with the result that the daily hours which prisoners actually spent at work had shrunk from five and a half to nearer four. Kirkham had cut the number of people going out to work on community projects, which had been a local feature of the prison.

Financial savings were being made in different ways at each establishment, and the main impact seemed to have been on training. Channings Wood had contrived to preserve a good budget for NVQs, but in 1995 when the local TEC stopped funding the prison's unique training scheme, 'Options For Learning', prison managers were unable to continue it as they had hoped to. (See pp. 159-161.) Highpoint had a similar experience with its 'Employment Focus' course, which stopped in 1994 after a year's initial funding by the Employment Department. In April 1996 Highpoint closed its main education section in order to save money, a move that threatened to revive the prison's chronic problem of inmate under-employment which managers during the previous three years had largely overcome. Kirkham in 1996 was no longer offering NVQs and had stopped its training course in building operations. At Maidstone, however, managers said that although there had been staff cuts activities for inmates had been protected.

Taking everything together, it seemed in spring 1996 that governors and staff at the five male prisons were, by and large, coping valiantly with the constraints of increased security and reduced finance, and trying hard to implement at least some of the Service's policies for improving inmates' work and training in line with Custody, Care and Justice. But the research prison most severely affected by the combined pressures of population, tightened security and budget cuts (as well as other matters) was Holloway. Details have been given elsewhere (Simon 1999: 44-45) and here a few points are summarised.

Built to house 517 prisoners, Holloway experienced during 1993-96 a rise in numbers from 456 to 595 (30%), and its population included more women with a variety of problems which put the staff under great stress. The education budget was cut, and inmates' activities drastically curtailed to the point where the Board of Visitors' annual report for 1995 said: 'The Board believes that the lack of a purposeful regime was profoundly damaging to the ethos of the prison and to the lives of inmates' (HM Prison Holloway Board of Visitors 1996: 8). The buildings became insanitary. In January 1996 there was a public outcry after media reports that maternity patients attending outside hospital were chained to prison officers during labour; later the Chief Inspector said that security restrictions 'had been taken to absurd extremes'

106

(Ramsbotham 1997: 53). By spring 1996 HQ had begun remedial action, and during the following months conditions gradually improved. In the rest of this thesis most references to Holloway are to the regime studied in the fieldwork of early 1993.

Final comment

The function of this chapter has been to summarise the Prison Service's intentions for developing inmates' work and training in response to the challenge of the Woolf Report, and to indicate briefly some of what happened during the four to five years afterwards, with illustrations from the six prisons participating in the Brunel research. At least at the male prisons strenuous efforts were made for reform (and for continuing reforms which had started before Woolf). But after 1993 managers' endeavours were impeded by the same obstacles as had recurred in earlier decades: a demand for tighter security, constraints on spending, and increasing numbers of prisoners. In Chapter 11 it will be argued that these three obstacles arise from public desires that prisoners shall be socially excluded: money must be available for locking them firmly away, but less so for activities which might ameliorate their isolation; and more and more offenders must be sent to prison.

Meanwhile Chapters 6-10 will explore, using the Brunel findings, how far prisoners' work and training did, or did not, tend to reduce their social exclusion.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Information on accredited programmes was supplied by Prison Service HQ.

2. 1997 saw the report of an evaluation of the incentives scheme by Liebling, Muir, Rose and Bottoms, based mainly on five prisons of different types (one of which was Highpoint). Overall, staff viewed the operation and effects of the scheme more favourably than did prisoners. In regard to work and participation in other regime activities it was found that the number of prisoners saying they got a lot out of such

things, or thought the regime was constructive, had declined since the incentive scheme came in. The researchers pointed out that during the same period the provision of work and education at four of the prisons had been reduced because of budget cuts. The cuts thus acted against one aim of the scheme.

3. See note 2 above.

CHAPTER 6

PRISON WORK IN THE 1990s, AND COMPARISONS WITH OUTSIDE

Introduction

This chapter begins with a national overview of prison work, indicating its provision throughout the prison system in 1996. Following that is a note on Prison Enterprise Services, the 1990s successor to PSIF in supporting the development of prison industries. The bulk of the chapter is taken up by comparisons between prison work, as seen at the six prisons, and work outside, on a variety of topics: the recruitment of workers; processes and products; workplace organisation, management, atmosphere and relationships; workers' responsibilities; pay and perks; and (briefly) skill and training. As will be seen, all these aspects are relevant to the consideration of workers' social exclusion.

The national provision of prison work in 1996

Kinds of work

Table 1 shows the main kinds of work available to inmates in Prison Service establishments in 1996, and for each kind how many prisons provided it and roughly how many inmates at any one time were doing it. It takes into account all 131 establishments, including remand centres and Young Offender Institutions, which were operating in 1996 except the four then contracted out to private management. It does not include a few kinds of work done at all prisons by very small numbers of inmates, like orderlies, clerks and stores assistants, and it does not include training courses or education. Table 1 has been compiled from several sources and the numbers of prisoners shown are only approximate.[1]

Table 1: Main kinds of prison work in 1996

Work	No. of prisons providing it	No. of prisoners employed in it (approximate)	% of total prisoners in this table
			(23,950=100%)
(a) PES industries			
clothing manufacture	46	1,940	8.1
other textile products	19	700	2.9
weaving	5	150	0.6
other fabric manufacture	3	230	1.0
sewing machine repairs	4	90	0.4
contract services (light assembly etc.)	50	1,440	6.0
laundry	44	720	3.0
engineering	17	600	2.5
woodwork	16	600	2.5
footwear and leather goods	5	200	0.8
printing and desktop publishing	13	180	0.8
plastics products	4	40	0.2
concrete products	3	30	0.1
brush making	1	40	0.2
(b) PES farms and gardens			
farming	42	880	3.7
gardens	128	1,150	4.8
(c) Other			
kitchens	123	1,870	7.8
other domestic (cleaners, servery etc.)	131	11,700	48.9
Works (building maintenance)	131	1,390	5.8

Sources: PES, Prison Service regime monitoring statistics.

Notes: Total number of prisons: 131. Total number of prisoners included in this table: 23,950. Total prison population: approximately 53,000. This includes (i) small numbers of prisoners employed in kinds of work not shown here, (ii) prisoners occupied in ways other than work, (iii) unoccupied prisoners. All the figures in the table exclude the four contracted-out prisons, whose population totalled approximately 2,300.

The first thing noticeable about Table 1 is that it accounts for less than half the prison population: the numbers of prisoners it shows as employed total 23,950 and the prison population in 1996 was well over 50,000. The gap is largely explained by several factors. Remand prisoners, who form about a quarter of the population, usually do not work. About a fifth of the population (and rather more than this among young offenders) are in education or training courses and about 4% are in induction.[2] Some others are occupied in other kinds of courses and some in the kinds of work not covered by Table 1. Nevertheless regime monitoring figures suggest that substantial numbers of inmates are unemployed. The majority of them would be remand prisoners but unemployment can affect sentenced people also, despite the Service's policy that for adult sentenced inmates the emphasis should be on work.

Here it is worth remarking that the apparent lack of work for some prisoners occurs despite the efforts of Prison Enterprise Services to provide it. PES budget figures for industries for 1996-97, which contributed to part (a) of Table 1, show a total of 7,200 inmates employed but a total of 10,320 jobs ('resourced employment places') available for them, and a similar over-supply occurs with farms and gardens. The mismatch between workshop places and prisoners to fill them is a perennial problem for prison industrial managers. Among the reasons for it are the fluctuating labour supply, especially in prisons having many short-term prisoners; the preoccupation of staff (especially at overcrowded locals) with day-to-day pressures; governors' differing views on the relative priorities of industrial production versus other occupations for inmates; and the ambivalence of the Service as a whole about the proper role of prison work. (See p. 28.)

However, Table 1 may be taken as indicating most of the kinds of work available to most prisoners, and now examined more closely. Certainly there is a great variety of work. But by far the most numerous jobs are for domestic workers: excluding kitchens, domestic service apparently occupies nearly half the prisoners in the table. Here again people on remand account for a good deal of the story: remand centres (and remand wings in local prisons) often cannot provide work for many of their inmates but they do have to be cleaned, and regime monitoring figures suggest that they employ more domestics than do other prisons.[3]

After domestics the biggest group of workers is in clothing and textiles: including weaving and other fabric manufacture (but not sewing machine repairs) Table 1 shows 3,020 or 13% of the total. In 1996 60 prisons had a workshop producing woven or knitted fabrics or articles made from them, and 18 had at least two such workshops; in many prisons those making garments are known as 'the tailors' though most of their work is production machine sewing. Next in frequency of inmate employment, occupying 8% in Table 1, are kitchens, a service essential to morale in every prison. Next is a group of workshops called contract services employing 6%; these typically do unskilled light assembly operations for outside firms, though some other prison workshops also take in contract work. Next in frequency of employment come Works departments, employing 6% of the total in Table 1, gardens at 5%, farming at 4%, laundry work at 3%, engineering and woodwork (furniture) at 2.5% each, and then smaller industries at less than 1% each. The distribution of kinds of work in prisons, compared with the kinds of work available outside, will be discussed in Chapter 10.

A note on Prison Enterprise Services

The kinds of work shown in parts (a) and (b) of Table 1 come under the auspices of Prison Enterprise Services (formerly PSIF). Until the Woolf reforms PSIF at HQ exercised central control and management of the industrial work in all prisons. Following Woolf (see p. 89) the role of PSIF at the centre changed to one of giving advice, oversight and support to prison governors, who gradually acquired much more freedom to find and manage their own supplies of work for prisoners if they wanted to. In 1993 PSIF (Central Services) Division stated its purpose as 'serving and supporting prison establishments in the cost-effective provision of purposeful work and training, thereby giving prisoners the opportunity to acquire knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits which will help them to lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release' (PSIF Board of Management 1994: 4). A brochure addressed to governors (PSIF 1993) offered a 'one-stop enterprise service' including among other things advice and support on investment, product development, plant maintenance, production scheduling, accreditation for quality assurance (especially BS 5750) and negotiation of

contracts. Governors were free to find local sources of work as well as, or instead of, accepting what PSIF provided centrally.

By 1996 PSIF had changed its name to Prison Enterprise Services and was vigorously advertising its capabilities to prisons and to outside bodies, including some in private industry (see below). It was helping prisons to start new kinds of work, e.g. desktop publishing, microfiching records, growing mushrooms and making printed circuit boards. In 1996 also, reorganisation at Prison Service HQ brought PES together with other branches concerned in developing activities for prisoners - including education, physical education, NVQs, offending behaviour programmes, and inmates' pay - under the head of 'regime services'. This move was intended to promote co-operation between the various departments of a prison in shaping constructive regimes, instead of the divisions and competition for inmate labour which had formerly been common.

PES encouraged prisons to engage with the private sector in providing work opportunities for inmates, as formerly PSIF had engaged directly. Private companies, said the literature from HQ, could be involved in several ways. Prison-made products could be marketed to outside customers; firms could send in components for assembly in prison workshops; a prison and a private firm could form a partnership for making particular goods or services; a private company could set up business within a prison, paying rent and employing prisoners. The first two of these things, of course, had been going on in some British prisons for many years (see Chapter 2), and examples of the other two could be found in other countries (see Chapter 3). They all have the potential for bringing the outside world of work closer to prison inmates, but there are problems and pitfalls (discussed by, for example, Lightman 1978, 1982; Flynn 1995; Smartt and Vagg 1998: 11-12; and shown by the Prindus scandal in the 1980s - Simon 1999: 9-10). In 1996 prisons' links with private firms seemed to be growing cautiously.

A central question is how much prisoners should be paid, and PES was involved in this too. One of its functions was to help prisons achieve ways of paying 'real' or 'enhanced' wages as part of the national framework of incentives (see p. 101). The national budget for prisoners' pay allowed governors an average of £7 a week for each inmate, and any extra had to be raised by increased productivity. But making extra

extra money was not easy. PES records in February 1996 showed that only three prisons had 'real wages' schemes, involving altogether just 25 prisoners whose highest wage was £135 a week. Eighteen prisons had enhanced pay schemes, involving in total 1,317 inmates through a variety of work and marketing arrangements; the enhanced earnings ranged from an average of £10 a week at Ashwell and Albany to £21 a week at Coldingley (though of course some individuals earned more). The list of prisons planning enhanced earning schemes was rapidly growing, and at the research updating visit to Kirkham in April 1996 it was learned that workers in the timber shop, which sold direct to outside customers, could earn up to £60 a week on piece rates.[4]

At the six prisons

The foregoing section has outlined the national provision of prison work in 1996, showing the main kinds in which inmates were occupied throughout the system as a whole. The rest of this chapter summarises findings from the six research prisons and makes comparisons with outside, mainly using points from the visits to outside employers. The six prisons between them provided examples of all the kinds of work shown in Table 1 as employing at least 200 prisoners except engineering. (None of the six had an engineering production shop, though two in 1992 had a training course.) Among smaller groups, the six prisons exemplified printing and leather goods manufacture, as well as kinds of work not included in Table 1 like orderlies, clerks and stores. Detailed descriptions of 14 kinds of work in prison, and ten kinds outside, are included in Simon (1999: chapter 3).[5]

Recruitment of workers

Induction procedures at each prison for people received under sentence included giving them some information on the activities there, getting information from them, and assigning them to an occupation. People needing (and wanting) basic skills in literacy or numeracy were sent to the education department if it had room, while people wanting a training course usually had to wait for a vacancy and do a prison job meantime. Most new arrivals were assigned to work.

Those sent to industrial workshops (as in part (a) of Table 1) or gardens often had little choice about the matter to begin with, though some asked for such work. In 1996 Channings Wood staff told new arrivals firmly that 'the needs of the establishment are paramount' and the same principle generally applied elsewhere, though there was more flexibility at Maidstone. Kitchen workers were usually 'volunteers' except at Kirkham and Liverpool. Works officers handpicked inmate helpers from those who applied, and they looked for people with trade skills or at least aptitude. Farm workers and others working outside the gate had to pass a risk assessment. Inmates who became orderlies were carefully selected after staff had got to know them. The same was true of some wing cleaners and other domestics, but also there was a temptation to 'pad' the cleaning parties with inmates who would otherwise be unemployed. The range of occupations available to Rule 43 inmates in the three prisons with a VPU was more restricted: in many cases to the laundry, one or two other workshops, or general education.

In most cases prisoners could apply for a change of occupation after three months or so if not earlier, and staff tried to accommodate their preferences. But in 1992-93 it seemed that the prior work skills of people who had them were not very often taken into account. Of 115 inmate workers interviewed who said they had some kind of skill before sentence, only 37% said they had used it in *any* prison activity during the current sentence and only 19% were using it now (e.g. in kitchens or Works). Three-quarters of those whose pre-sentence skill was not currently being used said they knew of some prison activity which they thought could have used it, though by no means all had asked to do so.

From 1996 at the training prisons the new incentive schemes gave most inmates more opportunities to aim for occupations they wanted, from those available. But this was very far from being a methodical arrangement for assessing prisoners' needs for vocational skills and then placing them in the most appropriate way. Nor was there any system for ensuring that the range of occupations a prison provided would match the needs of the population it received. And even if it had, there was no assurance that the next prison to which those inmates might be moved had a programme which would enable them to continue their training or work experience. One might have hoped for these matters to be addressed by sentence planning, but in 1996 sentence planning

seemed to be more concerned with getting prisoners into courses on offending behaviour than with guiding them into suitable work. Overall it seemed in 1996, as in earlier years, that the work an inmate was given to do in prison was, for many, largely a lucky dip.

As Karen Legge (1978: 12-13) has pointed out, a major distinction between work in prison and work outside is that people enter prison as *prisoners*, not as would-be workers. Once they are inside, a prison manager can consider how best to deploy their labour on tasks perceived as needing to be done. But the manager is always constrained by the requirement to keep the labourers in captivity and, as will be seen, security considerations often limited the scope of prisoners' jobs. Outside, on the other hand, an employer can advertise for the skills needed for his or her enterprise and choose the labour force from people who apply; and even in times of recession outside jobseekers have a freedom of action that prisoners do not. Recruitment for work, then, is one matter that points up prisoners' social exclusion. This aspect of social exclusion might be mitigated if prisoners were given work which took account of their previous skills (if any) and built on these, or at least maintained them, until they were released. But such continuity of experience was seldom an important consideration in the way prison workers were recruited.

Processes and products

For most kinds of work the actual contents - products and processes - were very similar in prison to what was seen outside (though the range of prison products was narrower), and the equipment and machines were largely the same. The biggest difference was in prison kitchens, which produced meals using traditional industrial cooking methods in contrast to the highly automated cook-chill processes of a hospital catering service. (Not all outside caterers, though, would use such a large amount of advanced technology.) Other differences were observed with printing, where Maidstone's printing shop in 1992 had old-fashioned equipment as well as modern machines like those at a high-class outside printer, and with weaving, where Kirkham's looms in 1992 were very out of date and (according to a prison manager) below industrial health standards; but by 1995 all prison weaving industry had been

116

modernised. The prison 'tailors' made far longer runs of the same product than did the small clothing firm visited, and both they and the prison leather goods workshop had a slightly smaller range of machines than those outside. Woodwork assembly operations were more de-skilled at Channings Wood than at a comparable outside furniture factory. The outside construction site had more large equipment than prison Works departments, which did mostly maintenance jobs. Apart from these differences the processes and equipment in prison workplaces were very similar to the outside examples seen.

In the early 1990s the Prison Service made a drive for high quality in its products. Farm operations complied with Ministry of Agriculture standards and European Union guidelines, and by the end of 1996 15% of PES workshops had achieved BS 5750. At the other main kinds of workplace - kitchens, Works and domestic - observations suggested that quality could vary. But instructors in general tried hard to instil high standards and good practices into their workforces, and on the whole they felt that good quality was achieved despite limited budgets and prisoners' limited skills. The research comparisons with outside industry tended to bear this out.

So in respect of processes and products much prison work was very like what went on outside. Provided that other aspects were found to be comparable, *and* that there were job vacancies outside, experience of prison work might tend to help ex-prisoners find employment, thus aiding their social integration. However it will be seen that matters were not so simple. Another point to be noted is that unskilled manual light assembly work, which comprises much of the contract work done in prisons (see Table 1), has become so scarce in ordinary industry that the researchers were unable to find an outside example of it to visit. The real comparators would have been either sheltered workshops for the mentally handicapped, or the large number of people employed doing unskilled assembly work at home. This matter will be discussed later.

Workplace organisation and management

Much of the workplace organisation was similar in prison to that outside, with workers operating as individuals, in pairs or in teams as appropriate to the task. A big

difference, however, with several kinds of work was that the prison occupied far more workers to produce the same amount than would have been employed outside: this was particularly the case with kitchens, gardens, farm, woodwork and printing. In kitchens and (to some extent) printing the difference was partly due to the prison having less automated equipment, but the main reasons for it in all prison workplaces where it was observed were of other kinds.

First, many inmates had low levels of skill for the task in hand and needed much supervision. Skill and training are discussed on pp. 124-125. Second, working hours for most prisoners were shorter than those outside. Except for kitchens (where inmates typically worked 50 hours a week, compared with 39 for the hospital caterers), and at Kirkham (which in 1996 had a 37-hour week), most prisoners worked only between four and five-and-a-half hours daily. This was because their working day was fitted inside the prison officers' working day, so that prisoners typically began work later than 8 am, stopped earlier than 12 noon when they were returned to their wings for lunch and a roll check and the officers had their lunch, re-started later than 1.30 pm, and finished some time after 4 pm when they went back to the wings for a roll check and the evening meal. The more time officers spent on escorting and security checks, the less time was available for inmates to be at their workplaces, and by 1996 the daily working hours for most prisoners at Highpoint (South) had dropped to four for that reason.

A third reason was that prisoners' work was subject to continual interruptions. Individuals were called away for visits official and private, medical appointments, sessions with probation, exercise, visits to the canteen (prison shop), library and so on: most of which matters in an outside firm would have had to be arranged outside working hours. And in prison the rhythm of whole workplaces could be interrupted because of other prison priorities like searches or staff training, or the absence of instructors for any reason (no substitutes being provided). These things, as well as the short hours, illustrate how the conditions of prisoners' work are determined by their status as prisoners rather than as workers. So the efforts of the Service to bring work processes and products close to those outside, thus mitigating prison workers' social exclusion, are counteracted by the primary need to run the establishment as a prison, not a business, thus emphasising the exclusion of its inmates.

The pace of work was considerably slower in prison than outside for work in gardens, farm, Works, woodwork and tailors' workshops. (It was faster in kitchens, where there was a continual rush to get meals ready on time, in contrast to the smooth automated procedures of the hospital caterers.) It also seemed slow (though the research made no outside comparisons) in some of the light assembly workshops, with male wing cleaners, and with some orderlies (for whose work there is no direct outside equivalent). Working pace was influenced by the levels of inmates' motivation and skill (see below), and also by the number of workers present, which could fluctuate much more than in an outside enterprise. A workforce could shrink when prisoners were transferred out (or released), while at other times some instructors were given more workers than they needed because of management's wish to keep inmates occupied. One instructor (R038) said:

'In here [i.e. prison] you're tied down with that many bodies under your feet. Outside you'd just go on and get it done, or you'd get a machine to do it. I think the biggest thing, for somebody to take a job in here, is to find that you've got all those people to utilise all day.'

This raises the question of whether the purpose of employing prisoners is to get the work done - as in an outside enterprise - or to keep the prisoners occupied and quiet. The aims and purposes of prison work, as explored by the research, will be discussed in Chapter 7.

The short prison working hours, the interruptions, the fluctuating size of the workforce, as well as the low skills and poor motivation of many inmates, combined to depress the amount of work done. One manager said in 1992 that although the workshop productivity standard was officially set at 30% to allow for interruptions, in practice it was actually sometimes as low as 8%. And all these things made the task of running a workplace more difficult for prison work instructors than it would be for work supervisors in outside industry. The next section looks at how they did it.

Working atmosphere and relationships

At most of the prison workplaces observed the atmosphere was generally good-humoured, orderly and businesslike, with the instructors in cheerful control of operations. Instructors who were prison officers had of course received training in managing prisoners, and so had most of the civilian instructors though some of them would have liked more. Asked how they managed their workforce, instructors stressed good personal relationships: fairness, praise for good work, personal interest and consideration. Several said they would help their workers with personal problems and could sometimes resolve them more quickly than officers on the wings, and prisoners interviewed confirmed this.

Prisoners had more respect for instructors who participated and helped them in the work than for those who merely supervised. Male prisoners appreciated the presence of women among the instructors, as at the Highpoint tailors: one inmate there said they had better control than the men, while another said, 'It makes it happier as well, makes it feel like you're on the out, not just men all over the place.' Altogether it seemed that relationships between work instructors and inmate workers were generally fairly harmonious: out of 129 prisoners interviewed 53% said that their relations with staff at work were 'good' and 40% that they were 'usually OK'.

But there was another side to it. Prison workers wanted their supervisors to treat them as adults, 'like normal people', 'not like prisoners or robots or children', and evidence suggested this did not always happen. Several instructors describing their methods used terms like 'kidology' and 'kidding along the line', while some inmates felt they were treated like children in a schoolroom. One said, 'You meet a lot of people in prison who behave like kids because they're made to behave like kids, people talk to them like kids.' This raises the topic of giving inmate workers responsibility, which is discussed in the next section. But it may be remarked here that managing a workforce of prisoners must probably rely more on supervisor-worker relationships - of whatever kind - than managing a workforce outside, though of course relationships are important there too. Outside, the ultimate sanction for bad work or indiscipline is dismissal (and several of the employers visited made it clear they would not hesitate to use it); conversely, dissatisfied workers outside are free to leave (though economic

pressures may dissuade them). In prison, ironically, 'the sack' does not mean so much: a troublesome worker can be removed from a wanted job and, if necessary, sterner measures taken, but he or she remains an inmate to be housed and fed. However, from 1995 the incentive scheme was designed to aid staff control of prisoners, and as a result it was said in 1996 that in the tailors' workshop at Channings Wood, which formerly had been disliked by many inmates (and instructors had been unhappy), motivation and relationships with staff had improved.

Relationships between workmates seemed on the whole to be amicable. Of 116 inmates asked, 28% said they worked alone and most of those preferred to do so. Among the rest 89% said that relationships were 'good' or 'OK', and only five admitted to having problems in getting on with their colleagues. But 'No. 1s' (see below) were not always popular, and (as staff pointed out) prisoners, unlike outside workers, could not get away from those they disliked at the end of the working day.

Responsible roles for prisoners

The amount of responsibility given to an inmate worker depended on several factors, including the type of work, the inmate's skill and other personal attributes, and the instructor's style of management. But the overwhelming consideration was security, as will now be illustrated.

At the lowest end of the security spectrum, some of the most responsible jobs were on the farm at Kirkham open prison. Examples were: the prisoner in charge of the farrowing house; a tractor driver who could be anywhere within the boundary; the inmate who ran the produce shop, handling stock and money and dealing with customers including the public. The prison staff were ultimately in charge, of course, but they trusted the inmate workers to use their skills and get on with the job without constant supervision. By contrast, in closed prisons most inmates who assisted tradesmen in the Works department had very little responsibility even though they might be tradesmen themselves. They acted rather as barrow-pushers and bag-carriers, and except for painters with their pots and brushes they rarely handled tools. An officer explained that if Works inmates were given tools others would put pressure on them or

steal tools to try to escape. 'At the end of the day the over-riding factor is that you cannot give inmates tools because they'll be through the wire with them.'[6]

On p. 116 it was suggested that prison workers' exclusion from the normal outside labour force might be mitigated if they could practise their skills in prison. But the Works examples show that use of skill was subordinated to concern for security, thus maintaining the workers' exclusion because of their status as prisoners.

In closed workshops most inmates had only a low level of responsibility, especially where operations were de-skilled. Certain people were given a little more as quality checkers or demonstrators who could do several operations, and some inmates were designated as 'No. 1' at the head of a team. But a No. 1's position could be uncomfortable. He or she had a little more power to make decisions, backed up by the instructors, but this might cause resentment among other inmates who felt that their erstwhile colleague was identifying with 'the system'. (See Simon 1999: 100 for an example.) For this reason some instructors felt strongly that prisoners could not be put in charge of other prisoners. R012, a kitchen instructor, designated several of his key workers like the butcher and baker as No. 1s but these men worked alone on skilled tasks, not as team leaders. Asked whether there was more scope for inmates to exercise power or responsibility he said, 'None whatsoever, because that would be the tail wagging the dog. It's not possible because of the constraints.'

Thus, again, a worker's status as prisoner limited his or her resemblance to a worker outside. The latter might hope for promotion to higher responsibility, and the researchers visiting outside employers met several supervisors who had risen through the ranks. But prisoners' opportunities were curtailed.

Pay and perks

Prisoners' pay

Of course the biggest and most obvious difference between most workers in prison and those outside, apart from the prison walls, is their level of pay. Even in

1996 the 'wages' paid to inmate workers were in nearly all cases still at the level of children's pocket money, averaging £7 a week, while the prison supplied the basic necessities of life whether the inmate worked or not. The issues surrounding prisoners' pay have been aired for many decades, and not least by the Woolf Report which said, 'A realistic wage would be a way of ensuring that the prisoner takes greater responsibility for himself in prison and outside' (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 394). Similar views were held by many of the senior staff interviewed for the research, and by some prisoners too (Simon 1999: 111-112).

In the last few years some enhanced earnings schemes have been introduced, and in 1996 the Prisoners' Earnings Act provided for prisons to deduct from inmates' earnings (if sufficient) sums towards their prison keep, dependants, victim support or crime prevention, and compulsory savings. But by mid 1999 the Act had not yet been put into practice[7] and even enhanced earnings were much less than pay outside, while the number of prisoners receiving 'real wages' was minuscule. Recently Tumim has commented, 'Despite some improvements, the principle of realistic pay does not seem to have been wholly accepted by the Prison Service' (Tumim, in Simon 1999: xi). One can only say that as long as this situation continues most prison workers are excluded from the normal adult world of work in one of the same ways that children are.

Perks

Several of the outside employers allowed their workers 'perks': for example, the hospital catering workers could take a free meal on duty, farm employees had free milk, and those at the laundry could have dry-cleaning done at half price. Prison workplaces gave some comparable concessions: for instance, kitchen workers were allowed extra food to be eaten in the kitchen, and in the Holloway sewing room on Fridays inmates who had completed the week's production quota by lunchtime could mend and iron their own clothes in the afternoon.

But in prison such legitimate perks were less significant than the illegitimate ones which many inmate workers took when they could. Food from the kitchen or servery, and garments from the laundry or clothing store, were smuggled out to

exchange with other inmates for illicit goods or services; the greater mobility of wing cleaners and Works helpers facilitated such transactions;   farm and some garden workers could collect 'the drop' (caches of contraband - drugs, alcohol, tobacco - left by outsiders at the fence);   orderlies with sharp ears picked up information and could wield influence. R601, who was dismissed from his kitchen job when his 'fiddles' became too blatant, said, 'All the staff know you get perks...Prison is one big trading post.' R653 said of his work as a wing cleaner, 'It gives you freedom to run round and do - prison politics, you know, do what you've got to do, wheeling and dealing.' One could say that for the prisoners who participated in such activities (and not all did), the illicit perks of prison jobs assisted their social *in*clusion - but in the limited sense of inclusion in the inmate counter-culture. The skills and experience involved would be unlikely to find favour with an outside employer.

Skill and training

This topic has been left till last in these comparisons of prison work with outside employment, partly because Chapter 8 is devoted to vocational training and partly because, unlike most of the other topics treated above, in regard to training the *potential* of the prisons came out surprisingly well.

In the prison workplaces many of the tasks done by inmates were of low skill. (For example: in kitchens, chopping vegetables or stirring pots; in woodwork, screwing together simple pre-cut, pre-drilled pieces; in sewing, machining just one or two seams repeatedly; in the print shop, manually folding leaflets. All the light assembly shops observed were doing only unskilled work.) The amount of training most recruits at first received, besides health and safety, was usually just enough to slot them into the swing of production. But people who stayed longer than a few months and who were motivated could be moved round to learn several machines or operations and improve their skill. In 1992 this might lead to a local college certificate of competence, but by 1994 NVQs were spreading throughout industry nationally and the Prison Service was offering them in 48 different trades and occupations, including most of those seen at the six prisons. As Chapter 8 will discuss, much of this training was done in vocational training courses and co-ordination with prison work was patchy and

inadequate. Nevertheless many work instructors were keen to train inmates in their workforce who were sufficiently interested.

The amount of training available, or potentially available, in prisons was greater than that offered by the majority of the 12 outside employers visited. Only three (the vegetable grower, and the manufacturers of furniture and leather goods) were then training apprentices or Youth Trainees, though one or two others had done so in the past. The majority said that *if* they were recruiting they would give preference to workers who already had some skill in the required operations and could be quickly inducted into the company's ways. (Interestingly, seven said that job applicants would not be questioned about criminal records, and three others were cautiously willing to consider ex-offenders on their merits. But it was not known how typical these employers were.) It seemed that people trained in prisons to the level of NVQ 2 in catering, horticulture, weaving, wood machining, machine sewing, laundry, printing or leather goods would, other things being equal, be well placed to apply for semi-skilled jobs in those industries *if* there were any (and if they could keep up with the speed of production).

But most of the 12 employers were not recruiting, and some had not done so for years. Informants emphasised the collapse of the weaving industry and the decline in agriculture, and the others too were (in 1993) affected by the recession. The extent to which the kinds of work done in prisons actually match the pattern of likely employment opportunities, so that experience of prison work could assist an ex-prisoner's inclusion in society outside, is one of the major topics discussed in Chapter 10.

Final comment

Most of this chapter has compared prison work with examples seen in outside industry, mainly on factual topics. It has been seen that in regard to processes and products, quality, and some aspects of work organisation the prison workplaces were on the whole very similar to those outside, while (as will be further shown in Chapter 8) the amount of training potentially available in prisons was often better. Thus in

these respects the Prison Service was trying to meet some of the criteria which it set in 1992 and which implied that inmates' experience of prison work might assist them towards social inclusion (see pp. 93-94). But in other respects - the recruitment of the workforce, working hours and pace, and the degree of responsibility given to workers - the requirements of the *prison*, as an establishment which kept its inmates excluded from outside, took priority. And on the essential matter of payment for their work most prisoners were excluded from the normal rewards of the adult working world.

However, social exclusion depends not only on objective circumstances but also on people's perceptions of them. The next chapter examines prison staff's and prisoners' perceptions of work.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Most of the data shown in Table 1 for Prison Enterprise Services work has been taken from information supplied by PES, especially some relating to budgets for 1995-96 and 1996-97. The numbers of inmates employed in farms and gardens, and all the data for 'other' work, have been taken from regime monitoring statistics collated by Prison Service HQ for 1995-96. Such statistics were the basis for the 'profile of inmate occupations' which until 1991-92 used to appear in the Prison Service Annual Reports. Because of various problems of definition, interpretation, collection and processing, regime monitoring figures contain anomalies and inconsistencies, and should be taken only as a guide to the proportions of prisoners engaged on average in various types of prison occupation. Numbers of inmates employed as orderlies, clerks etc. cannot be extracted from them. Prison Service HQ introduced new data collection arrangements in 1997.

2. Regime monitoring figures for 1995-96 show the number of inmates in education or training courses as 10,269 out of 45,030 'average population monitored', or 23%; those in induction were 2,182 or 5%.

3. The regime monitoring figures for 1995-96 show domestic workers as being 58% of inmates occupied in male remand centres, 32% in male locals, and 14% in Category B and C prisons.

4. Smartt and Vagg (1998: 10), using PES records for October 1996, describe prisons' provision for enhanced earnings in some detail, giving a very similar picture to that summarised here.

5. It may be noted here that because four of the six prisons were training ones their distribution of kinds of work differed from that in Table 1, being less skewed towards domestic work. Even so, among the 150 working inmates interviewed for the research the largest single group (19) were cleaners and servery workers.

6. This consideration actually seemed more in evidence at Highpoint, a category C prison with mesh fences, than at the higher-security prisons of Liverpool and Maidstone which were enclosed by thick walls and where, exceptionally, two inmates who worked as a drains-clearer and a glazier were allowed their own limited tool kits and some responsibility for arranging their own work.

7. Some prisoners earning 'real wages' were already subject to such deductions, as were those going out daily to ordinary jobs under the pre-release employment scheme (see pp. 164-165). But there were only tiny numbers of such cases. In 1999 the Prison Service received legal advice that until the Act was implemented it was not lawful to take money from prisoners' earnings for their keep, and that deductions already made must be refunded (Seward 1999).

CHAPTER 7

PERCEPTIONS OF WORK

Introduction

This chapter uses findings from the Brunel study to look first at prisoners' attitudes to ordinary work outside prison, and next at what they had hoped for by way of occupation during their sentence. Following that, much of the chapter is taken up with their perceptions of prison work: the satisfaction they got from prison jobs, their views on prison working pace and hours, the value they felt prison work had for them, and whether they saw it as like outside work. Findings on prison staff, especially work instructors, are presented too: their views on the value of prison work to prisoners, the instructors' roles and aims, and staff opinions on resemblances between prison work and work outside. There is a special short note on women's work.

The last major section of the chapter examines the perceptions by staff and inmates of the aims and purposes of prison work, referring to most of the purposes which Chapter 2 showed to have been advanced at various times during the last two centuries. It is concluded that prison staff and prisoners are confused about the purposes of prison work, and that underlying this state of affairs is the tension between social exclusion and social inclusion.

Prisoners' attitudes to ordinary work[1]

Although many of the inmates interviewed had chequered work histories, and two fifths had been largely unemployed during the 12 months immediately before their current sentence, a large majority (71%) were committed to the idea of working for their living (ordinary, legitimate work) if they could find a suitable job. When asked why work was important they gave a great variety of reasons. Money was the most frequently mentioned, but others were: self-respect and independence; enjoyment and

a sense of achievement; to plan ahead, get on in life; to support one's family; to keep busy, avoid boredom; to avoid temptation, would rather be honest; sociability, mixing with people; to benefit society. It can be seen that many of these reasons touch on the 'Jahoda experiences' inherent in employment (p. 5) and on the value of work for social inclusion. R572, a bricklayer, expressed his reasons thus:

> 'I love my job, I'm a good bricklayer... The money's good because I'm self-employed, so when there's plenty of work about I do earn good, but it's not just that. It's being outside, being with groups of blokes, and you have a laugh and everything. And I like it that - you go to a job one day and there's a hole in the ground, and three or four weeks later there's a house sitting there. I like to be able to go past and say to people, "I built that".'

And R631, a former merchant seaman, was surely expressing the idea of social inclusion when he said, 'People have to work. That's how society is formed.'

Work as a prophylactic against future crime

Towards the end of the prison interview 101 inmates who were within three months of release were asked what things could help them avoid serious crime in future (as 81[2] said they wanted to). Out of a list of 10 possible items they gave highest ratings to 'enough money to live on' (rated as quite important or very important by 90%), 'my own willpower' (89%) and 'a job' (84%). (The remaining items, which included family support, accommodation, avoiding alcohol or drugs, and four others, were rated as quite important or very important by up to 79%.)[3] These findings will be discussed in Chapter 9 in relation to the follow-up study, but they are mentioned now because one of them ('a job') again points up the importance which prisoners attached to getting employment in the outside world. Their belief has been borne out by much other research (see p. 31).

This section has shown that the majority of prisoners in the Brunel sample placed a high value on ordinary work. (The results are consistent with those of the National Prison Survey, which found that 88% of sentenced prisoners due for release

in 1991 said they would seek work - Dodd and Hunter 1992: 69.) So what were their perceptions of prison work? These are explored in the next few sections.

Inmates' preferences for occupation in prison

One hundred and fifty inmates were asked in interview what occupation they had wanted on arriving at that prison (out of the daytime occupations for inmates there). Nearly half of them had wanted a particular prison job; just over a quarter wanted a vocational training course; and just under a quarter wanted full-time education. (Three of the 150 responded by saying that they did not want to work.)

By far the commonest reason for people's preferences (given by a majority[4] of the 128 who were asked for reasons) was that they wanted to learn some skill, or keep up an existing skill, or use their previous experience in that kind of occupation. All other reasons, including enjoyment of the preferred activity, were mentioned much less often.

It is interesting that the majority of respondents, when thinking how they would have preferred to occupy themselves in prison, gave reasons - use of skill or experience, learning a skill - which imply a wish for connection with the world of ordinary work, while far fewer mentioned reasons which could imply promoting adjustment to their situation as prisoners - passing the time, being with friends, or access to prison perks. Only seven people mentioned money (prison pay). These answers give a slightly different impression from what will be said towards the end of this chapter about inmates' reasons *for working* in prison, and it could be that the above findings under-represent the importance of the prison setting, and of prisoners' efforts to cope with it, as a factor in their occupational preferences. But the fact that the majority indicated a wish to learn or practise something useful to them is significant, especially in relation to what will be discussed in Chapter 8 (pp. 153-154) on the continuity of training and the amount that inmates received. By the time of interview 75 of the 150 inmates had been placed in the occupation they wanted.[5] Even so it seemed, as mentioned on p. 115, that for people placed in prison jobs their prior skills (if any) were not often taken into account in the decision.

These interviews took place in 1992-93, and if they had been three or four years later when the incentive schemes were in place at the training prisons some people's answers might have been different. Pp. 101-102 have summarised the ways in which incentive levels were linked to prison work opportunities, and some inmates if questioned then might well have had the links in mind when thinking about preferred occupations, especially if enhanced earnings were part of the scheme as at Kirkham. But it may be remarked that the primary purpose of the incentive schemes was not to encourage inmates by their prison work (or other occupation) to prepare for inclusion in the world of work outside, but rather to facilitate the management of them *as prisoners*. In 1996 a senior manager at Maidstone, which had one of the most imaginative schemes, said quite frankly that its basic purpose was control within the prison.

Inmates' job satisfaction

As was mentioned on p. 69, prisoners' satisfaction with their occupation was measured by a six-point score reflecting the extent of the person's sense of achievement, interest in the activity, and scope for making decisions about it. For 121 inmates doing a great variety of prison work the average score was 2.21 points. This implies that inmates did not get much of those kinds of satisfaction from prison work, though some kinds of work were more satisfying than others.[6] By contrast, the average score for 25 inmates who were attending training courses or general education was 4.36. The essential difference between them and the workers was that those in training or education had all asked for that prison occupation and saw it as something personally useful for their future, whereas few of the workers did as will be seen later.

Inmate workers who had said 'no' or 'maybe a little' to any of the three questions asking about a sense of achievement, interest, and power to make decisions were asked whether they had ever had a job outside prison that gave them more, and their answers were unhesitating. Out of 92, 87% had worked outside in a job which, compared with their prison work, gave them more sense of achievement, or interest, or power (or two or all three of those things). Simon (1999: 115) gives examples. It may be that while in prison these people took a rose-tinted view of their lives outside. But that does not

alter the fact that they got little satisfaction from their jobs in prison. When asked how the work might be improved to give them more, two fifths made positive suggestions of which the most frequent were: give more variety of tasks; make a greater variety of products; arrange the work so that inmates make complete articles instead of doing just a few de-skilled operations; have better communication between staff and inmates; give inmates more trust and responsibility in their work; and provide more training leading to qualifications. (Vocational training of prisoners is examined in Chapter 8.)

Inmates' views on working pace and hours

Prisoners interviewed were asked how they felt about the pace and hours of prison work, and what they thought working pace and hours would be like in jobs outside. Most interviewees felt the prison working pace was satisfactory: of 116 asked 69% said the pace was 'OK', and the others were evenly divided between those saying 'too fast' and 'too slow'. But 71% said that if they were in an outside job they would have to work faster. Asked how they felt about the hours of prison work, half said they were 'OK'. Most of the rest wanted to work longer hours to relieve boredom, to get through the day more easily, or to have longer intervals between meals. Reasons for wanting shorter hours included dislike of the work, wanting more time in the gym, and wanting a better place in the queue at mealtimes.

But the great majority of inmates asked (85% of 98) said that if they were in an outside job the hours would be longer, and nearly two thirds of that group said they would *want* to work longer hours, or would not mind doing so. The main reasons were that they would be earning good money, and doing work they enjoyed. The findings on pace and hours suggest that inmates felt a clear distinction: prison work was one thing, 'proper work' was something else. They largely accepted the prison working pace and hours as facts of their sentence to which they had to adapt, but they knew that the 'real world' of work outside was different, and many looked forward to rejoining it, or trying to.

Value of prison work to prisoners: views of staff and inmates

Work instructors had mixed views about trying to give their inmates vocational training (see next section), but they were broadly agreed that prison work could impart some general employability skills or 'good work habits' such as punctuality, a steady working pace, attention to quality, co-operation and discipline. Prison staff other than work instructors agreed that such habits were beneficial, though some were doubtful about how far they were achieved in the abnormal conditions of prison work. A rating exercise with staff (other than work instructors) who had particular knowledge of prison jobs (see p. 66) found that they thought most kinds of prison work had more value for helping inmates to get through their sentence than for increasing their prospects of employment on release.

Inmate workers were asked about the value of their work in two stages. In the first stage 117 were asked whether their current job ever helped them to forget they were in prison, whether it ever gave them a feeling of self-respect, and how useful it was in helping them to serve their sentence without getting into trouble. Each of these 'coping' questions drew a positive response from between 44% and 56%. (By contrast, positive answers were given by at least 68% of interviewees who were taking training courses or education.) In the second stage 77 workers within three months of release were asked a series of questions about the value of all the prison jobs they had had (during the current sentence) as preparation for outside employment. This was done by a list of six items referring to skills and work habits, and while on average 37% of the respondents said their prison work had given them those experiences only 21% thought that the experiences might help them to find work outside. This result, that only one in five felt they had gained from prison advantages in skills or work habits which might help them in getting work on release, echoes a finding of the National Prison Survey (Dodd and Hunter 1992: 36).

Work instructors' roles and aims

Preceding sections of this chapter have shown that although the majority of the inmate sample had hoped for a prison occupation than might maintain, or increase, their

133

prospects of inclusion in the world of normal employment on leaving prison, those who were assigned to prison work felt that the reality was rather different, and that prison jobs were of more value to them in helping them to cope with their immediate status as prisoners. Staff other than work instructors tended to agree with the latter view. So how did the work instructors see their roles in relation to inmates, and what were their aims?

Looking to the outside world and inmates' future

Half the instructors interviewed said they would chat with 'their' inmates in a general way about their future prospects in the outside world, and would give advice if asked. But very few would contact potential employers or give references (only three out of 17 questioned on this point had ever done so). There seemed to be two main reasons for their reluctance to offer specific help. The first was that many of the instructors felt largely isolated from their industries outside prison: although 27 out of 30 had trade qualifications and had worked in the same industry outside, only eight were satisfied with official provision for enabling them to keep up to date. A prison manager discussing this point said that nowadays the Service in appointing instructors placed less emphasis than formerly on expert trade knowledge and more on the ability to manage large numbers of prisoners.

The second reason was a belief that prison staff were not permitted to give references or to be in touch with ex-inmates. Several instructors mentioned this with regret, and would have liked to participate in throughcare helping their ex-inmates to find jobs. Others felt that their role was simply to get the work done with prisoners' labour, and that what happened to the prisoners later was not their concern. This division of opinion was also found among other staff, and the question of prison staff other than probation officers participating in helping prisoners' transition to the outside world is a major topic discussed in Chapter 10. But here it may be suggested that while some conditions of prison work militated against the social inclusion of prisoners, a similar statement might be made about their instructors.

These were explored by asking instructors, 'In your work with inmates, how much emphasis do you give to each of the following?' and offering a list of nine items to be rated for importance. These included, for example, 'producing high quality goods or services', 'training inmates in vocational skills', 'teaching inmates to respect good honest work'. The details of this exercise are reported in Simon (1999: 221), and the results showed several things. First, the instructors on average thought all nine aims were important. Second, as a group they had clear priorities: top priority was given to producing goods or services of high quality, and next came training inmates in good work habits. By contrast, training inmates in vocational skills received nearly the lowest priority, but at the same time this aim was the one whose importance evoked most disagreement among the instructors, some rating it very high and others very low. This suggests a need for the Prison Service to have a clear policy about the emphasis to be given to training as one of the functions of prison work, a matter which will be discussed in Chapter 10.

Is prison work like outside work?

Staff who were asked this question pointed out obvious similarities, like products, processes and emphasis on quality. But they also produced a long list of differences: for example, the conditions of work (compulsion, restrictions, lack of promotion); slow pace and short hours; pay; low skill; less real discipline; lack of motivation and commitment. Inmates when asked the same question stressed the differences, and only one in three inmates could perceive *any* similarities; a frequent theme was the lack of incentive in prison. R572, the bricklayer quoted on p. 129 who in prison worked as a cleaner, said:

> 'Nobody wants to do it. Most of it is "Well, sod 'em, I'm not doing their work, I'm not you know, I'll do it just to get them off my back and I'll just do enough". A lot of the excuse is the measly wages, and the other thing is 'Why should I work in prison, they're punishing me, why should I do anything for them?'.... It's not set up the same. People haven't got the attitude towards work.

Working in the outside, people go to work because it's their job, they go and do their job hopefully to the best they can, they take their wages at the end of the week and they try to sort out their bills with what they've got. In prison if you don't work you still get much the same, you're going to live much the same life in prison whether you work or whether you don't. There's no matter of like, "well, if I work hard I'm going to do better". There's no incentive in prison.'

In later years the incentive schemes may have partly modified such views. But it is doubtful whether the incentive schemes would radically change the overall pattern of differences between prison work and outside work that have been described, or transform the way in which prisoners looked towards their futures. It is appropriate to end this section comparing prison work with outside work by quoting the view of R078, a thoughtful prison officer, who said:

'There's a great deal of difference....In prison it's very artificial. Outside, you're earning a salary, you're living a full life, in prison you're living part of a life. A lot of your life is very controlled, where it wouldn't be outside, you'd make more decisions outside....This is a half-life. Things stop once you come into prison.'

'Things stop once you come into prison.' There can hardly be a more succinct way of referring to social exclusion.

A note on women's work

The Brunel research did not study women prisoners' work separately from men's (see p. 82). Information from Holloway, one of the six participating prisons, contributed to the total picture of work and training and to the various aspects discussed in these chapters. But a brief note on women prisoners' work is in order here.

The range of occupations offered to inmates at Holloway (in 1993) could be seen as weighted towards those traditional for women: for example, the jobs included cleaning, cooking and sewing, and the training included courses in office skills and hairdressing. But they were not the only ones (see Simon 1999: 43). It was noticeable that the Works department employed inmates as helpers in the same way as at men's prisons, and ran a construction industry course (in painting and decorating). And in late 1996 when Highpoint (North) was made over to female prisoners the three construction courses there continued, and the women reportedly took them up with enthusiasm. Thus perceptions of what was proper 'women's work' seemed to be changing.

Male and female staff interviewed at Holloway were invited to give their opinions. Most thought women prisoners should be allowed to do the same jobs as men, and should be encouraged to work for their living. (For a somewhat different view expressed by a male manager see Simon 1999: 216.) Among the inmates interviewed there, not all wanted to seek full-time employment on release; some wanted to go out to work part-time and others wanted to stay as homemakers, at least while their children were young.

In 1993 Holloway tried to provide, besides work and vocational training, many activities centred on education and personal growth, and to steer inmates towards those thought to address their needs. The researchers found very little to suggest that the occupations offered to women prisoners were intended to encourage their exclusion from the wider working world on release. Rather, it would be appropriate to remark that the bias of prison jobs towards domestic and similar work in women's prisons was equally true of men's prisons (see pp. 111-112), and this raises the whole question of the relevance of prison work to outside labour markets which is discussed in Ch. 10.

Recent studies (Morris, Wilkinson et al. 1995; HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1997) have shown that the circumstances, problems and needs of women in prison differ from those of men (and make greater demands on the skill of prison staff). But one can say that work and training should be provided for women prisoners on the same basis as they should be provided for men: that is, with close attention to the prisoners' needs as individuals. The implications of this for women's prisons are briefly discussed in Simon (1999: 215-217).

Perceptions of the aims and purposes of prison work

This was the final topic explored in the interviews with staff and prisoners, by means of the rating forms described on pp. 66-67 and 70. Staff were asked what, in their view, were the Prison Service's reasons for providing work for inmates; what would be *good* reasons for providing it; and why inmates did the work. Inmates were asked why, in their view, the authorities provided work for prisoners, and why they themselves worked in prison. This exercise produced the five tables shown in Appendix 2, and the main findings were as follows. (More details are given in Simon 1999: 222-229.)

The staff group as a whole perceived the Prison Service as providing work for inmates primarily for the purpose of managing and controlling the prison on a day-to-day basis: the reasons ranked highest were 'to give inmates time out of cell, something to do' and 'to keep them busy, stop them causing trouble'. (These were endorsed as important to Prison Service HQ by 88% and 86% respectively of the staff raters.) But also, and nearly as important (to HQ, said staff) were the aims of improving inmates' prospects of future employment by giving them skills and work habits. Using inmate labour to help keep the prison running came next. Somewhat lower down, but still endorsed as important by more than half the staff raters, were the aims of commercial enterprise, enabling inmates to earn money, and improving inmates' characters (e.g. by teaching them to respect the work ethic and contribute to the community). At the bottom end of the scale only 6% of staff thought that prison work was provided as punishment.

Staff themselves thought that preparing inmates for employment after release would be the *best* justification for prison work: imparting skills and work habits were endorsed as good reasons by 94%. Next came giving inmates time out of cell, inculcating the work ethic, and enabling them to earn money. The list of items was practically the same as that in the preceding paragraph, and for any one reason there was little difference between the proportion of staff perceiving it as important to HQ and the proportion thinking it a good reason. But overall there was a distinct difference in emphasis. Reasons having to do with treating inmates as people, rather than with the

maintenance of the system, were all rated more highly as good reasons for inmates to work than they were as perceived reasons for official practice. By contrast, reasons to do with managing the system were all rated lower as good reasons than as perceived reasons for practice.

Inmates as a group, rating their own reasons for working, placed highest 'to get through my sentence without trouble, as soon as possible', which was endorsed by 92%. Next came passing the time and getting out of cell. These three items together, expressing the aim of getting through one's sentence, can be seen as the counterpart of the official aim of managing the prison and keeping it ticking over. 'To get a little bit of money' came fourth at 73%, followed by 'interesting activity, helps to take my mind off prison' at 69%. Other reasons rated as important by more than half the inmates included the opportunity to mix with people, using up mental energy, the feeling that one ought to work, compliance with prison regulations, and learning or using skills for future employment. Reasons endorsed by fewer than half included getting perks, work habits for future employment, the hope of parole, and compulsion ('I only work because the authorities make me', endorsed by 27%). Ranked lowest was working in order to relieve guilt, which only 10% of inmates said was important to them.

A comparison of inmates' own reasons with what staff perceived as inmates' reasons put most items into two groups: those where staff and inmates broadly agreed and those where they did not. Staff perceptions were largely accurate about the importance inmates attached to getting through their sentence, the smaller weight given to work as an interesting activity, the smaller ones still given to acquiring skills and work habits, and the unimportance of relieving guilt. But on other items, including money, perks, the hope of parole, and compulsion, staff perceptions of inmates' motives for working were unduly negative. (In fact staff thought inmates' highest motivation was money, which according to inmates was not so.)

Inmates' perceptions of the authorities' reasons for providing prison work placed highest 'to keep them busy, stop them causing trouble' (endorsed as important by 80%), followed by helping to keep the prison running and giving time out of cell. Thus inmates, like staff, believed that the authorities gave first priority to managing the

prison. Just over half felt the authorities used inmates as cheap labour. At the bottom of the scale 29% of inmates felt that prison work was intended as punishment: the minority holding this opinion was much greater among inmates than it was among staff.

Roughly half the inmates credited the authorities with wanting to give them useful skills and work habits. This reflects much the same weight as inmates themselves gave to these items as reasons for working, but considerably less than the credit staff gave to official intentions, which prompts the following comment. When they came into prison the majority of inmates had hoped for a prison occupation which would use their existing skills (if any) or give them new ones (p. 130), but by the time they got near the end of their sentence many felt this had not happened (p. 133). It is therefore not surprising that despite the official intentions (as perceived by staff) that prison work should help equip inmates for the future, and despite staff's own desires to do this, only half the sample of inmates, when asked in this exercise, answered that learning skills and work habits was an important reason for them to work in prison.

The items which this exercise invited staff and inmates to consider included most of those which, as Chapter 2 relates (pp 28-29), have been advanced over the last two centuries, at one time or another, as purposes of prison work. (The main exception was deterrence, which the lists did not include.) The rating exercise showed most of these purposes to be still salient in the minds of staff, inmates, or both, though some were expressed in more modern terms. Work as redemption from sin or relief from guilt had nearly dropped out of the picture, and work as punishment was given very little credence by staff though more than a quarter of the inmates believed it to be so intended. But most of the other purposes - aiding discipline, maintaining the system, offsetting costs, lightening the pains of imprisonment, imparting the work ethic, teaching trade skills, improving character, providing occupation - were still very much to the fore. It was seen in Chapter 2 that the relative emphases given to these aims have shifted back and forth over time with the changing currents of penal philosophy. Now the results of the rating exercise prompt the following observation.

Over half the staff sample rated the great majority of reasons as important, both as official reasons and as good ones. The items covered a wide range, and one interpretation could simply be that prison staff see prisoners' work as a multi-purpose activity. But the reasons are hardly all in the same direction, and it could be argued that some are at odds with one another. For example, merely giving inmates 'something to do' is not the same as improving their characters; and training them in work skills for release may be incompatible with running workshops as a commercial enterprise to offset costs. These divergences suggest a second interpretation: that prison staff are confused about what the main purpose of prison work is or ought to be. And the inmates' ratings of reasons they perceived as important to the authorities also covered a wide range of divergent items, which could suggest either that inmates perceive the authorities to be confused or that they themselves are confused about why prisoners are required to work.

There are some indications that this confusion may exist not only among staff who have to manage prisons and instruct inmate workers, but also at higher levels. First, as was noted on p. 94, in 1991 the Home Office statement of the purposes of prison work (in <u>Custody, Care and Justice</u>) gave first mention to maintaining the system and last mention to preparing prisoners for jobs on release, whereas two years later PSIF implied that the relative priorities of these two purposes were the other way round. Second, note may be taken of the history of Coldingley (Simon 1999: 10-11), whose shifting purposes over nearly 30 years well illustrate the Inspectors' 1988 remark (p. 28) about official ambivalence towards prison work, and which the Prison Service in 1997 was once again trying to develop as an industrial prison.

Final comment

The studies of prison work in the 1970s by Dawson (1972, 1975), and Legge (1978) who drew heavily on Dawson's work, painted a depressing picture of prison industries. Dawson observed that quality was poor and that inmates worked slowly and with little interest, and her interview data suggested that they saw prison work as having little relevance to their outside working lives (though many would have wished it

otherwise). The Brunel study 20 years later found that some aspects had improved: the drive for high quality, and the cheerful and purposeful atmosphere which instructors worked hard to engender (see Chapter 6). But the Brunel interviews with inmates echoed some of Dawson's findings, and the Brunel data from instructors (and other staff) suggested confusion which had also been implied in instructors' responses to Dawson: they were uncertain of their roles and sceptical about the value of prison work to inmates. (For a more detailed comparison between Dawson's findings and the Brunel study see Simon 1999: 126-127.)

Legge concluded that the confusion arising from incompatible objectives for prison work sprang from the conflict between the aims of custody and rehabilitation in the focal task of the prison (Legge 1978: 20). Using the perspective of social exclusion to look at the Brunel findings on perceptions of the aims and purposes of prison work, it is suggested that underlying the confusion is the inevitable *tension* between the objectives of social exclusion and social inclusion. Social exclusion would treat the workers as prisoners, to be confined, controlled, disciplined, kept quiet, and made to help maintain the system that segregates them from society outside. Social inclusion would minimise the differences between work in prison and work outside, would build links between them, and would focus on preparing inmates to join (or rejoin) the normal working world by imparting and sustaining relevant skills.

This last remark leads to the subject of prisoners' vocational training, which is examined in the next chapter.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. The first part of this section uses findings from the Brunel study which have not been previously reported. Appendix 1 gives further details.

2. To amplify these figures: it had been intended to ask all inmates interviewed who were within three months of release how they saw their future in regard to reoffending.

Sixty-eight said they would definitely try to avoid crime and 20 others said they would try to avoid anything serious, such as might lead to a further prison sentence. Eighty-one of these 88 people then completed the rating form that listed 10 items which might help them. Twenty other near-release interviewees also completed the form, but their answers to the question about avoiding crime could not be coded. All 101 cases were used in analysis of the form.

3. Seventy-two of the 101 were in prison for acquisitive offences (including robbery) or drugs crime, and these people as a group gave highest ratings to money (93%), willpower (91%) and a job (85%). But so did the 29 who were in for non-acquisitive crime, who rated all those items, together with family support and accommodation, at 82%-83%. Twenty of the non-acquisitive group had been sentenced for violence (excluding robbery), and for those 20 the highest items were money and family support (84%-85%) followed by a job (80%). So it seemed that, regardless of type of offence, getting a job was important to the great majority.

As for sex differences, the 101 contained only seven women, far too small a sample to analyse. But it was noted that the greatest number of them (five) rated willpower as very important, while a job was endorsed by only two. This suggestion of a sex difference in near-release prisoners' ratings of the importance of a future job is consistent with the National Prison Survey, which found that fewer female than male prisoners intended to work on release (Dodd and Hunter 1992: 69).

4. Elsewhere (Simon 1999: 59) the proportion is reported as 60%. On re-checking the coding for this item it was decided that 57% would be more accurate. The situation was not always straightforward, as some interviewees expressed more than one preference and for different reasons. Some people were more knowledgeable than others about which occupations were open to prisoners and (not the same thing) which ones might be open to them personally, and such knowledge may have influenced their replies.

5. The reasons why the others had not, or not yet, were various: e.g. the prison gave them no choice, security considerations precluded them, there was no vacancy in the

course they wanted, or their expected length of stay was too short. Nevertheless staff did try to accommodate people's preferences. Of the inmates who were doing a prison job when interviewed 57% were in it through some degree of choice even if at that stage their choice had been limited.

6. Kinds of work giving above-average satisfaction scores included gardens (4.11) and Works (3.33). The highest score (4.86) was for a group of inmates who had unusually creative jobs like producing a prison magazine or working in Holloway's craft shop. Prison work scoring well below the average included wood assembly (1.42), tailors (1.00) and light assembly (0.73).

CHAPTER 8

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR PRISONERS

Introduction

Compared with the confusion surrounding the purposes of prison work, the purposes of offering prisoners vocational training should be straightforward. The main aim would be to train them in specific work skills relevant to employment opportunities outside, in order to enhance their prospects of joining the normal world of work when released from prison. Along with this aim might be the encouragement of social skills which likewise would promote their social inclusion. Prisoners who took up training courses might be expected to do so chiefly with a view to seeking employment on release, as the majority of inmates in the Brunel sample hoped to do (p. 129), though they might have other purposes also.

This chapter describes the provision of vocational training in prisons during the first half of the 1990s, using mainly material from the Brunel research. First there is a summary of the national provision, indicating the kinds of training and qualifications offered throughout the prison system. Then material from the six prisons shows how inmates got access to training courses and how the training was carried out. Attention is directed to the important topic of continuity, and then to the question of how much training was actually achieved. Comparisons are made between prison training and the training given by four outside schemes, and these are followed by a summary of a special training scheme which ran for nearly three years at Channings Wood. In the final section it is suggested that prisons have good potential for increasing inmates' opportunities for vocational training.

National provision

In 1995-96, according to regime monitoring statistics, approximately 3,000 inmates, on average, in all Prison Service establishments (including those for young offenders) were occupied during the day in vocational training courses (including construction industry training along with other kinds). This figure was approximately 7% of the total monitored prison population, a proportion which had stayed fairly constant since 1992. The proportion was higher in establishments for young offenders (14%) than in those for adults (6%). As well as people engaged in these courses, which usually ran for several months, some other inmates would have been learning vocational skills in their prison jobs, in other education classes, or in gym sessions with physical education (PE) instructors, but the numbers training in those ways were not recorded.

National Vocational Qualifications

From 1990 the Prison Service mounted a drive to enable prisoners to train for NVQs, which were gradually being developed in many occupations to complement, or replace, older familiar certificates like those issued by City and Guilds (C&G) or local colleges of further education. In January 1991 the Director-General wrote (HM Prison Service 1991a: 1):

'The National Vocational Qualification system has become a recognised benchmark for all employment training...It will provide far better opportunities for training and employment for prisoners on their release ... indeed, without NVQs they will be at a serious disadvantage in the job market.'

A major advantage of NVQs, compared with some of the qualifications they superseded, was that each comprised a number of units to be achieved at the trainee's own pace. Thus a person whose training was interrupted for any reason (including, in the case of a prisoner, transfer to another prison or release) could be credited with units already achieved and then, in theory, continue the training elsewhere in order to complete the full certificate at NVQ level 1, 2 or higher.

Establishing NVQs in prisons was a slow and difficult business for the first few years, and at the time of the main Brunel research in 1992-93 they were in a state of flux (see Simon 1999: 129). But by 1994 the situation had greatly improved, with prisons offering NVQs in 48 different trades and occupations (compared with 24 two years previously). In 1994-95 3,543 inmates were registered as candidates, 13,470 units were awarded, and 1,264 full NVQs attained, the last figure being more than double that for 1993-94. In 1995-96 the figures were 3,156 inmates registered, 17,309 units awarded and 1,837 full NVQs attained (1,164 at level 1, 665 at level 2, and 8 at level 3).

These developments are evidence of real determination on the part of the Prison Service to help some inmates use their time in prison to prepare for inclusion in the world of work after release. However in spring 1996 there were signs that budget cuts might jeopardise progress. NVQ training was being offered in fewer subjects and by fewer prisons than a year earlier, and several establishments were saying that after 1 April they would give up their NVQ certification to save money. (Among the six research prisons Kirkham did so.)

Other qualifications, and duration of training

Before NVQs came in, one of the commonest qualifications in prisons was the C&G skills certificate, available in a variety of trades especially those in the construction industry. Others which could lead to C&G certificates included, for example, motor mechanics, welding, industrial cleaning, catering, printing, and information technology. Office skills could be recognised by RSA or Pitman certificates, and a number of local colleges awarded certificates in subjects like textile technology or business start-up.

The full-time courses leading to these qualifications occupied prisoners for the same, or nearly the same, daytime hours as others were occupied in prison work. Typically a course lasted four to six months, though by no means all the trainees stayed to complete it, as will be discussed below. Other inmates could study over a longer period for some of the same qualifications during daytime education or in evening

classes, some of which were held in vocational subjects. Some inmates working in farms and gardens could achieve National Proficiency Test certificates with the help of their instructors. Also, at some prisons a very few carefully selected inmates were allowed out on day release to attend a local college, though the numbers doing so were much smaller after the tightening of security rules in 1995.

Prisoners could also train for other certificates which normally required less time than those just mentioned but which might help in future job applications. PE departments encouraged inmates to work for certificates like the Community Sports Leader Award, and some ran first aid courses. Many kitchen and servery workers acquired the basic food hygiene certificate which needed six hours' training.

All the courses and qualifications mentioned above are examples, not an exhaustive list, of the vocational training offered by prisons to some inmates in the early 1990s and later. Apart from NVQs no central records were kept of how many people gained certificates. The levels of training reached by inmates in the Brunel sample will be described later in this chapter.

Training courses at the six prisons

In 1992-93 the six prisons were between them running 38 full-time vocational courses. Each had at least one CIT course and at least three others; between them they covered 21 subjects, and most lasted at least four months. Typically a course had 12 places and was taught by one trainer. Pay for inmates on courses (and for those in other daytime education) was at a standard rate somewhat less than the rate for nearly all grades of inmate workers. Trainees could aim for various qualifications, most commonly (at that time) C&G skills tests.

By 1996 there had been some changes, of which the biggest of course was the move to NVQs. One result of this was more flexibility in the length of training: all trainees were encouraged to aim at NVQ level 1, but whether they went further depended on the prison as well as on their own ability (see Simon 1999: 131). Kirkham in 1996 was offering less training than before (and no NVQs), while training

at Holloway had almost collapsed in the troubles of 1994-95 (Simon 1999: 44-45). But the other four prisons were holding their own despite fears for the future resulting from budget cuts, and in most other respects the research updating visits gave no reason to think that vocational training was substantially different from what it had been in 1992-93. (Data gathered then is the basis for most of the description in this chapter.)

Access and selection

Usually it was up to an inmate to take the initiative in applying for a training course after learning what was available, normally during induction on arrival at the prison. There was very little systematic provision for giving new prisoners vocational assessment and guidance, to advise them how prior work skills might be maintained or developed for the future, or whether they should consider a new direction for best prospects of employment on release. One might have expected this to be a part of sentence planning, but in 1996 it seemed that sentence planning was mainly concerned with slotting inmates into offending behaviour programmes, though in some cases it did facilitate acceptance for vocational training. Education staff sometimes offered vocational guidance. In 1996 the education department at Channings Wood began a course called 'New Horizons' which was said to be very popular; it included vocational guidance, and to that extent was an attempt to fill the gap left by the demise of the Options For Learning training scheme (see pp. 159-161).

At the three prisons with a VPU (Channings Wood, Liverpool and Maidstone) most full-time training courses were in the main prison so VPU inmates could not attend them, but the VPU's own education programme offered some vocational subjects. Most of the prisons' incentive schemes did not greatly affect access to training except for the few people demoted to the basic regime. Security considerations sometimes affected access: Highpoint, for example, held most of its CIT courses in the 'North' part of the prison where security was lower, so a man wanting one would have to wait until judged eligible; and at Liverpool inmates wanting courses or education classes had to have security clearance.

At all the prisons most courses had waiting lists, some of them several months long. For all courses inmates were selected by the trainer, usually after an interview, from among those who applied, and trainers looked for keenness almost above all else; one test of motivation was whether the inmate was willing to accept the lower pay than he or she would have earned in a prison job. In many cases an important selection criterion was the length of sentence an applicant still had to serve before his or her expected date of release. In 1992 six trainers interviewed said they would normally not accept anyone who had less time available than the length of the course, and apart from applicants who approached the trainer direct and were told this, it is likely that other would-be trainees were discouraged by the labour board, or by fellow-inmates, from applying for this reason. So the length of a trainer's waiting list probably often underestimated the degree of potential interest by inmates in that course. In later years the NVQ framework with its provision for the accumulation of units should have allowed more flexibility, but with so many applicants waiting it would be understandable if trainers still preferred those who could stay for a reasonable length of time.

Subject to these considerations, the majority of trainers ran their courses on a roll-on, roll-off basis, and most courses ran throughout the year except when the trainer was away for any reason. But in 1992-93 when the trainer was absent the course had to be suspended because the prison's budget allowed no money to engage a substitute, and there were several 'current' courses, including three of the five then provided at Holloway, where this had happened and trainees were being deprived of their tuition, in some cases for months. A similar problem could occur if the trainer was supplied by a local college which insisted that prisoners should be taught for only 36 weeks a year like its other students. Such gaps and interruptions demotivated inmates who had been keen to learn, and must have resulted in some not finishing their courses. However in later years when prison education and training were contracted out these problems should have diminished, as contracts could specify the number of hours of tuition the contractor had to provide.

In the training workshops

Facilities

Practical courses observed during the research were run in well-equipped workshops. Examples included Maidstone's welding and sheetmetal shop; Holloway's hairdressing salon; Highpoint's engineering workshop; and the several painting and decorating courses where each trainee had a little 'room' to practise on. But in some courses security or other considerations prevented trainees prevented trainees from getting realistic experience. Bricklaying trainees could not work at a proper building site; trainees learning business skills could do only simulated exercises (though they were encouraged to develop their own plans); and the engineering teacher at Liverpool could teach only theory in a classroom, without any facilities for practical demonstrations.

Atmosphere, relationships, and trainees' satisfaction

In the workshops observed the atmosphere was cheerful, quiet and busy, trainees working at their own pace with a good deal of individual attention from the trainer. Trainers interviewed stressed the importance of treating their trainees as individuals and as students rather than prisoners, and sustaining their motivation by drawing out their interests and talents. All emphasised the importance of aiming at high quality in everything their students did. As well as teaching trade skills, health and safety, and tidy working habits, they had wider aims too: ten trainers, when asked what other benefits inmates might derive from their courses, spoke of increased social skills, self-esteem and confidence.

Most of the 37 trainees (over nine kinds of course) with whom the researchers chatted in their workshops appeared to be well motivated and on good terms with the staff. Of the 13 trainees who were included in the main interview sample ten said their relationship with the trainer was 'good' and one that it was 'OK'. Like inmate workers (p. 120) the trainees wanted to be treated as fellow-humans rather than prisoners, and as adults who were willing to learn, and the majority apparently felt they were.

Of the 37 trainees mentioned above, 28 said they had chosen the training in order to gain or improve skills, and seven said it was for enjoyment. For 22 the course was a new experience, and for 14 it built on some knowledge they had already. Thirty said it was a definite help in getting through their sentence, and 34 hoped it would help them after release, in the majority of cases for jobhunting though ten (most of whom were learning painting or building operations) said it would be mainly useful for DIY. The 13 trainees in the main interview sample were scored for satisfaction in the same way as inmate workers (see p. 69) and their average score was 4.08, significantly higher than the average of 2.21 for workers.

The trainers

All the trainers interviewed were well qualified in their speciality and the majority had a teaching qualification too. Those employed by a local college were mainly satisfied with their opportunities for contacts outside the prison, and some others had links through trade associations. Trainers felt more able than work instructors to give their inmates specific advice for the future: 12 out of 13 trainers who were asked about it said they discussed work prospects with their trainees, advised them what employers looked for, and gave tips on jobhunting. Eight out of 12 sometimes contacted employers or gave references, and eight occasionally heard from ex-trainees who had been released. But trainers, like work instructors, believed that the Prison Service frowned on such activities and on contacts between staff and ex-inmates. They would have liked more feedback about their former students, and two said the only way they could seek it was through the college which employed them, not through the prison. R045, regretting his lack of contact with employers, said, 'It's a very disappointing part of the job...I know some of them have settled down, but I've never had a progress report. I think it would be a good thing actually.'

Comments

This description of what was going on in the training workshops shows a much more straightforward and positive picture of prisoners' vocational training than Chapters

152

6 and 7 did of prisoners' work. The inmates taking vocational courses were there by choice; they were highly motivated and wanted to learn; and as well as finding that the course helped them to cope with their sentence they valued it for the future, for giving them skills and interests with which to face the world outside prison. The trainers were highly motivated to teach them, and as well as imparting trade skills they tried to develop social skills which would help their trainees on release. They were more active than work instructors in making outside contacts which might ease their trainees' passage into employment. Altogether, one could say that prisons' vocational training courses were much more geared than prison work to promoting the social inclusion of ex-prisoners. But trainers, like work instructors, suffered from some degree of exclusion themselves because of what was believed to be Prison Service policy. And on some courses the perceived need for security - i.e. to treat the trainees as prisoners - limited what they could be taught.

Continuity of training

Sometimes a trainee could take one course in trade skills and then another in business start-up with a view to self-employment on release, and there were several instances at Channings Wood. An important form of continuity occurred when inmates after completing a training course moved into a related prison job where they could gain more skill, or at least consolidate what they had learned. Examples (again from Channings Wood) were the placing of catering trainees in the officers' mess and of trainees from the industrial cleaning course as departmental cleaners responsible for their own areas. In other cases a trainer and his or her course members as a body offered the prison a specialised service (for examples see Simon 1999: 136).

But altogether it seemed from the researchers' discussions with staff and inmates that planned links between vocational courses and prison jobs were inconsistent and patchy. An obvious possible one would have been for CIT trainees to move on into the Works department, but on the whole not many did. Works' aims were to maintain the prison, not to train inmates; they preferred if possible to recruit tradesmen with fairly long sentences for a stable workforce, and they reserved some kinds of jobs for their own staff. Other examples were the courses in office and business skills whose trainees

rarely got prison clerical jobs. Out of ten inmates who were in a training course when interviewed only two expected on completing it to move into a prison job which would use their new skill. Among inmate workers interviewed were 33 who said they had learned, or begun to learn, a new skill during their current sentence but before the prison job they were now doing; only five of them were using that skill in their current job, though 18 others knew of jobs which they thought could have used it. Altogether it seemed in 1992-93 that only a small proportion of course trainees had opportunities to practise and consolidate their skill in prison jobs, and although in 1996 staff gave other examples the researchers felt that the prisons had potential for much more linkage.

A major cause of interruption to training (though the research could not gather any statistics on it, nor did the Service systematically keep any) was the transfer of inmates between prisons. This occurred for a great variety of reasons, including control and discipline, the inmate's security category (normally expected to decrease during sentence), the availability of special facilities and - an increasing consideration with the pressure of rising numbers - the sheer need to find space for prisoners somewhere or other within the system. It seemed that preserving the continuity of an inmate's training often received little attention when a transfer was decided. People with long sentences might fare best, though even they, after serving the early years in a high security prison and embarking on a substantial training course, might find on 'promotion' to a prison with lower security that they could not continue because the new prison did not offer it. Prisoners with shorter sentences were more liable to have their training interrupted by transfers, if indeed they started training at all. Examples of both continuity and interruption are given by Simon (1999: 137-138).

This topic of continuity shows that although there was goodwill in prisons towards vocational training for inmates who wanted to learn, in practice their interests as trainees were often outweighed by the pressure of the system to treat them as prisoners. Courses were provided (though not enough) in skills which might aid their social inclusion through work on release, and trainers were keen to help them. But the possibilities for developing their skills were hampered by the ambivalence surrounding the purposes of prison work, and their training was liable to be dislocated by other aspects of the system whose custodial function was to exclude them from society outside.

How much training did prisoners get?

Work instructors who were asked this question were inclined to reply that inmates could acquire some skill if they were sufficiently interested and motivated, which the majority were not, and if they stayed long enough in that prison job; and that then, in most cases, they would be employable at a fairly basic level. Trainers said that not all trainees achieved the full qualification aimed at (C&G skills test certificate, NVQ level 2 or equivalent), but in several courses the majority would *if* they stayed long enough. Most of the courses were modular, or would be more so with NVQs, and a trainee who managed only some of the requisite units would get a 'record of achievement' for them and could, given the opportunity, continue elsewhere. But a course of six or even 12 months, resulting in NVQ level 2, is not sufficient to make a qualified tradesperson. The courses were not apprenticeships but they imparted basic skills which, provided jobs were available (and that, of course, was another matter), could help a willing worker get a foot on the ladder.

In order to assess what training was received during the current sentence by inmates interviewed for the research the follow-up sample of 88 was used, since for those people the information was updated to the time of release (p. 76). It was summarised in three ways. First, focusing on daytime occupation, it was noted that 47 people (53%) had done only prison work during their sentence; 38 (43%) had done work plus a training course (whether or not they completed it) or education (or both); and three (3%) had done only training or education (or both). Considering that some of the prison jobs might have imparted vocational skills, it seemed likely that a substantial proportion of the 88 might have received some skills training through daytime occupation during their sentence.

Secondly, the 88 were asked whether they had learned, or started (or continued) to learn, any kind of vocational skill from *any* activity at any time during their sentence. Forty-five people (51%) said they had done so, listing between them a great variety of skills. Thirdly, those 45 people were asked whether they had attempted a qualification, and if so how far they had got. The answers are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Qualifications achieved, or partly achieved, by 45 inmates who started (or continued) to learn a vocational skill during sentence

Qualification	No. of inmates	
Obtained HND or GCSE	2	}
		}
Obtained full C&G skills or basic certificate, or NVQ level 1 or 2	7	}
		} 12
		}
Obtained college certificate of completion/achievement for a course lasting several months	3	}
		}
Record of achievement for some C&G skills or units of NVQ 1 or 2	6	}
		} 8
Obtained certificate for a small course (e.g. health & hygiene, or basic first aid)	2	}
		}
None at all	20	
No information	5	

Total	45

Table 2 shows that altogether 12 of the 45 who acquired some kind of vocational skill obtained a certificate which recognised their achievement in completing a course, or learning a skill, which required several months or longer. Six people went part of the way and obtained a 'record of achievement', while two others did a smaller course and obtained a certificate. (Several others in the first group of 12 also obtained a smaller certificate.) But 20 people, as far as the researchers could tell, received no qualification nor any credits towards one, and about five others they obtained no information.[1]

The reasons why nearly half the group of 45 obtained no kind of certificate, and six other people obtained only a partial one, were various. Some people in prison jobs felt they were acquiring a little skill but there was no structured training and no

certificate; some started a course but then lost interest; some had their training interrupted for the kinds of reasons described on pp. 150 and 153-154; and some were caught by the teething troubles of NVQs in 1992-93 and did not receive the qualification they and their trainers had hoped for. So although half the 88 people during their sentence felt they were learning (or had begun to learn) some kind of vocational skill, only a quarter derived from it any kind of paper with which to try to impress an employer; and as already mentioned even the qualifications which people did get were well below the level of a skilled tradesperson.

Nonetheless the achievements in 1992-93 of this sample of 88, who were fairly representative of prisoners sentenced to a year or more, compare favourably with the national NVQ figures for prisoners. Estimation by Simon (1999: 141) suggests that if the people in Table 2 had received their training three years later when NVQs had settled down the proportion of the total sample with NVQ units might have been raised to perhaps 25%, of whom half would have got a full NVQ. Nationally, the 1995-96 figures of 3,156 prisoners registered for NVQ training and 1,837 full NVQs attained (p. 2) are 13% and 7% respectively of the number of prisoners received in 1995 who were sentenced to a year or more. This comparison between the sample and national NVQ figures is rough in several respects (for details and justification of it see Simon 1999: 242 n. 8), but it suggests that the research sample got more training than did the national average three years later. Here it may be recalled that four of the six research prisons were 'training' ones which had been chosen partly because they were officially thought to provide good training (p. 62).

Of course not all prisoners wanted vocational training. Out of the total of 178 inmates interviewed for the research, 37% were judged by the researchers to be skilled workers already (though 16% of them had been wholly or largely unemployed during the year before their sentence, as had 56% of those with little or no skill). On the face of it such people were better equipped than others to find employment on release, though their chances would also depend on the relevance of their skills to the labour markets then existing and on other personal factors (see Chapter 9). But it may be recalled that (1) the majority of those interviewed had wanted a prison occupation which would use their skill or experience or teach them a skill (p. 130); (2) prisons had little provision for vocational guidance (p. 149); and (3) most of the vocational training

courses had waiting lists (p. 150). From all this it would seem that the supply of vocational training in prisons fell considerably short of the demand and the need for it (and see p. 180).

Comparison of prison training with outside training schemes

The comparison of vocational training in prisons with that provided by four large Training For Work schemes chosen as sympathetic to the needs of ex-prisoners (p. 79) revealed several interesting things. Like the prisons the four schemes between them covered a wide range of subjects, but with more emphasis on service and business occupations. Along with vocational skills they offered trainees personal support, basic education if necessary, and jobsearch techniques; and their vocational training was a planned mix of tuition by the scheme staff and practical experience through work placements with suitable employers. The usual target qualification was NVQ level 2, which trainees were expected to attain within (on average) six months, though not all did. Three schemes said that their success rate, as measured by the proportion of leavers going into employment or into further training or education (i.e. obtaining a 'positive outcome') was about 40% - 50%.

Overall, the kinds of training the schemes offered were more in tune with outside job prospects, a situation which was helped by their contacts with TECs and local employers. Scheme staff could make more use of such links than prison trainers who felt they were officially discouraged from doing so. At the schemes the mix of skills training, work experience, jobsearch techniques and (if needed) basic education, together with personal support, meant that for a trainee the whole period could be planned to address his or her individual needs and enhance employability. By contrast prisoners, despite the frequent willingness of trainers and other staff to take a personal interest in them, were liable to be moved about the system and placed in prison occupations with often little regard for continuity and their other training needs. So the outside schemes were more geared than the prisons towards promoting the employment prospects, and thus the social inclusion, of their trainees, and they pointed to some ways in which prisons' vocational training might be improved. Other ways were shown by

the special training scheme which ran during 1992-95 at Channings Wood and which is described in the next section.

The 'Options For Learning' scheme at Channings Wood

This training programme, which ran from mid 1992 to March 1995, was funded as a Training For Work scheme by Devon and Cornwall TEC, who reasoned that money available for training unemployed people with 'special needs' could be spent on training prisoners. It was administered at the prison by a manager and support staff appointed specially for the purpose, and the actual training was carried out by prison trainers, teachers and work instructors for OFL trainees in the same way as for other inmates whom they trained and supervised. An OFL trainee, like TFW trainees outside, received an individual assessment and a personal training plan which took into account his abilities and past experience, his hopes for the future, and the kinds of training which could be provided; in his case the training provider was the prison.

OFL inmates were paid, in addition to their prison 'wage', up to £10 a week extra (corresponding to the £10 a week which outside TFW trainees received in addition to their benefit money). The OFL money was put aside until the inmate's release. He then received half of it, and the other half 13 weeks later; and if by then he was in employment, further training or education he also received a bonus of £50. The prison too had monetary incentives to participate, receiving (like outside training providers) £35 a week for every OFL training place plus a bonus in respect of each trainee who achieved an NVQ or a 'positive outcome'. (It was hoped that the prison's share would be ploughed back into facilities for training.)

Much hard work was necessary in the first year to establish the scheme and win the trust of prison staff, but by mid 1994 it was flourishing strongly. There were OFL trainees in all the Channings Wood training courses, in basic education and PE, and in five kinds of prison work, trainees aiming at NVQ level 2. Trainees received personal guidance and support from the scheme's administrators, especially through a 'personal development' course which the administrators offered, and they got jobsearch training in the prison's pre-release course. By mid 1994 a total of 255 men had passed through

the scheme and reached their check date of 13 weeks after release. While at Channings Wood 28 of these had gained an NVQ at level 1 and nine at level 2; by 12 weeks after release 52 (20%) had achieved a 'positive outcome'. This figure, though lower than the success rates quoted by outside schemes visited, is nevertheless not discouraging for a group composed wholly of ex-prisoners, as will be seen from the information on the follow-up sample in Chapter 9. Scheme staff said that during its last year the success rate was nudging 30%, and was particularly high among ex-trainees who had taken the personal development course.

The Channings Wood OFL scheme was an innovative and imaginative venture, and particularly interesting in the context of this thesis for the following features:

(1) The TEC was involved directly in the prison. It advised on the suitability of prison training, and funded some.

(2) The scheme's staff had a holistic approach. Trainees received an individual assessment and training plan, personal support and guidance throughout their training in addition to vocational skills, and jobsearch help near release.

(3) The training was combined with practical experience in related prison work.

(4) Trainees' pay enabled them to save some money against their release.

(5) Feedback information on ex-trainees' progress was available to prison staff.

Two observations may be made here. First, comparing points (2), (3) and (4) with the generality of prisons' vocational training as described elsewhere in this chapter, it would seem that inmates in the OFL scheme at Channings Wood were given better preparation for social reintegration than trainees in other prisons. Secondly, points (1) and (5), and indeed the very existence of the OFL scheme, suggest that it helped to reduce the social exclusion of the *prison* itself. The TEC treated the prison as a training provider like others outside; the funding arrangements were similar; and the

scheme's administrators were personal links between prison staff and the outside world of training and employment.

At the end of March 1995 Devon and Cornwall TEC was obliged by a directive from the Employment Department to withdraw the funding. The reason was understood to be a government policy that one department should not subsidise another's activities: in this case, that prisoners' training should not be paid for by both the Employment Department and the Prison Service. Channings Wood managers wanted to keep the OFL scheme going but could not, and it was wound down a few weeks later. The NVQ training of Channings Wood inmates, which the OFL scheme had largely 'kick-started', continued and grew, but the distinctive features of the scheme - listed above as (1), (2), (4) and (5) - were lost. Thus the rigidity and separateness of government funding rules acted to re-assert the social exclusion of prisoners and of prisons.

Final comment: prisons' potential for vocational training

This chapter has described much that was positive about prisons' arrangements for inmates' vocational training. The Service's adoption of NVQs showed a commitment to offering some prisoners the same training as outside, in order to help them towards inclusion in the ordinary working world after their release. Prison training facilities were often good, and trainers were keen to impart skills. In some respects their task was more straightforward than that of the work instructors: their inmates were well motivated, and they were not under pressure to meet production targets or service deadlines. The purposes of vocational training in prisons were not befogged by the ambivalence surrounding the purposes of prison work. But training was hampered by obstacles arising from the prison context itself: security restrictions, short hours and interruptions to the training day, and dislocation of trainees' progress as they were moved around the system because of their status as prisoners.

The comparison with outside training schemes, and the special OFL scheme at Channings Wood, suggested ways in which prison training could be improved. Inmates should be offered vocational assessment and guidance. Trainees should receive a personal plan tailored to their needs, hopes, and likely opportunities; they should be

given personal support as required throughout their training; they should be enabled to save money against their release; and they should be able to practise and consolidate their skills through a planned mix of training and work experience in relevant prison jobs.

And prisons should provide *more* vocational training. It may be recalled (p. 125) that few of the outside employers visited were giving much training to their workforce, and most said that if recruiting they would give preference to applicants who already had some skill. This suggests that prisons have a real opportunity to bridge the gap. During the research a great many practical suggestions were made by prison staff, prisoners and a few other people as to how prison work could be made to open up more opportunities for vocational training. (For details see Simon 1999: 146-148.) Clearly there was much potential for developing training, given sufficient will on the part of the Service. But in 1995-96 the number of prisoners registered for NVQ training, and the number who attained an NVQ, were only 13% and 7% respectively of the number serving sentences of at least one year, i.e. those who would, in favourable circumstances, have time for a vocational course. (See Simon 1999: 242 n.8.) These low proportions indicate how small at that time was the Service's provision of an activity which it recognised would promote ex-prisoners' prospects of employment (and thus of social inclusion).

But there are also wider issues concerning the training of prisoners for the outside world of work, namely: the relevance of prison work to outside labour markets, and the importance of addressing in an integrated way a prisoner's other needs which may affect his or her chances of future success. Chapter 10 will discuss these topics. First they are pointed up, among other matters, in Chapter 9, which examines how far the ex-prisoners in the Brunel study used their experiences of prison work and training after their release.

Notes to Chapter 8

1. The figures in Table 2 may not be as exact as they look. For this information, as for much else on the sample of inmates, the researchers relied on what they said and did not check other sources for evidence one way or the other of certificates gained. It is doubtful anyway whether the prison files of all would have been complete in that respect.

CHAPTER 9

RELEASE FROM PRISON

Introduction

Release from prison entails the change from a state of social exclusion to a state in which the potential for social inclusion is much greater, and a major element in the latter is employment. This chapter therefore begins by looking at ways in which prisons prepared inmates near release for the transition, especially in regard to seeking work. A summary of the national provision is illustrated by arrangements at the six research prisons, and this is followed by an account of what the 88 people in the follow-up sample did - or did not do - to try to link up with the outside world of work before their release.

The bulk of the chapter traces the experiences of the 88 during their first few months after leaving prison: their search for work, and factors affecting their success; whether their prison work and training helped them; their financial situations; further offending; and their views, in retrospect, of the time they had spent in prison.

Pre-release provision

The Pre-Release Employment Scheme (PRES)

This scheme enabled selected long-term inmates approaching their release date to spend some months engaged in pre-release training and prison work, and then to go out of the prison daily to ordinary work (or training) for the last few months of their sentence. In 1996 participating establishments included six resettlement prisons and units with about 560 places between them, and five pre-release hostels with 73 places between them. The PRES scheme with its total of approximately 630 places was tiny in proportion to the prison population of 55,000, but it is mentioned first because of its

164

importance. In 1992 one of the hostels was at Maidstone, and R540, an inmate there, later expressed the value to him of the experience:

'Six months' work is much better than six months' prison... Financially, security, family ties, your own self-being, attitude - when you're removed and alienated from people for so long you need time to adjust mentally, physically and in quite a few ways. Just to sit down and converse and feel confident again. All those things seem to be drained from you during a prison sentence.'

R540 was surely describing the social exclusion inherent in imprisonment, and the need for a careful transition to inclusion in society outside.

Pre-release courses

Much more common than PRES places were pre-release courses, which by 1996 were being held in all prisons. Typically a pre-release course was run by two prison officers for about a dozen near-release inmates at a time, and lasted one or two weeks. The officers held some sessions themselves and brought in specialists, often from outside, for others. These people advised the course members and led discussions with them on a range of 'survival' topics: DSS benefit entitlements, budgeting, health matters like alcohol and drugs, social skills and, especially, getting into employment. Inmates would practise jobsearch techniques and receive information about training courses, jobclubs and other Employment Service facilities.

Pre-release courses were intermittently at risk of suspension if the prison was short-staffed, or if governors decided there were more urgent calls on officers' time. At Channings Wood in 1992 there were frequent stoppages, but by mid 1996 an influx of new officers enabled better staffing. Highpoint's provision was erratic. Liverpool's courses were suspended for most of 1995 because officers were diverted to other work, but by 1996 they were running again though not often enough to meet the demand.

Twenty-seven of the 88 people in the follow-up sample had attended a pre-release course during their most recent sentence. Twenty-two others would have liked

the opportunity but did not get it for various reasons, including suspension of the courses. Seventeen other people had not wanted to attend, in some cases because they felt they would not learn anything new. Of the 27 attenders, 15 when asked later thought they had benefited in some way; they included nine who felt the jobsearch training had been useful, though several of these also said they would have felt so more strongly if they had actually succeeded in getting a job. (Statistically the 27 attenders were not more likely than others to have found any work during the follow-up period.) Several people felt the pre-release course had helped them gain general confidence as they prepared to face the outside world. (For an interesting example see Simon 1999: 152-153.) As the case of R540 above implies, and as will be seen later in this chapter, personal confidence was an important factor in ex-prisoners' efforts to settle in society outside, including the search for work.

A variation on the officer-led pre-release courses was the 'employment focus' courses supported by the Employment Department. These began in 1993, and in 1994 54 prisons were offering them. Inmates attending learned jobsearch skills and received information about work and training opportunities, and before leaving prison they had an action plan, a contact with the Employment Service in their home area, and a place in an Employment Service programme if they wanted it. But a year or so later difficulties arose. Local Employment Service managers, like prison governors, were being given more control of their own budgets, as well as targets for placing clients in jobs, and a manager whose local prison discharged most of its inmates to other parts of the country had little incentive to go on funding a course there. In addition, when prison staff had to spend more time on security procedures and less on escorting inmates to courses attendances fell, which further discouraged the Employment Service from supporting them. By the end of 1996 most employment focus courses were being wound down.

Prison jobclubs

Several prisons ran jobclubs funded by the Employment Service. Some, like Pentonville's, were held inside the prison, but in 1993 Holloway's was outside, about ten minutes' walk away and run by NACRO. Inmates who had served at least half their

sentence could apply to attend, and in February 1993 seven were doing so (and the jobclub also took a few people referred by the probation service). Attenders were helped to look for employment: the club provided local newspapers, a telephone, typing facilities and so on, and the staff advised and encouraged. Holloway inmates often went to the jobclub after finishing the pre-release course. Those who found a job would normally be allowed out of prison daily to do it until the end of their sentence, and so were like other prisoners who participated in the Pre-Release Employment Scheme.

Holloway staff felt that going out of the prison to attend the jobclub, rather than it being inside the prison walls, helped to give women confidence in preparing for interviews with employers, and jobclub staff said that the proportion of people who stopped attending the club in order to go into work, full-time education or training was about 40%. Not all Holloway women who found an outside job would be able to continue in it after release because their homes were in other parts of the country, but the experience of outside work, even for a short period, could help build confidence for later jobhunting elsewhere.

In 1994-95 opportunities for Holloway inmates to go out of the prison were severely curtailed by tightened security and Holloway's other troubles (pp. 106-107), and attendance at the jobclub eventually ceased. But by mid 1996 a fresh start had been made with jobclub sessions being held inside the prison, conducted by a jobclub representative who came in several times a week (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1997a: 114).

Other provision, and comments

Another contribution to pre-release assistance was made by NACRO's Prisons Link Unit (PLU), funded by the Prison Service, which trained prison officers to advise inmates on housing and employment. By 1996 all but two prisons had a pool of PLU-trained officers, and NACRO kept in touch and offered refresher training. Like other staff, however, these officers could be switched to other duties judged to be more pressing.

Thus across the Service there was a variety of provision for helping inmates to prepare for release. But in practice arrangements could be erratic, so that in a population of over 50,000 prisoners a good many people, especially those with shorter sentences, must have been missed.

Two other comments may be made here. First, to some extent pre-release preparations were at risk from the same hazards that jeopardised the provision of work and training in prison, namely funding difficulties, security restrictions, and population pressures which diverted staff to duties viewed as more urgent. Second, except for the very small numbers of participants in the Pre-Release Employment Scheme, assistance was normally offered only a very few weeks before a prisoner's release date. There was little attempt to link pre-release activities with work or vocational training which a person had done in prison during the bulk of the sentence. It is as if, a few weeks before release, the focus suddenly switched from in-prison to outside, and the in-prison experience was not seen as relevant to what might happen later. This way of thinking emphasises the social exclusion of prisoners, rather than considering how their time in prison might be used to promote their eventual inclusion.

Eighty-eight prisoners: jobsearch before release

Except for two who used the Holloway jobclub and one who lived at the Maidstone PRES hostel, the 88 members of the follow-up sample did not have special opportunities to start work for an outside employer before the end of their sentence. But they could while still in prison make some enquiries about work prospects, depending on their inclinations and their contacts. At the time of release 65 hoped to find work, and seven others wanted to pursue full-time education or training. But of those who wanted work only 35 took any steps to look for it before leaving prison, like asking relatives about job prospects, contacting former employers, or seeking help from anyone else. Among the whole sample of 88 the commonest situation was that inmates' families or friends made some enquiries for work on their behalf: this happened in 31 cases (including a handful where the inmates themselves were not particularly interested). Altogether three people had a job firmly arranged before leaving prison, and several others had hopes which in the event were not realised. Home leave (which

39 people said they had had) was usually spent in family contacts rather than jobhunting.

Prison education staff helped six people to apply for college courses, other prison staff helped in four cases and an outside agency in three. Probation officers (in prison or outside) helped in only five; although 31 of the 88 prisoners were due for statutory supervision after release and others could ask for probation officers' help, it seemed that few thought the probation service would be able to assist them in finding jobs. Prison probation officers interviewed said their first priority with people about to be released was trying to ensure they had accommodation.

Altogether in 43 cases - practically half the sample - nothing was done before the date of release, by the inmate or anyone else on their behalf, to enquire for work, education or training: a finding which suggests that many inmates saw little connection between life in prison and the outside world of work. This impression of the acceptance of imprisonment as social exclusion is reinforced by the fact that in most cases nothing was done by prison staff either to help inmates link up with job prospects outside.

Looking for work after release

During the first few weeks after the follow-up sample left prison (in 1992-93) 71 of them (81%) looked for work, most searching hard at first and by several methods. By far the most fruitful method was asking friends and relatives for work or job leads: 49 people did this and 23 of them thereby obtained some sort of work, though in many cases it was only casual and intermittent. Twelve people found some work by other means. The role of family and friends in helping an unemployed person to find work has been emphasised by Sinfield (1981: 45-47). But it may be remarked that *having* family and friends is an aspect of social inclusion, and that ex-prisoners may have fewer than other people. (For example, the National Prison Survey found that, even allowing for age differences, prisoners were far more likely than the general population to be single, divorced or separated - Dodd and Hunter 1992: 10-11.) This points up the desirability of assisting prisoners to make links with the working world outside.

169

Many of the jobseekers were prepared to be flexible, though few were willing to accept just *any* job. Altogether 85% of those who had some pre-sentence skill tried to find work using it, but many were willing to do other jobs too, and the unskilled looked for a range of manual jobs. Twenty people were seriously interested in self-employment, though the time till the follow-up interview was too short for most such plans to have been realised. Simon (1999: 157-159) gives examples of people's jobhunting attitudes and experiences.

Altogether 42 people (48% of the sample of 88) did some kind of paid work (including self-employment) at some stage during the few months of the follow-up period. Situations varied, but half the people who obtained anything got only casual work, which in most cases was sporadic and in small amounts. In only five cases was people's work related to the type of work they had done in prison, and this will be discussed later. A few people who did part-time or casual work were content with it, and a few were not seriously interested in employment anyway though they occasionally did jobs for friends. But the great majority wanted regular, full-time work, and many who did not find it became increasingly discouraged as the weeks wore on. By the time of the follow-up interview some people's efforts to find a job had tailed off, though they would still have liked to have one.

The employment situations of the 88 people at the time of the follow-up interview (or reference point - see p. 81) can be summarised as follows.[1]

(1) Ten people were in full-time employment, while two were in substantial part-time or casual work and not seeking more. Eight others were running their own business or preparing to do so and not seeking other work. This subtotal of 20 out of 88 people (23%) may be regarded as working.

(2) Fifty-six (64% of the total) were unemployed and wanted work. Some of them had had some sort of job at some stage and others had prospects including self-employment. But 29 (33% of the total sample) had had no work at all and had no immediate prospect of any.

(3) Ten other unemployed people (11% of the total) were not looking for work. Four of them intended to do so eventually after sorting out other personal matters. The other six appeared discouraged, fatalistic, or frankly not interested in legitimate employment, though some of them did minor casual work from time to time.

(4) Finally, one man was too ill to work and one aged 66 was retired on state pension.

Sixteen people at the time of follow-up were interested in taking training or further education to improve their job prospects. (All but one also wanted to find work, in some cases to tide them over until their other plans bore fruit, and all are included in the above figures on employment situations.) In seven cases people's plans were linked with training they had done in prison, and this will be discussed later. But most of the unemployed were not interested in government training schemes of the kind described on p, 79; they wanted 'a real job'.

The majority of the unemployed were unhappy with their state, expressing a variety of negative feelings some of which clearly implied a sense of social exclusion. Others were stoical or resigned. People found ways of occupying their time, but in most cases it did not make up for the lack of a job. These matters are described in Appendix 3.

Factors affecting jobhunting

Qualitative analysis of data from the follow-up interviews and from observation of people's situations during the follow-up visit suggested a number of matters which seemed to be important influences on ex-prisoners' jobseeking, and sometimes on the results. These factors interacted with one another, in different ways for different people. They may be summarised as follows, and Simon (1999: 161-164) gives examples of each.

Perceptions of high unemployment

When unemployed respondents were asked the straight question as to why they thought they were out of work now, by far the commonest reason offered was the recession: they believed there were very few jobs available, and the experiences of some bore this out.

Having a criminal record

In some cases this potential difficulty did not apply, and others had not reached the stage of testing it. But for nearly half the jobseekers their criminal record had been a real obstacle: sometimes because fear of having to disclose it had put them off applying for jobs, but more often because (they believed) their applications had failed on account of it.

Acceptable wages

When jobseekers were asked what minimum take-home pay they would accept their answers spanned a wide range, from 'anything more than the dole' to more than £200 a week. Their reasons varied. Family men wanted to support their partners and children; others feared to lose housing benefit if they came off income support; and some were deterred by personal pride from taking a job at a wage they felt was paltry (like £3 an hour).

Family worries

Several people had decided at the time of release to delay looking for a job until they had sorted out other problems, like accommodation for their families or the custody of children. Others, though wanting work, seemed unable to focus clearly on jobhunting because of distractions at home, including difficulties in resuming normal

family relationships after coming out of prison. (This latter problem is discussed by King and McDermott 1995: 283-285.)

Bewilderment

R540, quoted on p. 165, was one of several people who described the lack of confidence experienced on emerging from prison into the outside world, and which was clearly affecting some even three or four months later. This state of mind could impede jobhunting, as examples showed.

Lack of commitment to legitimate work

This was clearly a factor in some cases, though hard to assess in others where earlier enthusiasm for jobhunting had faded after repeated disappointments. Crime and work were not necessarily alternatives, but people out of work were more likely to be involved in offending, as is noted later (p. 179).

Comments

This section has looked briefly at several matters which, in different combinations for different people, seemed to influence many ex-inmates' job-hunting or its results. Not included here are some obvious ones like lack of transport (which was mentioned by one in ten of the unemployed), or lack of skill and qualifications, which is treated in the next section. But the intention has been to give some small indication of the complexity of people's lives, and to show that for many ex-prisoners looking for work - let alone finding it - was not a simple matter. This suggests that if people's time in prison is to be used to train them for employment, as will later be argued, other needs besides vocational skills will have to be addressed. These issues are discussed in Chapter 10.

Did prison work and training help?

As already mentioned, only five people found work which was related to the type of work they had done in prison. To explore the central question of whether prison work and training could help in obtaining any kind of work after release, two methods were used. First, a set of statistical analyses was carried out to see whether any link existed between people's experience of prison work and training and their chances of being in employment at the time of the follow-up, taking into account their pre-prison employment record and skill. Second, a qualitative analysis was made of information on all but one of the 45 people (p. 155) who had begun to learn a vocational skill in prison, to see whether they tried to use it after release and what factors influenced their attempts.

Statistical analyses

These are described by Simon (1999: 230-233) and will be summarised here. Pre-prison employment record was measured by whether or not the person had been in work for most of the year immediately before sentence, and pre-prison occupational skill was measured by three levels. Prison experience was measured in three ways: the kind of daytime occupation the person had had during sentence (work, training or education, or both), whether any vocational skill had been learned, and whether any certificate had been gained. Six analyses were carried out (by three-way tables) to see how these factors (in alternative combinations) were related to the probability of being employed at the time of the follow-up interview.

The results were all negative. Employment status at follow-up was strongly linked to pre-sentence work record, and alternatively to pre-sentence occupational skill; but neither of these links was materially altered by what the person had done in prison. For people who had been employed in the year before sentence the chance of being in work at follow-up was about 50% no matter what their daytime occupation in prison had been. For people unemployed (or in some other state) the year before sentence, doing prison training or education instead of prison work, or adding training or education to prison work, made no difference to their 13% chance of being in work at

follow-up. As for previous occupational skill, 40% of the people counted as fully skilled (tradesperson, management or professional) were in a job at follow-up, compared with 22% of the semi-skilled and 11% of the unskilled; but adding education or training to prison work did not improve the employment chances of the unskilled or semi-skilled. Similar results were obtained when the measure of prison experience was whether the person had started to learn a vocational skill during sentence. There was a slight suggestion that obtaining a certificate might be linked with motivation to look for work, in that none of the people who got one were among the small group who at follow-up were unemployed and not jobhunting, but the difference was too small to be statistically reliable.

These negative results appear to show that to the people in the follow-up sample prison training made no difference to their employment prospects on release: an outcome which, if true, would be disappointing for prison staff who try to train inmates in vocational skills. But two points should be kept in mind. The first is the limitations of the statistical data: the small size of the sample, the crudeness of the measurements, and the tiny numbers in some cells of the tables. The second point is that people's experiences cannot be adequately expressed in neat statistics: one must look further and more sensitively at their situations. So the second method of analysis was qualitative, examining individually 44 cases of people who while in prison had begun to learn a vocational skill. This enquiry is summarised in the next subsection and, as will be seen, some small positive findings emerged.

Qualitative analyses: use of prison skill

The situations in the 44 cases just mentioned were as follows:

(1) Twenty people were definitely planning, or had already tried, to use their prison skill in work or training that was related to it. Only three had obtained some work using their prison skill; four planned to use it later but were doing or seeking unrelated work meanwhile; 13 had looked for work using their skill, so far without success, though three of these had now applied for training which would build on it.

175

(2) Eighteen had looked only for unrelated work or training, though four of them regarded their prison skill as a possible 'second string' for the future.

(3) Six had not looked for work or training at all.

Examination of all these cases suggested that a number of factors helped to determine whether ex-prisoners tried to use a prison-acquired skill, and whether those who tried succeeded. Some of these factors have already been seen in relation to jobsearch, and they are relevant now too. As before, factors interacted with one another and appeared in different patterns for different people. The main ones appeared to be as follows.

- *Self-image:* whether the kind of skill learned in prison fitted with the person's self-image, interests, and chosen lifestyle (before imprisonment and/or after it).

- *Energy:* the extent of the person's determination and ability to sort out his or her life on release, and overcome distractions while doing so.

- *Incentive:* whether the skill learned gave the person positive encouragement which was lacking before.

- *Self-confidence:* how far the person could cope with the mental shock of leaving prison.

- *Relevance:* whether the prison skill was similar to any kind of work outside.

- *Job vacancies:* whether they existed in similar work outside.

- *Previous occupational skill* that the person had gained before imprisonment.

- *'Bird in the hand':* luck in getting a job regardless of prison skill.

- *Level of prison skill:* the extent to which this equipped the person to apply for available vacancies, and to combat his or her disadvantages in competing in the labour market. Disadvantages included criminal record, inadequate pre-sentence occupational skill (in many cases), and sometimes personal matters like self-confidence or appearance (such as tattoos).

Illustrations of all of these are given by Simon (1999: 167-168).

Comments

From the statistical and qualitative analyses together the general conclusion was that, overall, the effect of prison training on people's chances of employment was small. For a very few people it enhanced their prospects; it gave some people an incentive and hope for the future; for a few it provided a foundation for further training; and some used their new-found skills for DIY. But for many the level of vocational skill acquired in prison was too low to offset the handicaps with which they re-entered a very competitive labour market; and for others their prison skills did not seem relevant to working life outside. The results suggest that it is not only vocational skills that matter: personal qualities like self-image and confidence are important too. In Chapter 10 it will be argued that prisons, *if* they were adequately resourced for proper sentence planning, would have a real opportunity to offer inmates help to address these personal needs together with relevant vocational training, and that such a holistic approach would greatly increase their prospects of finding work. But first the rest of this chapter looks briefly at three other topics explored in the follow-up interviews: money, further offending, and retrospective views of prison.

Money

At the time of leaving prison three quarters of the 88 ex-prisoners had almost no money other than the discharge grant of about £40 (or £80 for those with no accommodation). These people were more likely than others to experience serious financial difficulties during the follow-up period, a finding consistent with those of

Hagell, Newburn and Rowlingson (1995). At the time of interview three quarters of the sample were claiming DSS benefit, and most of those people had no other income. Only nine people were supporting themselves wholly by legitimate earnings. Nineteen benefit claimants were also earning money which they did not declare to the authorities, though the amounts varied widely. A few people were supported by family or friends, and ten appeared to be living partly by crime.

One in five appeared at the time of interview to be in reasonably comfortable financial circumstances, but the researchers classified nearly half as 'only just managing, tight' while others were poorer still, a few having huge debts (for examples see Simon 1999: 171-172). The 30% who lived with dependent children were worse off than others. Most people who depended solely on benefit were struggling; those who supplemented their benefit by casual or part-time earnings were a little better off; those with regular full-time earnings were most likely to be comfortable.

It will be recalled (p.129) that 'enough money to live on' was ranked highest by 101 near-release prisoners who were asked what things could help them avoid serious crime in future. The National Prison Survey found similarly (Dodd and Hunter 1992: 72, 103) and the result is consistent with one from Burnett (1992: 13). The Brunel study, which focused on work, suggested two ways in which the Prison Service could help the inclusion in society of ex-prisoners and reduce their likelihood of further crime. One is to pay sufficient wages for prison work to enable inmates to save significant sums against their release; and the other is to give inmates work and training that will enhance their prospects in the labour market.

Further offending

When first interviewed in prison two-thirds of the follow-up sample had said they were determined to try to avoid crime in future. The impression from the follow-up interviews was that during the first few months many people certainly did try, including some who had been doubtful earlier. The researchers asked interviewees, and tried to deduce from other things they said, whether they had broken the law in any

way since their release. In 24 cases it was decided that the interviewer did not gather sufficient information to answer the question; the other 64 cases were as follows.

Twenty-three people (26% of the whole sample of 88) committed no further offences, and 13 (15%) committed only minor ones (like minor motoring offences, smoking cannabis, or failing to declare small sums while claiming benefit). Nine (10%) failed to declare more substantial earnings but did not offend more seriously. Nineteen (22%) committed other types of crime (like burglary, assault, shop theft, or taking vehicles); in nine cases the offences were 'one-off' or sporadic, but the other ten people appeared to be living partly by crime. Few of the offences had been detected.

There was a statistical link between people's further offending and their employment situation during the follow-up period. Among 20 who were working, or who were jobhunting but had had a reasonable amount of work at some stage, three (15%) were involved in crime other than benefit fraud or minor matters. Among 36 jobhunters who had had little or no work, ten (28%) were involved in crime. Among eight people not working or looking for work, six (75%) committed crime. Although the numbers are very small, the increasing proportion of people involved in crime as one moves through the employment categories is worth noting.[2] This result is of course consistent with those of many other studies (see p. 31).

But the relationship between lack of work and further offending was not simple, because individuals reacted to their post-release problems in different ways. The common element in many cases of offending was the ex-prisoner's perception of his or her need for money, and this was often linked with other difficulties. Many people tried hard to avoid crime, and even among the most experienced ex-prisoners - those who had been in prison three or more times previously - nearly half kept out of serious trouble. (Simon 1999: 176-177 gives examples of people who reoffended in various circumstances.)

Prison in retrospect

Towards the end of the follow-up interview 86 people were invited to reflect on their last prison sentence and on their experiences since release, and to say whether any aspect of their imprisonment had been useful to them, in any way, since they came out. One third felt they had benefited in some way by work, training or education they had had in prison. Half felt they had been able to use the time for some other kind of personal improvement: gaining self-understanding, self-control or social skills. (Among other responses, 30% said their sentence had been a deterrent and 29% said they had learned nothing useful at all.) When they were asked for suggestions to improve prison work and training, half made a plea for more relevant work, more access to training, or higher levels of training. And when 74 people were asked what, in an ideal system, they would have *liked* their sentence to do for them, given that they had to serve it, by far the commonest answer (given by almost half) was a wish for more or better training, while others responded in equally practical terms referring to work, money, or further education. Some wanted better psychological preparation for the transition to freedom.

And 12 people's answers revealed that they wanted much more help towards self-enlightenment than they felt prison staff had offered them, including advice on how to stop offending. Here it may be recalled that near-release prisoners had ranked 'willpower' second highest among possible aids to avoiding future crime (p. 129). Since those interviews the Prison Service has expanded programmes to help prisoners addressing offending behaviour, and this is discussed in the next chapter. But the fact that half the follow-up sample felt they had tried to use their prison sentence for learning self-understanding or social skills, and that some would have liked more help in such matters, suggests that the Prison Service has, potentially, a real opportunity to give prisoners training not only in work skills but also in the personal competence needed for success in life after release. The Brunel findings are consistent with the discussion by West (1997: 129-133) of the various ways in which prisoners try to use their time inside to 'sort their lives out'.

Final comment

This chapter looked first at ways in which prisons prepared inmates for release, and then at how 88 ex-prisoners managed during their first few months 'on the out'. The focus has been on employment, and the evidence suggested that, on the whole, prisons and prisoners made little connection between the in-prison experience and the world of work outside, though there were inklings that more connections would have been possible. Little has been said here about other important matters like family relationships or housing which also contribute to social inclusion; for a comprehensive survey in general terms of the issues involved in the resettlement of ex-prisoners see NACRO (1993).

The Brunel follow-up study found, like much other research, a link between reoffending and unemployment. But in considering how prisons might help to reduce the likelihood of recidivism it pointed tentatively towards two conclusions. First, even if prison work is made relevant to outside work and inmates receive vocational training, those things alone will not necessarily ensure that released prisoners find jobs. Ex-prisoners' success in jobhunting depends also on some intangible things like self-image, confidence, energy and commitment, as well as (of course) on actual vacancies, wages and employers' willingness to consider applicants with a criminal record. Second, ex-prisoners attempting to achieve social inclusion feel themselves that prisons could help, and ought to help more, not just through work and training but by supporting them in intangibles like social skills, self-understanding, and re-orientation towards law-abiding behaviour. All this suggests that prisons should take a holistic approach in the rehabilitative programmes they offer to inmates, and this is among the topics discussed in Chapter 10.

Notes to Chapter 9

1. The information set out here is quite independent of whether the person was signing on as unemployed and claiming DSS benefit.

2. For the 3 x 2 table comparing the quoted percentages, chi-square for linear-by-linear association = 7.89, df = 1, P = .005, though this is probably overstated because of small expected frequencies.

182

CHAPTER 10

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE BRUNEL RESEARCH

Introduction

Chapters 6-9 have shown what prisoners' work and vocational training comprised in the 1990s up to 1996, and how far a sample of prisoners released in 1992-93 had found their prison experiences useful to them afterwards. The Brunel findings pointed to ways in which, ideally, the Prison Service ought to develop its provision for inmates' work and training beyond the 1996 position, and this chapter will discuss these and related topics. (Chapter 11 will include some indications of what actually happened up to 1999.)

This chapter begins by arguing that the *primary* aim of providing work for prisoners should be to promote their prospects of getting employment on release. The next section looks at employment trends in the changing outside world of work, and at the qualities successful job applicants need. Prison work and vocational training are then discussed in the light of this information, and it is argued that substantial alterations are needed, including more attention to labour markets, better opportunities for training, a much more prominent role for work instructors, and consistent support from local employers and TECs. Many of the changes recommended are summarised in proposals for a system here termed employment throughcare, and it is shown that this would incorporate 'what works' principles into prisons' arrangements for inmates' work.

Purposes of prison work

Chapter 2 showed that the last two centuries have seen a shifting variety of purposes stated for prison work, and for many decades there have been recurrent official inquiries into its practice. Research studies from Cooper and King (1965) onwards have referred to the confusion surrounding its aims, and the Prisons Inspectorate in 1989

spoke of 'ambivalence' (p. 28). The Brunel study in the 1990s found this confusion and ambivalence still existing (pp. 138-141), and on p. 142 it was suggested that underlying this state of affairs is the tension between the objectives of social exclusion and social inclusion in the treatment of prisoners.

What the primary purpose should be

It will now be argued that the Prison Service should resolve this matter by setting the *primary* purpose of prisoners' work as preparing them to get worthwhile employment when they leave prison, i.e. by using work to enhance their prospects of social inclusion. Such a policy would take forward Woolf's view that part of the role of the Service should 'be seeking to minimise the prospect of the prisoner re-offending after serving his sentence' (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 242). Much other research has shown (p. 31) that offenders are less likely to reoffend if they are in employment. To this may be added the following findings from the Brunel study: prisoners near release said that one of the three most important aids to them in avoiding further crime would be a job (p. 129); in the follow-up sample those who had had some work were less likely to be involved in crime (p. 179); the majority of inmates had wanted a prison occupation which would use or improve their work skills or experience (p. 130); half the follow-up sample pleaded that prisons should give inmates more relevant work and better training (p. 180); and prison staff thought that the best purpose of prison work would be to train inmates in ways which could help them get a job after release (p. 138).

From all this, it is maintained that the *primary* purpose of work (and vocational training) in prisons should be to prepare and help prisoners - those who want to, and most do - to get worthwhile work when they leave. This need not preclude some other purposes: inmates can still be expected to help maintain the establishment that houses and feeds them, and if some of the products of their labour can contribute to public funds, well and good, *provided that* the work is similar to work outside prison and the workers are fairly paid. But the most important aim, consistently emphasised, should be to sustain and improve prisoners' work skills so as to enhance their prospects of

employment on release. The rest of this chapter discusses changes which would be necessary to accomplish this aim.

Prospects of employment in the outside world

In order to consider how far prison work and training prepare prisoners for jobs outside, one must look at the kinds of work available outside and the qualities successful job applicants need. Much has been written in the last few years about the changing world of work. For the present purpose, bearing in mind the descriptions of prison work in Chapters 6 and 7, the following very brief summary (and the longer account in Simon 1999: 185-187) draws on material from Rajan (1992: 1-8, 20-27), the Institute of Employment Research (1995: Tables 2.3, 3.3; 1996: 6-7, 11-17), and the Skills and Enterprise Network (1991: 16-22; 1997: 1-17, Figures 2.5, 4.2).

Kinds of work available

Over the last four decades, and especially in the last two, the industrial and occupational structure of Britain has changed, and the changes are continuing. Some industries are in severe decline: among them are agriculture, mechanical engineering, textiles and clothing. Growth industries, on the other hand, include hotels and catering, business services, health, education, and leisure. Construction, a cyclical industry, was badly affected by the recession of the early 1990s but has since been recovering.

Occupational trends and projections for 25 years from 1981 show rising employment in, for example, managerial, administrative and technical occupations, and in personal and protective services; but jobs are declining for skilled manual workers (apart from construction trades), plant and machine operators, and unskilled workers like labourers and cleaners. There are other changes too. By 1996 self-employment had risen to 13% of total employment, and part-time employment to 29%; it was expected that early in the new century half the labour force would be women. Many full-time jobs of the kinds traditionally held by men, especially manual workers, have been lost. There are fewer permanent jobs, while temporary and contract work have

grown. White-collar employment has increased, while far fewer unskilled labourers are needed. Even in traditional skilled jobs the need for manual dexterity is being replaced by the need for skills in understanding and monitoring automated systems. Many jobs now require higher levels of skill, and the capacity to assume several roles and responsibilities.

Personal qualities needed for good prospects of work

These include the following:

- Higher levels of skill and, for many jobs, multiple skills rather than a single one; vocational qualifications;

- Information technology skills, for jobs at all levels;

- Business and enterprise skills, both for self-employment and for employees;

- Awareness of technological and environmental issues;

- Willingness to be flexible in hours, length and conditions of work;

- Self-management, initiative, being able to take responsibility;

- Adaptability, willingness to retrain ('lifetime learning');

- Individual responsibility for one's own career development;

- Skills in inter-personal relations, for effective communication with colleagues and customers.

Relevance of prison jobs to outside employment

The first question now to be considered is how far the work to which prisoners are assigned is like the kinds of work available outside. The research comparisons of prison work with outside examples (pp. 116-117) suggested that in actual content - products and processes - many kinds of prison work are very like their counterparts outside, and the quality is comparable. Though the outside firms visited may not have been wholly typical, the best evidence of similarity is the availability of NVQs for a wide range of prison occupations (p. 147).

But when outside job opportunities are examined the picture is much more mixed and doubtful. A comparison between Table 1 (p. 110) and the trends summarised on pp. 185-186 shows a serious imbalance between the kinds of work occupying many prisoners in 1996 and the kinds of work in which they were likely to find jobs on release. Nearly half of working prisoners were on domestic duties (as cleaners, servery assistants and so on), which for the most part are unskilled (despite prisons' training courses in industrial cleaning). After the domestic workers one of the largest groups was those engaged in 'contract services' work, usually comprising unskilled manual assembly operations of which one governor (R070) said, 'I suppose occupational therapy is the best way to describe it.' The total of these two groups of unskilled prison workers is out of all proportion to the demand for unskilled workers in the labour market. (Of course there are other kinds of unskilled work too, in prison and out, but the comparison just made is sufficient to point up the imbalance.) The industry which, after domestic work, employed most prisoners was clothing and textiles: in 1996 approximately 13% of working inmates were so occupied. This is in sharp contrast to the drastic reduction in such jobs outside (see Simon 1999: 185, citing IER figures), and it prompted R091, the industrial manager at one of the research prisons, to liken the Prison Service to a Third World country (Simon 1999: 189).

Some other kinds of prison work may be much more in step with opportunities outside. Employment in hotels and catering has grown (though many such jobs are poorly paid). Some skills are transferable, e.g. tractor driving and fencing are used in other contexts besides farms. And the fact that an industry is in decline does not

necessarily mean there will be no jobs left in it: engineering workers will still be needed, though in fewer numbers than formerly and with some different skills.

The important message is that prisons should make every effort to arrange that the kinds of work they require prisoners to do are matched as far as possible to outside labour markets. This means taking advice from local employers and TECs as to what occupations offer good prospects in the localities to which their prisoners will be released. The trends mentioned above are national, but regional and local figures are available: in particular, TECs regularly produce surveys showing occupational trends and skill shortages in their own areas. Prison governors should make use of such material, as some already do.

Prisoners' vocational training

A second topic relevant to outside employment prospects is prisoners' opportunities for vocational training. Four aspects will first be considered here: the kinds of training offered, access to training, levels of skill acquired, and the position of short-sentence inmates.

Kinds of training

Prisons between them offer an impressive range of kinds of vocational training - in structured courses, in other education classes, and 'on the job' in prison work. It is important that the skills taught should match those required in local labour markets: as with work, TECs should be asked for guidance. Prisons should enable inmates to acquire multiple skills: for example, most prisons should provide several kinds of CIT course to help would-be building workers to be adaptable. Skills in information technology are needed across a wide range of jobs, and so are business and enterprise skills: all prisons should offer training in computers and in business skills to as many inmates as can benefit, and this is addressed below.

Evidence from the research prisons suggested that access to training was, overall, quite limited compared with the amount of inmate labour devoted to production. Inmates were often expected to do a stint in workshops before joining a course; many courses had long waiting lists and short-term inmates missed out; security restrictions limited access for some; inmates in VPUs had fewer opportunities; courses were sometimes suspended. Even in the workshops the training many people received was only the minimum necessary to fit them into the swing of production, not the wider range of skills tuition which instructors had the potential to offer. On the whole, despite the progress of NVQs and commendable efforts by prison managers to defend training against budget cuts, it seemed that vocational training was not a high priority in the prisons' activities. This situation should be changed, to give prisoners much better access to training.

Skill acquired

The comparison on p. 157 between national NVQ figures and those for the research sample of 88 people suggests that in 1995-96 prisoners in general gained less skill than those in the six research prisons had gained three years earlier. Yet it had seemed clear then that many inmates were not reaching the levels of skill which prison training had the potential to offer them. Factors contributing to this state of affairs included (1) restrictions on the amount of skill inmate workers could use or aspire to (e.g. as tradesmen's 'mates' in Works); (2) the de-skilled nature of production operations (e.g. in sewing workshops); (3) the lack of co-ordination between training courses and related prison jobs (see below); (4) interruptions to training through transfer to other prisons (p. 154); and (5) the short working/training day - five hours or so at most prisons (and also subject to interruptions). All these things could be improved by better prison management, if there were a re-ordering of priorities *and* sufficient resources.

The estimate of NVQ attainment mentioned in the preceding paragraph referred only to prisoners sentenced to a year or more. Yet such people comprise fewer than half (in 1996, 38%: Home Office 1997b: Table 1.13) of all who pass through the system. For the majority who have a shorter time to serve after sentence (on average, less than five months), a full-time course leading to an NVQ may not be feasible in many cases. But these inmates like others should receive a vocational assessment at the beginning of sentence, and then (unless needing education) they should be placed in suitable work. A suitable prison job would be one which maintained any existing skill and helped to increase it by on-the-job training, including NVQ units (and accreditation of prior learning) wherever possible. Thus shorter-sentence prisoners, like others, should be included in the system of employment throughcare outlined on pp. 195-197.

Linking training with prison work

This topic now merits further attention. Pp. 153-154 indicated the inconsistency of prisons' arrangements for inmates who 'graduate' from a training course to move into a linked prison job where they could practise their skills. Among the concrete suggestions made by staff and prisoners for improving training (Simon 1999: 146-148) were several which would enhance particular trade skills in that way. But in addition, many opportunities could be developed for inmates to practise computer and business skills by helping with, for instance, records of stores, workshop production, sales of prison produce, training progress etc. Prison managers should survey all the work that is done, and that *could* be done, by inmates, asking: What is the training content of this activity? How could it be increased? Is there an NVQ available? What training courses in the prison are, or could be related to it? What is its potential for giving inmates on-the-job experience in computers and business skills?

A further point is that inmates should be expected to help with low-skill household chores as they might at home, but this should not be their main work. In areas of work like cleaning there could be a division of labour, so that inmates

receiving vocational training in those occupations were regarded as the prime workers and given the most skilled tasks, while the unskilled tasks were designated as domestic chores of which other inmates had to do their share before going off for the main part of the day to their own work or training elsewhere in the prison.[1] Such arrangements would help foster a culture of respect for skill and training, and would diminish the attractions of jobs like wing cleaning as opportunities for participating in the illicit inmate counter-culture (see R653, p. 124).

Responsibility, generic employability skills and personal competence

A third aspect of fitness for outside employment is being able to take responsibility for one's work and one's working life. Being in prison necessarily entails loss of freedom to make decisions. Yet, to the fullest extent consistent with its duty of keeping prisoners in custody, the Prison Service should seek to limit the damage caused by incarceration and, as Woolf said (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 372-373) to encourage inmates in the exercise of personal responsibility. Security, while a prime consideration, should not be invoked automatically to deny inmates opportunities which, with more thought, they might very well be given. (The researchers noticed, for instance, that trainees in welding and practical engineering courses were trusted with tools far more than many inmates in prison jobs.) Instead, staff concerned with prisoners' work should look constantly for ways of giving them responsibility.

This should begin at the beginning: a new prisoner should be offered vocational assessment and planned opportunities for work and training which best fitted his or her interests and hopes for work on release (see pp. 195-196). In the workplace inmates should be encouraged as far as possible to manage their own work and use initiative (as, for example, with a gardener responsible for his or her own patch). Opportunities should be made for teamwork and leadership. And the negative attitudes of some prisoners towards 'No. 1s' (p. 122) could be counteracted by two measures. First, all inmate workers should be enabled to attain the highest possible level of vocational skill; this would promote a workplace culture in which skills were respected and No. 1s deservedly looked up to. Second, and even more important, all should be paid at rates

which would allow even the least skilled to gain adult dignity and self-respect from their own work (p. 123).

Work instructors believed that prison work could impart 'good work habits' (pp. 133, 135). But fewer than one in four inmates near release felt that in their prison jobs they had used such habits (listed as producing good quality, working regular hours, accepting orders from authority, and co-operating with workmates) in ways which could help them get work after leaving prison (Simon 1999: 119-120). Yet Canadian studies (Gillis, Robinson and Porporino 1996; Fabiano, LaPlante and Loza 1996) have shown that work instructors can play a critical part in helping inmates develop generic employability skills: self-management, co-operativeness, initiative, adaptability, problem-solving and so on, as well as reducing pro-criminal attitudes (see p. 57). Working prisoners spend more time with their instructors than with other prison staff (and if prison work hours were longer the difference would be greater still), so instructors have excellent opportunities for influence. The Brunel researchers felt that their potential for developing inmates' personal competence was seriously under-used. Many instructors had little contact with other departments of the prison; when inmates left their workshops they often heard little more about them; and they felt officially discouraged from making outside contacts which might assist them (p. 134). R071, a senior manager, said, 'I think it's a common feature of all prisons that instructors get pushed to one side and forgotten about.' The implication here is that instead of this situation, instructors should be enabled to take a central role in the life of the prison, and should be fully involved in inmates' sentence planning and throughcare (see pp. 195-196).

The Service's criteria for judging prison work

The criteria which the Prison Service set out in 1992 for judging prison work implied a real interest in using prison work to promote offenders' prospects of social inclusion (see pp. 93-94). The Brunel findings suggested that in 1996 progress was slow. Of the seven benchmarks comprising the first criterion (realism compared with work outside) the only one satisfactorily attained was 'production processes/technology', and perhaps 'interaction with others' was partially met. On the second criterion (fitting

prisoners' aptitudes) there was often a mismatch. On the third (teaching and maintaining marketable skills and qualifications) prisons' efforts with NVQs were creditable but there was a long way to go, and training had too low a priority. On the fifth criterion (prisoners' earnings) most prison work fell far short. (The fourth, sixth and seventh criteria were not part of the Brunel study.) Altogether, it seemed that enabling prisoners' work to contribute to their social inclusion was still a distant goal.

Involving outsiders

So far this chapter has focused on changes to prisoners' work and training which could be made by the Prison Service. Now attention is turned to two groups of outsiders: local employers and TECs. They have already been mentioned as sources of advice about labour markets (p. 188), but there are other ways too in which they can work with prison managements, and in so doing reduce the prisons' exclusion from the rest of society.

Local employers

The commonest arrangement for private firms to be connected with prisoners' work is as customers for prison-made goods, either through the open market or by sending in work to be done under contract. If contract work teaches inmates marketable skills, well and good. But in 1996 much of the work in prisons' light assembly shops comprised unskilled repetitive manual operations which outside prisons are done mainly by underpaid homeworkers or in sheltered workshops for the mentally handicapped (Simon 1999: 97-99). Such experience does not help ex-prisoners' job prospects, and prisons should reduce their reliance on it to the absolute minimum. Rather, employers should be encouraged to do the following: come into the prison and run workshops similar to their own outside; run vocational training programmes; employ inmates allowed out on work-release; contribute expert knowledge to pre-release courses; and provide jobs for released prisoners, ideally under arrangements which begin before release to enable a smooth transition. A notable example of an employer's in-prison training programme in 1993 was Reed Employment's scheme at Holloway (Simon 1999:

43), while in the 'Beyond the Gate' scheme which ran in Kent prisons during 1993-95 (Simon 1999: 202-203) local employers made valuable contributions to inmates' work and training in several of the ways just mentioned.

PES, of course, was trying to encourage the private sector to participate in all these ways (p. 113), as were individual prisons. But it is uphill work, and many things can go wrong. A private firm naturally aims at profit, but prisons are complex institutions and a labour force of prisoners is subject to constraints not applicable outside, as Lightman (1979, 1982), Flynn (1995) and Davies (1995), among others, have discussed (see pp. 40-41, 58). Prisons should not aim to use inmates' labour primarily for profit, and prison managers should not seek the participation of the private sector in the expectation that gaining it will solve their problems and relieve them of the responsibility for prisoners' work. Instead, they should regard outside employers as partners who can help by giving prisoners a more normal experience of work, thus promoting their eventual social inclusion and reducing the likelihood of further crime.

Training and Enterprise Councils

The Options For Learning scheme at Channings Wood (pp. 159-161) was an excellent example of collaboration between a TEC and a prison to give prisoners worthwhile training for work. Another example was the support by Kent TEC of the Beyond the Gate project mentioned above. In 1993 the Employment Department published a comprehensive guide to ways in which TECs could work with prisons, probation services and the Employment Service to help offenders into training and jobs, and this document (Employment Department 1993) and the letter publicising it throughout the Prison Service (HM Prison Service 1994) listed ten TECs which were supporting a variety of projects in prisons in their areas. Among the activities were: providing local labour market information; funding the training of work instructors as NVQ assessors; facilitating the secondment of instructors to outside firms for refresher periods; supporting prison training courses; and funding the provision to individual inmates of vocational assessment and training plans. At four of the research prisons, at some time between 1992 and 1996, the local TEC had an important role (see Simon 1999: 203-204 for details).

Yet these hopeful enterprises were often short-lived. Options For Learning and Beyond the Gate both stopped in 1995 when TEC funding ended. At the time of the research updating visits in spring 1996 there was very little TEC-funded activity at the five male prisons (and no labour market information was being sought or supplied). The short-term, 'stop-go' nature of TEC funding, and the squeeze on prisons' budgets which made them unwilling to continue what others had started, resulted in frustration and disappointment to people who had worked hard to build the schemes and to persuade employers, prison staff and inmates to participate. The uncertainty and separateness of funding arrangements meant that opportunities for diminishing the social exclusion of prisons and prisoners were not sustained: on the contrary, the ending of such schemes served to re-affirm that exclusion.

Employment throughcare

Running through many of the Brunel findings is the theme of the need for *continuity*: between training and jobs within a prison, between training in different prisons, and between a person's training and work experiences in prison and those outside. It has been seen that inmates were often assigned to prison work with little regard for their existing skills and aspirations (p. 115); that their training was frequently liable to interruption (pp. 153-154); and that in many cases nothing was done before their release to link them with outside job opportunities which could use skills learned during sentence (pp. 169, 170). The Employment Department's 1993 guide to TECs (Employment Department 1993) envisaged that a prisoner's sentence plan would incorporate a training plan including: the possibility of training being provided by outside agencies as well as the prison; the gaining of NVQ units; the transfer of records of achievement; the accreditation of prior learning; and planning for the continuation of training after release. Now it is argued that this approach should be taken further, to develop a system which might be termed *employment throughcare*. (This is set out more fully in Simon 1999: 204-207.)

In employment throughcare, prison staff and other people as appropriate would work with the inmate from the beginning of sentence to guide him or her through an individual programme of work and training linked to work on release. The essential

first step would be a vocational assessment and guidance interview by someone skilled in such work. Then a flexible work and training plan would be drawn up to enable the inmate to make the best use of the facilities at each prison in which the sentence is served. During the early stages the people involved (besides the inmate) would probably be mainly prison staff such as work instructors, trainers and teachers, but outsiders could be involved too, in vocational assessment, in furnishing information about outside job opportunities, and as employers providing work in the prison. Later during sentence the balance might shift so that outsiders played a bigger part, with the inmate working out from prison, attending an 'employment focus' course, using a jobclub or other facilities run by outside agencies; but insiders could still participate, with work instructors and trainers contacting outside employers and giving references. After release outsiders, including the supervising probation officer where present, would play the main part, but support from prison staff should still be available until the released prisoner is fully settled into employment.[2]

At each prison where the inmate served his or her sentence the plan would be co-ordinated, monitored and advanced by the inmate's personal officer. (Personal officers would thus have a very interesting and demanding role.) Moreover, such a system of employment throughcare would gradually help prison managers to plan their provision of work and training to meet the needs of the prisoners they received. Aggregated data on individuals could be analysed to reveal various groups defined by previous work experience, stage of training reached, likely length of stay, and employment goals on release; with this information the prison's regime could be planned to address the needs of the different groups. And prisons would need to co-ordinate their regimes with one another, so that as prisoners moved between them at different stages their work and training plans could progress. All this would eventually result in more continuity of training and work experience for prisoners, and more constructive and efficient use of prisons' resources.

These ideas are not new. In 1991 Prison Service HQ, in planning the development of NVQs, proposed a framework comprising steps very like much of what is suggested here (HM Prison Service 1991b). Substantial elements of what is here called employment throughcare have already existed in some prisons, for some inmates, at some periods (for examples see Simon 1999: 207). The aggregation of data on

prisoners' needs, to inform regime planning and co-ordination, was foreshadowed in the Service's 1995 report on sentence planning (HM Prison Service 1995d), though in 1997 it had barely begun.

This approach to prisoners' work and training, emphasising continuity and making links between inside and outside, would be in direct contrast to the attitude expressed to one of the researchers in 1996 by a principal prison officer involved in assigning inmates to prison jobs. He clearly felt that the boundary between prison and the outside world was proper and should not be crossed, and expressed it thus:

'Ours is a people business. People in prison are our product. Once the product has left the factory, that's our job done.'

Instead of this viewpoint, employment throughcare as proposed here would focus on lessening the social exclusion of prisons and prisoners: on building links between prison staff and the outside world, on 'normalising' prison work, and on helping prisoners to make a smooth transition from their life within the walls to life outside, equipped as far as possible for a greater degree of social inclusion.

A note on long-sentence prisoners

People serving very long sentences should participate in employment throughcare like others, though with a longer time-scale. In fact sentence planning was first adopted for the minority of inmates sentenced to four years or more,[3] and the Brunel researchers interviewed several long-termers who had well-designed plans. And prisoners with many years to serve before release should be given opportunities of doing work in prison through which they can still feel that they are contributing to society outside: examples are Maidstone's Braille transcription unit and the wheelchair repair workshop at Manchester. Of course pay rates which enabled prison workers to maintain their dependants and compensate victims would do much towards giving them some sense of social inclusion.

A 'what works' perspective

This section will consider prison work in a wider context, referring to 'what works' principles which in the 1990s have received much attention in regard to the treatment of offenders.

The 'what works' principles

In contrast to the pessimistic view of the 1970s that 'nothing works', much has been done in the last two decades to review and synthesise research findings on methods of treating offenders, and to draw out common principles underlying those which appear to succeed in reducing recidivism. Two major reviews, encompassing others, of 'what works' have been carried out by McLaren (1992) and by McGuire and Priestley (1995). Among the principles of effective treatment programmes for offenders which they set out are the following.[4]

- The programme should focus on those needs of the participants (offenders) which have clearly contributed to their offending.

- Preferably, it should use cognitive and behavioural techniques to teach the participants new, non-criminal ways of thinking and behaving.

- It should teach them practical skills to cope with personal and social problems.

- The programme should be 'multi-modal', recognising the range of the participants' problems and using a variety of methods to address them.

- It should match the methods of treatment to participants' abilities and learning styles.

- The content of treatment should match the needs of the participants, and the amount and intensity of treatment should be determined by the level of risk they present.

- Offenders should be involved in making the plan for their treatment, rather than it being imposed on them.

- The staff of the programme should relate to the participants with warmth and empathy, and in ways which encourage pro-social attitudes and behaviour. They should act as advocates for the participants, and link them to other appropriate services.

- Staff should draw on resources from the community, and establish positive links with outside.

- The programme must have integrity. This means, among other things, that it must be based on appropriate theory and be consistently run, by competent staff who stick to the design. It must have adequate resources, and management must not allow it to be weakened or diverted because of other demands.

Applications

These principles are usually referred to in connection with treatments aimed directly at addressing offending behaviour of one type or another (and not just in prisons). But one can see their relevance to the whole management of a prisoner's sentence, right from initial assessment and allocation, through participation in programmes of 'purposeful activity', and on to release (and post-release supervision). Ideally sentence planning, accompanied by adequate provision, would enable all a prisoner's needs related to offending to be addressed in a holistic way.

But in 1997 sentence plans were drawn up for only a minority of prisoners (pp. 98-99), and even for them there was no assurance that prison programmes meeting their needs would actually be in place. The pressures of increasing numbers of prisoners, tightened budgets, and the over-riding emphasis on security severely constrained prisons' ability to provide the opportunities which sentence plans might indicate were needed. Thus the majority of prisoners, even including some who had a sentence plan, were unlikely to be offered the integrated programme of activities which a 'what works'

approach might imply they needed to help them avoid reoffending. And accredited courses on offending behaviour were likewise available to only a small minority (p. 100).

The importance of applying 'what works' to prison work

The circumstances just discussed increase the significance of prison work. By no means all prisoners will have a comprehensive sentence plan and not all will participate in an offending behaviour course. But most adult prisoners are at work for at least part of their sentence; thus it is important that prison work and vocational training should be developed in ways which make the most of their potential for helping prisoners not to reoffend. Chapter 9 showed that ex-inmates' efforts to get work, which they felt was important for avoiding further crime, were hampered not only by lack of vacancies and inadequate vocational skills but by other personal factors: lack of confidence and coping skills, bewilderment, family worries and so on. People wanted 'willpower'; many felt they had made some use of their time in prison for self-improvement, and some directly expressed a desire for help in overcoming criminal inclinations (p. 180). So a prisoner's sentence should be used to address these matters. It is argued that inmates who felt during sentence that their needs for work skills *and* for social skills, confidence and ability to resist offending were being adequately addressed would be much more capable, on release, of participating in legitimate work and of staying out of crime: prisons' efforts on these two fronts would be mutually reinforcing.

Braithwaite in 1980, reviewing the mixed results of vocational programmes aimed at reducing recidivism, stressed the importance of ensuring continuity in the prisoner's experience (see p. 56). Further, he implied the need to address other problems besides lack of vocational skills:

'There is at least some hard evidence to show that it is possible for vocational programs to reduce crime. The problem is that so far we have not been very good at using them, and that the people we are trying to change have been through such a long process of disillusionment and alienation that it is difficult

for them to see the point, even in a program which offers the most concrete of economic and work satisfaction benefits' (Braithwaite 1980: 54).

McLaren, after concluding likewise that the results of vocational programmes were mixed, suggested that they could be improved by embodying 'what works' principles. 'It may well be that the failure of vocational interventions to reduce offending on a consistent basis may have less to do with the broad intervention type than with their failure to incorporate what is currently known about effectiveness into design and implementation' (McLaren 1992: 63).

The Brunel study assessed the outcome of prison work and training primarily in terms of post-release employment rather than the avoidance of reoffending, though the connection between the two was examined. It was found that the follow-up sample's experience of work and training in prison appeared to make very little difference to their chances of obtaining jobs in the first few months after release, though a small number were still hoping to benefit from training. Now much of the discussion in the present chapter has suggested why the results were so negative: in a nutshell, the work prisoners are given should be relevant to the labour market and to their interests, *and* their other needs must be addressed as well. Prison work should be part of an integrated programme based on 'what works' principles.

Many of the ideas presented in this chapter for improving prison work and training are in line with 'what works', as follows. Vocational assessment and guidance would involve diagnosing an inmate's strengths and weaknesses in relation to work, and identifying what would be needed in order to pursue a legitimate and satisfying career.[5] Inmates would participate in drawing up their work and training plans. Assigning inmates to suitable work and training (here assumed to be available) in accordance with their plans would match treatment to individual abilities and needs. Work instructors, relating to their workers with warmth, empathy and active leadership (as many already do), would encourage pro-social attitudes and behaviour. Instructors would collaborate with other prison staff so that inmates' problems were addressed in 'multi-modal' ways. Instructors could be trained to teach inmates personal coping skills and their application in the workplace. Instructors would be advocates for their workers not only in dealings with other prison staff but in linking them with outside employers and other agencies.

Community resources, such as TECs and training schemes, would be drawn in (as can happen now) to help prison inmates and those making the transition to outside work. Finally, 'programme integrity' in regard to prison work and training *must* mean that their provision in prison matches outside labour markets, that they are adequately resourced, and that continuity and consistency of training and work experience are assured.

So the application of 'what works' to prison work and training would lead to the system of employment throughcare proposed on pp. 195-197. Of course work is not a cure-all. The integrated system of sentence planning to which the Prison Service aspires would encompass many other things too; and not all offending is related to work. But employment throughcare, together with adequate pay for prison work, would help a great many more prisoners, both short- and long-sentence ones, towards better prospects of social inclusion.

Final comment

This chapter has discussed many ways in which the Prison Service could improve work and vocational training for inmates so as to increase their prospects of obtaining legitimate and satisfying work in the outside community, thus aiding their social inclusion. This should be the primary purpose of prison work. Prisoners' jobs should be influenced much more by outside labour markets; vocational training opportunities should be increased in several ways; all prison work that could be done by inmates should be surveyed for its training potential, especially in information technology and business skills; inmate workers should be given more responsibility and paid much better; work instructors (and trainers) should have a central role in developing inmates' skills of personal competence; links with outside employers and TECs should be forged and sustained; and the approach here called employment throughcare should be developed, as incorporating the principles of 'what works'.

It is recognised that making these changes would not be cheap or simple, and that prisons are complex institutions concerned with many other things besides prisoners' work. But in the next and final chapter it will be argued that the chief constraint hindering prisons from moving further along the paths suggested is the

influence of public attitudes: the pressure of public demands that offenders, and especially prisoners, shall be socially excluded.

Notes to Chapter 10

1. This proposal is similar to one made earlier by the Inspectorate (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1993: 75).

2. The question of prison staff having contact with ex-inmates is covered by Prison Rule 66 (Rule 81 before 1999). Work instructors and others interviewed during the research believed there was a blanket prohibition. But in fact governors have discretion to permit contacts, and staff should apply for permission in cases where they think contact would be helpful. See the discussion by Simon (1999: 207).

3. In 1997 these were fewer than 7 percent of all prisoners received under sentence, though of course they form a much larger proportion of the sentenced prison population: 44 percent in 1997 (Home Office 1998c: Tables 1(f), 1.7).

4. The principles listed here represent 18 of a total of 25, the 25 comprising the 19 set out by McLaren (1992: 11-14) and the six summarised by McGuire and Priestley (1995: 14-15). The seven omitted, as being of slightly less interest in the present context, refer to the need for clear authority structures, modelling and reinforcing pro-social behaviour, controlling offender peer groups, involving ex-offenders as helpers, relapse prevention, and the finding that institution-based programmes tend to be less effective (though still worthwhile) than community-based ones.

5. In invoking 'what works' here it is not suggested that in all cases offending has sprung from employment needs.

CHAPTER 11

FINAL DISCUSSION

Introduction

This final chapter brings together issues revealed in the preceding ones and discusses them in relation to recent and contemporary events. After recalling the importance for social inclusion of work (for ordinary citizens) it summarises points from the history of prison work and from the Brunel research, showing that prisons and prisoners are subject to conflicting pressures. Efforts since the Woolf Report to make prison regimes more constructive were jeopardised in the mid 1990s by budget cuts and pressure on the courts to lock up more and more prisoners, and before the 1997 general election politicians competed with each other to appear tough. Tending in the opposite direction, towards inclusion rather than exclusion, has been the slow growth of interest in restorative justice. Since the Labour government came to power it has worked for social inclusion in many of its policies, including changes to the criminal justice system, but it has also made contrary moves which may increase the numbers of prisoners still further. Sections near the end of the chapter discuss some current prospects for better prison regimes since the Comprehensive Spending Review provided them with a little more money. Finally, it is observed that because of prisons' very nature there will always be a point beyond which they cannot go in reducing inmates' social exclusion, and that the tension between pressures for exclusion and inclusion are well illustrated by the issues surrounding prison work.

Social exclusion

Social exclusion, a term which has come to prominence in Britain during the last decade, is a multi-dimensional concept covering several arenas of deprivation - economic, social and political - and it can refer to both the state and the process of being excluded. But in whatever sense the term is used, social exclusion means the

antithesis of social integration, of being part of society (De Haan 1998: 12; Commins 1993: 4). There is much evidence that for most individuals *work*, meaning paid employment (including self-employment) is a necessary and important component of social inclusion (see pp. 5-7). It seems that, in general, social inclusion requires people to contribute through paid work to the community in which they live.

Crime is linked with social exclusion (see for example Donnison 1997; Murie 1997), and known offenders are more likely than other people to have experienced exclusionary forces of various kinds, unemployment among them (Smith and Stewart 1997). But the harshest referent of social exclusion is imprisonment, which segregates prison inmates from the rest of society. Yet most prisoners are required to work (for minuscule pay) while they are incarcerated, which raises questions. What are the functions of prison work? How is prison work related to social inclusion, or exclusion?

Points from history

A glance at history from the 1770s shows that prison work has had a shifting variety of official purposes. Until the Gladstone reforms punishment and deterrence were often to the fore, especially at times of rising crime. But work was also seen as promoting repentance for sin, or alternatively as relieving the pains of incarceration. Even before Gladstone it was also thought (e.g. Du Cane 1885: 170) that some kinds of prison work could assist reform by imparting good work habits, and possibly trade skills, for use on discharge. In practice prisoners' labour aided control and discipline, it helped to maintain prisons, it could contribute to public works, and it could produce trade goods to subsidise the cost of the system.

These practical functions of course continued in the 20th century, but also the idea that work should assist prisoners' reform, or rehabilitation, recurred with increasing emphasis during several decades. In 1933 rehabilitation was advocated as the main object of prison employment by the Departmental Committee on that topic (p. 19). After World War II the Prison Commissioners placed work at the centre of their doctrine (for convicted prisoners) of 'treatment and training', and at some prisons opportunities for work and vocational training expanded. But at the local prisons,

which held the majority of prisoners, such worthy intentions were frustrated from the 1950s by overcrowding due to steeply rising numbers of prisoners, as well as by other problems (pp. 20-21). Efforts to improve prison work in the 1960s, following the Anson inquiry, were soon overshadowed by preoccupations with security after the Mountbatten Report (p. 22).

In the 1970s, when 'treatment and training' had given way to 'humane containment', the prison population was still rising, restrictions on public finance obstructed efforts to relieve overcrowding, and prison industries were struggling (pp. 24-25). In the 1980s the Service's search for direction was hampered by the still-increasing numbers of prisoners. By the end of that decade King and McDermott had written of 'the ever-deepening crisis', and one of their findings was that the deterioration in regimes, including work, was greatest in prisons having the highest security (though it could not then be explained by lack of resources) (King and McDermott 1989). Prison industries showed evidence of serious mismanagement and muddle (p. 26). In 1989 the Inspectorate concluded that the Service's view of the role of work in prisons was characterised by *ambivalence* (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1989: 15, emphasis added).

Prisons are complex institutions, and inmates' work is of course only one among many concerns for prison managers. But the points just summarised suggest that the role of prison work exemplifies a *tension* between opposing pressures with which the Service must contend. On the one hand is the desire to assist prisoners, as far as possible, to rejoin the normal community when their sentence ends: on this view, work in prison should aid rehabilitation by preparing inmates for employment outside. On the other hand is the pressure (which, it will be argued below, comes from public and political expectations) to keep more and more offenders securely segregated from the rest of society, and not to spend too much money on them: in this scenario the functions of prisoners' work are control and discipline, and the maintenance of the segregating system. Using up-to-date terms one may say that the tension is between pressures for social inclusion and social exclusion; the pressures themselves have existed for many years.

One may also suggest that the great betterment in prison conditions which has occurred over the 20th century shows a desire that prisoners while serving their sentences should suffer less exclusion than formerly. Though 'social exclusion' is a recent term the acknowledgement that imprisonment entails it is of long standing, and an example can be found in the Prison Commissioners' 1955 Annual Report. Reviewing developments since 1946 they refer (pp. 21-22 of the appendix to their chapter 1) to plans to provide further education 'for the citizen in prison as for the citizen outside', and to their 'wish to counteract the feeling that prisoners are in some way cut out of society by bringing in normal community agencies ... into the prison wherever possible.' Their topic here was prison education, not work, but one might construe in a similar way the attempts made (since at least the 1933 Departmental Committee) to 'normalise' aspects of prison work: the introduction of modern machinery and incentive schemes, the involvement of outside employers, and the growth of vocational courses (pp. 19-22). But in stark contrast to this interpretation is the matter of prisoners' pay, which has always been set far below the level of outside wages. For Hawkins (1983) the issue of prison earnings exemplifies the persisting power of the principle of less eligibility: the idea that prisoners are entitled only to a smaller share of goods than the lowest class of free citizens. In the present context this principle may be equated to the idea of social exclusion.

Points from the Brunel research

Pressures on prisoners and prisons

The Brunel study of prison work, carried out in the wake of the Woolf Report, showed the conflicting pressures clearly. Following Woolf the Prison Service expressed real determination to provide (as resources allowed) constructive regimes for inmates, with work at the core for most. Despite some early lack of clarity over the purposes of prison work (pp. 91-92), the policy statement of mid 1992 set criteria whose order implied that the most important consideration was the extent to which (*except for pay*) prison work was similar to work outside and prepared prisoners for employment on release (p. 94). The Brunel research found that most of the prison workplaces studied were indeed like their outside counterparts in several ways: processes and products,

attention to quality, and some aspects of work organisation. But in other ways - the recruitment of the workforce, working hours and pace, and the scope for workers to exercise skill and responsibility - the requirements of the *prison*, to keep the workers captive, took precedence. And despite the great variety of prison jobs throughout the system nearly half the prison workforce was engaged in domestic tasks, while many others were occupied in traditional types of prison industry (clothing and textiles, unskilled assembly) which were seriously out of balance with employment opportunities outside.

Many prisoners on starting their sentence had hoped for a prison occupation which for them would promote, or sustain, some connection with the outside world of work. But they found instead that prison jobs were more useful in just helping them to cope with the fact of being in prison; they experienced prison work as different from 'proper work'. Both staff and inmates thought the authorities' chief purpose in providing work for prisoners was to support the day-to-day management of the prison system, though they perceived many other purposes too and their responses on this topic suggested some confusion. Vocational training was a more straightforward matter, and the Service's drive for NVQs evinced a commitment to helping some prisoners towards inclusion in the world of normal employment. But inmates' training, like their work, was often hampered by the custodial context: short hours and interruptions, security constraints, and discontinuities as prisoners were moved around. The supply of vocational training did not nearly meet the demand, and the research showed the Service's potential for greater provision (pp. 161-162, 188-191).

So far this section has indicated ways in which prisons were subject to conflicting pressures for social inclusion and social exclusion in their treatment of prisoners. A slightly different aspect of social exclusion is the tendency to think that prison treatment, whatever it may comprise, has nothing to do with life outside: that what takes place within the walls should be kept separate. This was illustrated by much of the pre-release activity offered to some inmates. Often it was available only a short time before release, and little was done to relate it to work or training carried out during the main part of the sentence (p. 168). Prisoners themselves seemed to accept this lack of connection, as many who wanted to get a job after release did nothing towards it while they were inside (pp. 168-169).

A third aspect of pressure for social exclusion, related to the one just mentioned but this time acting on prisons as institutions (in addition to individual prisoners), was illustrated by the uncertainty and separateness of government funding arrangements. The early 1990s saw various schemes whereby local TECs and employers made valuable contributions to prisons' work and training, thereby not only helping inmates towards normal employment but also linking the prisons with the outside community. An outstanding example was the Options For Learning scheme at Channings Wood (pp. 159-161) and there were many others (pp. 193-194). But the short periods for which such schemes were financed, and the prohibition on 'double funding' (p. 161), meant that within a very few years they were likely to stop, which caused frustration to all participants and encouraged the sense that prisons and their activities were separate from the rest of society.

The case for a holistic approach

The follow-up study of released prisoners (Chapter 9) found that although most of them wanted employment their experiences of prison work had very little to do with their chances of getting it. Qualitative analysis of their situations a few months after release suggested that success in jobhunting, or in applying vocational skills learned in prison, rested on a number of factors which were interwoven in complex ways for each individual. Practical matters like the existence of job vacancies, and employers' willingness to consider applicants with a criminal record, were of course important; but so too were less tangible ones such as people's self-image and confidence, energy and commitment to overcoming personal problems. This implies that if prisoners are to be helped towards social inclusion through work, prisons must take a holistic approach in the opportunities they offer inmates during sentence. Work and vocational training by themselves are not enough: there must also be support for social skills, self-understanding and resisting criminal inclinations. Ex-prisoners looking back said they had wanted such help when trying to 'sort their lives out'.

Ideally sentence planning would answer this situation, bringing together prisoners' opportunities for work, vocational training, education, addressing offending behaviour, and other things in an integrated way, and linking them with post-release

provision. But the Service's 1997 sentence planning scheme covered only a minority of prisoners. For others the scheme of employment throughcare suggested by the Brunel research (pp. 195-197) would do much to help, and both it and the wider sentence planning framework incorporate 'what works' principles. The discussion in Chapter 10 indicates how far, given a fair wind, prisons might be able to go in helping their inmates towards social inclusion.

Prisons' constructive efforts in jeopardy

But by the mid 1990s it was clear that the Service's efforts since Woolf to build constructive prison regimes were being jeopardised by the same three troubles which had beset it in previous decades: great preoccupation with security, financial restrictions, and hugely increasing numbers of prisoners (pp. 102-105). Signs of strain were evident at the research prisons in spring 1996, and throughout the system generally things were getting worse. In October 1996 the Chief Inspector wrote, 'The most severe problems facing the Prison Service are shortage of money, and the danger signs that overcrowding, and the associated evil of inactivity, are doing real damage to all the progress that has been made over the past 4-5 years' (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1996: 3). In July 1997 the new Home Secretary (Jack Straw) reported to Parliament on an audit he had requested of Prison Service resources and of the demands on it. The main findings included the following:

- in the three months since the general election on 1 May the prison population rose by the equivalent of the total capacity of four average-sized prisons, and far exceeded previous projections;

- the building programme approved by the previous government was already being outstripped by the rise in population;

- the number of prisoners held two to a cell designed for one had increased by 50% since 1992;

- the level of purposeful activity for prisoners had dropped;

- there was a growing risk of prisons having to close because of inadequate maintenance.

(House of Commons Parliamentary Debates, 25 July 1997: cols 761-762). The Home Secretary announced the allocation of £43 million extra over two years to provide more accommodation for prisoners. Yet the Chief Inspector when reporting on the period April 1996 to November 1997 wrote that despite this extra money budgets for constructive regimes continued to be cut, though finance was available for tightening security. Probation services had been cut, affecting throughcare; education budgets had been cut in almost every prison; work instructor posts had been cut and workshops closed; posts for psychologists, who contribute to offending behaviour programmes, had been cut; drug treatment was seriously under-funded; and there was not enough pre-release provision. 'In sum, while money and attention have been directed at the security part of the mission, the reverse has been true of the rehabilitation' (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1998: 8).

So in the mid 1990s public money for prisons was being concentrated on building them and keeping people securely inside them, and the number of prisoners was soaring. The next section argues that this state of affairs arose from public and political pressure for the social exclusion of offenders.

Public and political pressure to imprison offenders

More and more prisoners

At the end of 1992 the prison population was below 43,000. This was 3,000 less than the average for 1991, the year of the Woolf Report, and the lowest figure since mid 1984. But from spring 1993 the population climbed rapidly, averaging 49,000 in 1994, 51,000 in 1995, 55,000 in 1996, 61,000 in 1997 and 65,000 in 1998.[1] Commenting on the 1993-97 increase the Home Office stated (Home Office 1998c: 6) that the chief factor apparently explaining it was not a change in the number of people prosecuted but a rise, at both magistrates' and Crown Courts, in the proportion who received custodial sentences and an increase, at Crown Courts, in the length of

sentences imposed. That is to say, courts were increasingly using imprisonment as a way of dealing with offenders.

Sentencing and public opinion

There is reason to think that this growth in imprisonment took place with the encouragement of the general public. Little research has been done on how sentencers take public opinion into account when making their decisions[2] but experts have said that they do. A standard text on sentencing states, 'In real life most sentencers admit to having some regard to what they believe to be public opinion' (Walker 1985: 64; Walker and Padfield 1996: 75), and in 1997 the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, said in the course of a lecture entitled The Sentence of the Court, 'I do not consider it would be right, even if it were possible, for judges to ignore the opinion of the public' (Bingham 1997: 19). Ashworth and Hough, discussing the huge attention given by the media (see below) to crime topics in 1993 and the sharp rise that year in the courts' use of custody, said of the latter: 'The most straightforward explanation is that judges and magistrates believed that the climate of opinion was changing, and attempted to reflect it to some degree' (Ashworth and Hough 1996: 783).

Hough and Roberts (1998) have shown that public opinion on crime and sentencing is complex. When asked general questions about judges and magistrates most people say that they are too lenient. But this view is accompanied by considerable ignorance of the real patterns and trends of crime, the sentences available, and courts' actual decisions; and when people are given more information their responses are more discriminating and closer to sentencers' practice. Nevertheless there is evidence that during the decade public attitudes to offenders became more punitive. In 1990 the British Social Attitudes survey found that 48% of respondents agreed with the statement 'The prisons contain too many people who ought to be given a lighter punishment', but by 1994 this proportion had dropped to 28% (Brook and Cape 1995: 198). The International Crime Victimisation Survey found that in England and Wales the proportion of the public favouring imprisonment for a young recidivist burglar increased from 37% in 1992 to 49% in 1996 (Mayhew and van Dijk 1997: 56). So even if many

of the public under-estimated the proportion of offenders who were imprisoned by the courts, they were apparently happy for it to increase as in fact it did.

Political developments

The Home Office graph of the prison population during 1987-97 is accompanied by notes on policy changes and events thought to have influenced it (Home Office 1998c: Figure 1.3, pp. 3, 5-6). While the overall decrease in population from 1988 could be explained by several measures, the sharp drop during the second half of 1992 was associated with the implementation in October of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, which (among other things) restricted in several ways courts' powers to imprison offenders. Events associated with the huge increase in prison population which began in 1993 were: the killing of two-year-old James Bulger in February of that year (an event which, together with the subsequent trial of his killers both aged 11, attracted enormous media reporting and comment); the Criminal Justice Act 1993 (restoring to courts some of the powers they had lost by the 1991 Act); the 27-point 'law and order' speech in 1993 by the Home Secretary (Michael Howard); the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (allowing longer sentences for juveniles and reducing requirements for pre-sentence reports); and, in 1996, the White Paper Protecting the Public (Home Office 1996b) which foreshadowed the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997. At the core of the White Paper were proposals for tougher sentencing, including automatic life sentences for certain serious offenders and mandatory minimum sentences for some others, and it described plans to build more prisons to accommodate the substantial increase in population which it estimated would result (Home Office 1996b: iv, chapter 13).

Downes and Morgan (1997), analysing the politics of 'law and order' since World War II, show that after 1970 the broad cross-party consensus supporting rehabilitative policies for crime control began to dissolve, in the face of continued increases in recorded crime and episodes of public disorder. By the 1980s the Conservative Party had made 'the fight against crime' a major political issue, stressing tough measures and individual responsibility, while the Labour Party, trying not to appear 'soft', was gradually forced to play down its traditional attribution of crime to

economic and social causes. Dunbar and Langdon (1998) have analysed the 1990s in great detail. Among events immediately preceding the 1993 rise in prison population were: increasing public criticism of flaws in some of the sentencing provisions of the CJA 1991; media allegations of a crime wave among juveniles; the Conservative government's economic difficulties and low poll ratings; and Tony Blair's repositioning (in January 1993) of the Labour Party as 'tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime' (Dunbar and Langdon 1998: 96-98, 100-102). From 1993 until the passing of the Crime (Sentences) Act in March 1997, Parliamentary debate was dominated by competition between Conservative and Labour to appear as the party of law and order determined to protect the public, and by Michael Howard's slogan 'Prison works' (Dunbar and Langdon 1998: chapter 10).

Pressure on the sentencers

The Lord Chief Justice, in his lecture of July 1997, said as follows:

'Given the temper of our society in the last five years, I do not find it surprising that the prison population should have increased by 50%, reflecting the more ready resort to custody by sentencers and an increase in the length of sentences imposed. The tenor of political rhetoric has strongly favoured the imposition of severe sentences; this rhetoric has been faithfully reflected in certain sections of the media; and judges accused of passing lenient sentences have found themselves routinely castigated in some newspapers....The increase in the prison population is not explained by any recent increase in sentencing powers, and I have no doubt that it is related to the pressure of public opinion.'

Towards the end of the lecture he spoke of 'the present vengeful mood of the public' (Bingham 1997: 20, 34).

Bottoms (1995: 39-40), discussing the complexity of public opinion, draws a distinction between it and 'populist punitiveness', a term by which he intends 'to convey the notion of politicians tapping into, and using for their own purposes, what they believe to be the public's generally punitive stance'. Odegard (1995: 540) suggests a

'spiral effect of symbolic politics' in which politicians compete with one another to appear tough on crime, thus encouraging further severity in punishment as 'a kind of self-fulfilling expectation'. In the present context, considering the political events of 1993-97 and the Lord Chief Justice's speech as quoted above, it is argued that the increase in the prison population was due to public pressure on the courts for the social exclusion of offenders.

Yet, partly over the same period, there has been a development in the opposite direction: the growing interest in restorative justice, which is examined in the next section.

Restorative justice

Evolution, principles and practice

Martin Wright, who has done much to promote restorative justice in Britain, defines it as 'a form of criminal justice based on reparation', and reparation as 'actions to repair the damage caused by the crime, either materially (at least in part) or symbolically. Usually performed by the offender, in the form of payment or service to the victim, if there is one and the victim wishes it, or to the community, but can include the offender's co-operation in training, counselling or therapy. Reparative actions can also be undertaken by the community' (Wright 1996: iv).

Wright's comprehensive study (1996), which has been drawn on for much of the following account, traces the evolution of the concept of restorative justice. In mediaeval England the victim of a crime often played a prominent part in obtaining redress from the offender, but gradually the state appropriated this role, focusing on prosecution and punishment, and the modern adversarial system gives little space to the victim. In recent decades, however, several developments in various Western countries have given more recognition to victims' interests. These include the provision of some state compensation for victims of violence; the growth of victim support groups through which local communities offer victims practical help and advice; and the

courts' increased use of compensation orders. Community service orders can be seen as a means by which the offender makes indirect reparation to the community.

Largely contemporaneous with these recent developments has been the growth of local mediation services, which spread slowly in Britain in the 1980s. Victim/offender mediation projects can work alongside the courts, trying to resolve matters informally, and they have been supported variously by police, social services, probation services and courts, usually for juvenile offenders and in conjunction with police cautioning, though some schemes also include adults. They were partly inspired by methods of conflict resolution in non-Western cultures, especially the family group conference which grew from Maori tradition in New Zealand and has there become the principal method for dealing with juvenile offenders. (See, for example, McElrea 1994.) Braithwaite and Mugford (1994) have reported how the conference method operates in New Zealand and Australia. In contrast to the formal courtroom where the judge has total control and the offender may be stigmatised and alienated, the conference co-ordinator (mediator) enables the victim, the offender, their families and other interested parties all to speak freely, to examine what happened and why, and to propose a solution. The process generates mutual support and encourages the taking of responsibility. It puts into practice (though it developed independently) Braithwaite's theory of reintegrative shaming (Braithwaite 1989), and Braithwaite and Mugford describe the successful conference as a reintegration ceremony.

Proponents of this kind of approach have come to describe it as 'restorative justice'. They see it as a better alternative to the traditional criminal justice system in that it makes the offender take responsibility for the harm done, gives the victim a rightful place in the process, and encourages the healing of community relationships. In contrast the traditional system focuses on delivering punishment (or perhaps 'treatment' which others may see as 'a let-off'). Wright's study gives very careful consideration to many issues, including: the need to preserve the rights of accused persons who deny offending; to safeguard the interests of victims against powerful offenders (so that they are not 'mediated away'); to protect the public from dangerous people; to clarify the criteria by which schemes are evaluated; and to avoid widening or strengthening the net of social control by the state. Nevertheless Wright is a firm advocate of the approach, and writes:

'The principles of restorative justice may be summed up as: for the victim, support and reparation (with mediation if required); for the offender, reparation to the victim or the community, including co-operating in any needed rehabilitation, with restrictions or detention only if necessary. This would, it is suggested, have an integrative effect on the local community, whose members would have the right and the duty to participate in the process as much as possible' (Wright 1996: 143).

And Bazemore (1998), in a comprehensive review of theories and practice on restorative justice (mainly in USA), observes that it is a collaborative process involving three co-participant groups: crime victims, offenders and the community. Clearly, the principles of restorative justice point in the direction of social inclusion.

Restorative justice is often thought of in connection with offences like burglary or criminal damage. Hudson (1998) discusses the dilemmas posed for its supporters by domestic violence, sexual assaults, child abuse and racial attacks. The incidence of these serious crimes is under-reported and the criminal justice system often fails their victims (for reasons to do with community attitudes, official prejudices, problems of obtaining evidence and so on). To replace formal prosecution and punishment, which symbolise society's disapproval of behaviour, with 'restorative' procedures which might seem 'milder' risks depreciating these victims further instead of giving them due recognition. And such crimes involve the offender's abuse of power over the victim, a relationship where mediation may not produce justice. Nevertheless, says Hudson, Braithwaite's conference model of restorative justice enables full attention to the victim's perspective, it can address the issue of community safety as well as the victim-offender relationship, and reintegrative shaming can be powerful and salutary. Restorative justice could be developed in ways which empower and protect women, children and members of ethnic minorities, and the law could have a formal role as guarantor of rights (including protection of the offender against vengeance). Such developments, says Hudson, would be best supported by a culture of social inclusion.

The practice of restorative justice in Britain has grown very slowly. By the end of 1995 there were nearly 20 victim/offender mediation projects (Wright 1996: 106). By 1997 the conference method was being cautiously promoted for young offenders by

the Thames Valley police, guided by Australian experience, and one of the cases successfully dealt with was that of four youths who had put the staff of a bank in fear of armed robbery (Davies 1997). In September 1998 a joint announcement was made by the Thames Valley Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Probation Services in the Thames Valley and the Prison Service that they would work together in Thames Valley to protect the public using, wherever possible, methods based on the principles of restorative justice. The statement (Thames Valley Police et al. 1998) explained the principles in detail, linking them explicitly with the concept of social inclusion, and gave examples of ways in which each service would try to put them into practice. (For prisons these included, among other things, teaching inmates to understand personal relationships and empathise with victims, and increasing the number who worked in prison for the community.)

The extent to which restorative justice schemes actually achieve social inclusion depends on how they are carried out. Marshall and Merry's early study of mediation projects found a number of problems, but among their conclusions were that the experience 'seems to affect offenders even more than an appearance at court, and affect them in such a way as to increase their sense of responsibility rather than feeling inadequate and rejected', and that although local community members (in the sense of residents) were often not involved, 'there is another sense of community, one not connected with neighbourhood, but connoting the feeling of being fellow citizens, of co-operation, of sharing the same society, of mutual respect and help. This formulation ... corresponds well with the feelings participants in victim/offender mediation appeared to be describing in their accounts (often surprised - if pleasantly - at such developments, which violated the stereotyped expectations parties had of each other)' (Marshall and Merry 1990: 239, 247).

A note on community service orders

How far can community service orders embody principles of restorative justice? According to Marshall and Merry (1990: 245) they were originally envisaged as a restorative measure, but more recently they have been promoted as a tough punishment. Lord Bingham (1997: 33-34) argued that in order to reverse the increasing use of

imprisonment action should be taken to raise the credibility of community service orders in the minds of sentencers and the general public: every order should ensure that the offender carries out a set quantity of rigorous and demanding (but not demeaning) work, so that people see it as a serious punishment and not a soft option. However McIvor (1992), summarising her study of CSOs in Scotland, reported that:

'... offenders found their community service to be more rewarding if they were able to acquire skills during their placement, if they enjoyed a great deal of contact with the beneficiaries of their work, or if they were engaged in work that they could perceive as being of considerable benefit to the recipients';

and

'Offenders whose experiences of community service had been particularly rewarding were less often reconvicted and fewer were reconvicted of offences involving dishonesty, such as burglaries and thefts. The quality of community service appears to have been most significant for certain offenders who had perhaps had less opportunity than others to make a valued contribution to their communities in the past.'

(McIvor 1992: 88, 173) Thus a CSO at its best may give the offender positive feelings of being included among other citizens, and perhaps even offer new experiences tending to compensate for previous exclusionary ones linked with the offending.

Restorative justice and public opinion

What public support is there for methods based on the principles of restorative justice? In 1987 Wright summarised the findings of numerous surveys carried out during the 1980s and concluded that there was quite a lot. 'What these surveys show ... is that many members of the public, including victims, are ready to shift the whole basis of the debate ... a substantial number of people are beginning to say "use reparative sanctions instead of punishment." ...Perhaps it is time for courts to move towards a restorative sentencing philosophy' (Wright 1987: 107). Since then restorative

219

methods have been further developed, but also, as has been seen, after the early 1990s public opinion on the use of imprisonment became harsher.

Yet some of the findings by Hough and Roberts (1998) on the complexity of public attitudes give grounds for cautious hope that harshness might be lessened. Among respondents to the 1996 British Crime Survey, community service was the non-custodial penalty most widely known (69% being aware of it). Asked to choose among methods of reducing prison overcrowding, the majority (56%) chose 'find new ways to punish offenders that are less expensive than prison but tougher than probation' (Hough and Roberts 1998: 12, 35). When respondents were asked to choose (from six options) the most effective way of preventing crime, the largest number (36%) selected 'increase discipline in the family', while the next most frequent response (given by 25%) was 'reduce levels of unemployment'. 'Make sentences tougher' attracted 20%, while the other options were far less popular. Commenting on these figures the authors say, 'Thus even though most people believe that lenient sentencing is a major cause of increasing crime rates, the public has a broad, multidimensional view of crime prevention, one which does not place exclusive or even primary emphasis on harsher sentencing' (Hough and Roberts 1998: 33).

These results suggest that, given sufficient time, appropriate government policy on crime and related matters might succeed in altering the climate of public opinion so that there was less pressure to send offenders to prison, and reducing the prison population became politically acceptable. And if the numbers in prison were reduced, the Prison Service (provided it received the necessary resources) would have the scope it lacked in 1997 to resume and accelerate progress in constructive regimes, which in regard to work and training could alleviate the social exclusion of prisoners themselves as discussed in Chapter 10. With these thoughts in mind, attention is now turned to two major developments which followed the 1997 general election: the Comprehensive Spending Review and the Crime and Disorder Act.

The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)

The CSR was set in train by the new Labour government very soon after taking office in May 1997, and the results were presented to Parliament by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in July 1998. The CSR set out agreed spending plans for each government department for the three-year period 1999-2002, enabling departments to plan ahead for much longer than had the annual Public Expenditure Surveys which the CSR replaced. For each department there was an agreed statement of policy directions, aims and objectives, and these were summarised by the CSR White Paper Modern Public Services for Britain: Investing in Reform (HM Treasury 1998a) and an accompanying booklet (HM Treasury 1998b). Preceding the departmental statements the White Paper summarised overall policy for attaining the government's three key objectives ('sustainable growth and employment, fairness and opportunity, and efficient and modern public services'), and recurrent in much of this text, as well as in later sections, was the theme of reducing social exclusion.

The criminal justice system

In addition to a statement for each department the CSR included three 'cross-cutting reviews' covering the work of several, one of which was for the criminal justice system. In introducing it the White Paper said:

'The Government will improve the performance of the Criminal Justice System by: investing in an evidence-based crime reduction strategy; setting clear objectives and targets for the system as a whole; and introducing new arrangements for joint strategic planning and performance management.'

Two 'overarching and unifying' aims were set for the system:

'To reduce crime and the fear of crime, and their social and economic costs; and

To dispense justice fairly and efficiently, and to promote confidence in the rule of law'

(HM Treasury 1998a: 57, 59). Thus these plans addressed the issue of public confidence, and also the concern of the Woolf Report (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 20) for better co-ordination between the various parts of the system including the Prison Service.

The Home Office

The CSR established a single purpose for the Home Office:

'To build a safe, just and tolerant society, in which the rights and responsibilities of individuals, families and communities are properly balanced and the protection and security of the public are maintained'

(HM Treasury 1998a: 60). The White Paper (chapter 11 and elsewhere) showed how the Home Office aimed to 'help deliver the Government's commitment to be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime', and also how the causes of crime would be addressed by wider government policies to relieve social deprivation.

Seven objectives were stated for the Home Office, of which the first was 'reduction in crime, particularly youth crime, and in fear of crime; and the maintenance of public safety and good order' (HM Treasury 1998b: 8). Much of the activity associated with this objective was reflected in the Crime and Disorder Act, discussed in the next section below. Alongside it was a three-year programme of projects for reducing crime, which was based on findings from a major review of research (Goldblatt and Lewis (eds.) 1998) specially carried out for the CSR. The crime reduction programme included several large initiatives (for example, tackling 500 domestic burglary 'hot spots'); it began in 1999 and was to be co-ordinated with the work of other government departments (Home Office 1999).

Thus the CSR programme for the Home Office, like the plans for the criminal justice system (of which the Home Office of course was a part), aimed at reducing crime and increasing public feelings of confidence and safety.

More resources for the Prison Service

Early in 1998 the Home Secretary (Jack Straw) had added £112 million to the Prison Service budget for 1998-99 to provide more places for prisoners. But the CSR settlement in July provided a further £660 million over three years, of which £51 million was for dealing with juvenile prisoners, £76 million was for the prisons' drugs strategy, and £79 million was earmarked for constructive regimes. Announcing this to his staff the Director General said, 'I believe we have a better prospect ahead of us than for some time - the chance to make a really big step forward on providing constructive and effective regimes, greater certainty in planning than for some years, and more realism on efficiency...' (HM Prison Service 1998a). The CSR thus gave the Prison Service hope of resuming progress, and some of the subsequent developments in regimes will be discussed towards the end of this chapter.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998

In July 1997 Jack Straw made a statement to Parliament (House of Commons Parliamentary Debates, 30 July 1997: cols. 341-344) introducing proposals for changes in the criminal justice system, many of which eventually became part of the Crime and Disorder Act. He prefaced his speech by saying, 'My overriding priority is to secure the safety of the public.' The next few months saw the publication of several consultation papers and a White Paper (No More Excuses - A New Approach to Tackling Youth Crime in England and Wales: Home Office 1997a), followed by the Crime and Disorder Bill in December. These prompted a great deal of public discussion and debate, which continued until the Act was passed in July 1998.

Several themes are discernible in the Act (not all of whose provisions will be mentioned here). Local authorities, the police and the courts (variously) have new

powers to deal with young children who are out of control (e.g. the local child curfew, the child safety order). Police cautions are replaced by a more stringent procedure (reprimand and final warning). Prosecutions of young offenders will be speeded up. Courts have new community sentences available for young offenders (e.g. the action plan order) as well as for older ones (e.g. the drug treatment and testing order). Courts may make new preventive orders in the interests of public protection (the anti-social behaviour order, the sex offender order).

As well as providing such measures, many of which can fairly be described as tough, much of the Act is directed at strengthening community links and promoting safety by requiring local people to work together to tackle their crime problems. Local authorities and the police must draw up, publish and implement a three-year strategy for reducing crime and disorder in their district, and probation and health authorities must co-operate with them. The theme of local co-operation is clearly seen in the Act's overhaul of the youth justice system, whose principal purpose the Act establishes as the prevention of offending by children and young people. Local authorities with responsibility for social services and education must ensure the availability of appropriate services for youth justice, and police, probation and health authorities must help them do so. Other local people and organisations may partake in these arrangements. Thus elected councils are given significant power, and the duty to ensure that other relevant bodies are brought together in pursuit of clear aims. The youth justice system is to be overseen by a new national body, the Youth Justice Board, on behalf of the Home Secretary. Clearly this new structure moves away from the 'market project' and towards the 'solidarity project' discussed by Pitts and Hope (1997) - see pp. 8-9. It could be seen as moving towards social inclusion.

Moreover, the Act and its preceding White Paper contain hints towards restorative justice. A court may order a young offender to make reparation to his or her victim (or to the community at large): the reparation may be an apology or up to 24 hours' work, with the victim's consent. Chapter 9 of No More Excuses sets out proposals for further reform of the youth justice system, including new measures which would make 'a step change in the culture of the youth court' and would 'build on principles underlying the concept of restorative justice: restoration...reintegration...and responsibility' (Home Office 1997a: 31-32). This is a clear signal by the government

of support for restorative justice, and in principle there is no reason why in due course the proposed new measures should not be extended to older offenders.

It was planned that many sections of the Crime and Disorder Act would be implemented gradually between 1998 and 2000, following pilot testing (Home Office 1998b). At a series of three conferences on the Act, held in autumn 1998 and attended by nearly 300 delegates of whom the overwhelming majority were practitioners, there was plenty of lively criticism but the prevailing mood was one of intense interest and determination to make the Act work.[3]

Prospects for easing pressure on the prisons

One would hope that in due course the Labour government's wider policies (not just those for the criminal justice system) aimed at diminishing social exclusion would succeed in reducing crime and public anxiety, so that it became politically acceptable for courts to use imprisonment much less. But this will take some time and the problems are substantial. In November 1998 Chris Mullin, chair of the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee which had been considering alternatives to prison sentences (see below), spoke[4] of the attractiveness to many people of the slogan 'prison works'. In poor inner-city areas, where since the 1980s unskilled employment for men had vanished, young criminals now made residents' lives a misery ('in parts of my constituency, civilised life has collapsed'), and against some offenders existing sanctions were ineffective. This was not a matter for criminal justice measures alone: young people had to be given a stake in society by education, training and ultimately work, and families had to be helped so that the new generation of children would be diverted from crime. 'There is no magic solution. All we can do is hope to reverse trends that have been set in place over a long time.' The need for an integrated and long-term strategy was also stated by Goldblatt and Lewis (1998: 135) in regard to effective crime reduction, though some initiatives, like the targeted burglary project, might bear fruit sooner.

The Home Affairs Committee, sitting at the same time as the debate on the Crime and Disorder Bill, deliberated on ways of reducing the prison population. In

their report <u>Alternatives to Prison Sentences</u> (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 1998), published at the same time as the Act was passed, they welcomed many of the Act's provisions and stressed the need for community sentences to be properly evaluated so that sentencers and the public would have faith in those proved to be effective. The government's reply to the Committee's report (Home Office 1998a) concluded by saying: 'The Government intends that sentencers and the public should regard community sentences as tough and effective punishments for many offences and that prison is used only where necessary.'

Thus the first year or so of the new government saw much energy devoted to measures which might in time ease pressure on the prison system. At this point it is interesting to note that in the mid 1990s, i.e. *before* the general election, there were indications that the crime rate, which had risen almost continuously since the 1950s, might be beginning to fall. A report on the 1998 British Crime Survey showed that crime recorded by the police, after peaking in 1993, fell in 1995 and again in 1997; while crime reported to BCS interviewers peaked in 1995 and then fell in 1997. So for 1995-97 both measures suggested a drop in crime (Mirrlees-Black et al. 1998: 23). Moreover, the 1998 BCS also found signs that in that year people were less worried about becoming a victim of crime than they had been two years earlier (Mirrlees-Black and Allan 1998). Whatever the explanation for these changes, they perhaps suggest a slightly more favourable atmosphere for the introduction of the new government's policies.

Whether sentencers will use prison less than they did before, only time will tell (see below). Some critics (e.g. Pitts 1999) have suggested that some measures in the Crime and Disorder Act may widen the net of the criminal justice system, eventually resulting in *more* people going into custody: it remains to be seen whether this happens. Meanwhile attention is now turned to two other government measures likely to affect the size of the prison population.

The first is home detention curfew, provided under the Crime and Disorder Act and implemented in January 1999. Prisoners serving sentences of between three months and less than four years may (if assessed as suitable risks) be released up to two months earlier than they would otherwise have been, subject to a curfew monitored by

electronic tag. The Home Office estimated that about 4,000 prisoners would be out on curfew at any one time (Duffin 1999) and that by the end of March 1999 the prison population would have been reduced by that number (White et al. 1999: 7), but in mid 1999 it seemed that prison governors were being cautious and releasing only about half as many.[5]

The second point is that parts of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997, framed by the previous government but largely endorsed by the new Labour one (and mentioned again on p. 234), are expected to *increase* the prison population. In October 1997 the provisions for an automatic life sentence for a second serious sexual or violent offence, and for a minimum of seven years for third-time drug trafficking, were implemented. In January 1999 Jack Straw announced that the provision for a minimum of three years for third-time domestic burglary would be implemented in December. It was forecast that these measures together would add about 4,000 to the prison population over a period of ten years (White et al. 1999: 7).

Allowing for these and other factors, it was estimated (White et al. 1999: 1) that the prison population would drop in 1999, but thereafter would slowly rise and reach 66,700 in 2006 - *if* the courts' use of custody remained constant at 1998 levels. (Of course if custody use were to increase, as happened during 1992-97, the rise would be greater.) Sixty-six thousand seven hundred is still a great many prisoners, even if by 2006 they are not overcrowded. One would hope that well before then the sentencing climate would have changed so as to produce instead a substantial decrease in their numbers. A much smaller prison population, together with the provision of adequate money for constructive prison regimes, would be necessary conditions for the Prison Service to succeed with substantial rehabilitative measures to help prisoners towards social inclusion. Meanwhile, with the population hovering around 65,000 (in mid 1999), the next section looks at some developments in prison regimes during 1998-99, especially in regard to work.

Some developments in prisons, 1998-99

The fourth CSR objective stated for the Home Office (HM Treasury 1998b: 8) was: 'Effective execution of the sentences of the courts, so as to reduce reoffending and protect the public.' This became known as Home Office Aim 4, and it led to the setting of two objectives for the Prison Service:

'To protect the public by holding those committed by the courts in a safe, decent, and healthy environment;

To reduce crime by providing constructive regimes which address offending behaviour, improve educational and work skills and promote law abiding behaviour in custody and after release'

(HM Prison Service 1999a: 8). The statement of purpose (see p. 27) remained in place. In July 1998 Jack Straw in an address entitled 'Making Prisons Work'[6] outlined a range of measures by which the Service was now re-focussing attention on constructive regimes. To convey an idea of the new spirit, three of them will now be briefly described: Welfare to Work, the drive to improve prisoners' education, and the Purposeful Activity Expansion Scheme.[7]

Welfare to Work

This project in prisons actually pre-dated the CSR, being funded early in 1998 under the government's New Deal training and work scheme for unemployed people. The prisons project, as described by Woolfenden (1998), was a programme to make links with the New Deal for prisoners aged 18-24 who were three months from release. It comprised five main components: (1) an initial assessment of the individual's needs and aptitudes, including a psychometric assessment, leading to an action plan (fitted into the sentence plan); (2) an eight-week 'Into Work' course imparting basic skills applicable to a range of jobs, and inter-personal skills; (3) a cognitive skills course (for selected participants) aimed at addressing offending behaviour and improving self-sufficiency, confidence and working relationships; (4) advice on local job opportunities

228

and jobsearch; and (5) liaison with employment and probation services to enable the participant when released to keep up momentum and move straight into the New Deal. For most participants the programme occupied about 15 hours a week, and it was delivered mainly by prisons' education departments together with external agencies. During 1998-99 it was piloted at 11 prisons, involving up to 2,500 inmates during 12 months, and a careful evaluation was planned.

A drive for education

In its <u>Corporate Plan 1999-2000 to 2001-2002</u> the Prison Service stated: 'Over half of all prisoners have such poor literacy and numeracy skills that they are excluded from almost all jobs' (HM Prison Service 1999a: 23). This conclusion had arisen from comparing the results of surveys by prisons' education staff with a national report (Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit 1993) showing the levels of basic skills required for different jobs. Following this discovery Prison Service HQ in 1998 framed a new policy for prison education (HM Prison Service 1998b). It included a drive to raise inmates' basic skills, aiming to achieve, by 2001-2002, a reduction of 15% in the proportion of prisoners who at release were at level 1 or below in literacy and numeracy (HM Prison Service 1999a: 25). Among its various measures were: the intention to assess all new prisoners' education levels at the beginning of their sentence; a training scheme (beginning in 1998) for work instructors to qualify to teach basic skills; and a requirement that (by December 1999) every prison's education contractor should have a master plan linking outside organisations (such as TECs and training agencies) into throughcare arrangements, so that (for adult prisoners sentenced to over a year, and most young offenders) individuals' sentence plans would include a discharge plan helping them on release into employment, training or further education.

As well as basic literacy and numeracy the Service's core curriculum for education already included six key skills which the National Council for Vocational Qualifications had identified as fundamental to all NVQs (communication, application of number, problem solving, information technology, personal development, and working with other people). By 1998 many prisoners who needed education were being released from work to attend day classes part-time, and it was envisaged that education

staff could provide 'drop-in centres' where workers could seek help with particular problems. Also, in 1997 Education Services at HQ developed a nationally accredited course named 'Generic Preparation for Work' which all prisons were required to be running for new inmates from April 2000. This course, lasting 30 hours, aims to impart an understanding of many basic work requirements, of which some (like security rules and pay routines) are geared to prison workshops but many others (e.g. health and safety, team work, attention to high quality) apply to outside employment also.

The Purposeful Activity Expansion Scheme (PAES)

This scheme, which grew out of an earlier one focusing on prison workshops, had as its stated aim: 'To increase the level of purposeful activity, within a fully integrated regime, maximising opportunities to reduce the risk of re-offending' (HM Prison Service 1999b: 5). Its objectives were summarised as follows:[8]

'Increase purposeful activity to 30 hours per prisoner per week;

Offer meaningful training and work by maximising employment places, workplace hours (31-35), productivity, qualifications;

Increase delivery of basic and key skills in education;

Maximise delivery of purposeful accredited PE programmes;

Deliver more accredited offending behaviour programmes;

Increase assistance in planning accommodation and employment on release.'

The scheme's principles were stated thus (HM Prison Service 1999b: 6):

'To maximise the potential of an increasing range of activities to contribute to reducing the risk of re-offending;

An increasing amount of purposeful activity should accord as closely as possible with What Works criteria;

A commitment to evaluating or demonstrating effectiveness;

Maintaining a balanced and integrated regime;

Maximising the use of resources and achieving value for money.'

The PAES began early in 1999 with pilots in eight prisons (including three locals, one Category B, three Category C, and one YOI). The intention was that each of these, with a great deal of support, explanation and guidance from HQ, should develop its own version of the scheme so that lessons could be learned and best practice eventually spread. The guidance stressed, among other things, the importance of assessing prisoners' needs and assigning them to activities accordingly, and effective sentence planning which involved all disciplines and activities. The 'what works' principles were set out in detail in the PAES 'workbook' (HM Prison Service 1999b) for use by all participating staff.

In view of the Brunel research findings, especially as discussed in Chapter 10, the PAES guidance on work is particularly interesting and is reproduced below in full (HM Prison Service 1999b: 8).

PAES guidance on prison work

'Where possible work should:

- have a primary purpose of preparation for work on release;

- match prison jobs to outside labour markets;

- provide access to skills training and opportunity to gain formal generic or specific work related qualifications;

231

- give prisoners scope for exercising responsibility;

- be realistic, in terms of: hours of attendance; production processes/technology; interaction with others (supervisors/workmates); incentives for good work/penalties for poor performance; production, comparable to that found in outside industry in terms of quality of product, price, pace of work, methods of work;

- be suitable for the requirements and aptitude of the establishment population;

- recognise the importance of contributing to the upkeep of the prison or the Prison Service;

- involve the generation of earnings which the prisoner can use: for upkeep of his or her family; to pay compensation to the victim of his or her offence; for enhancing self-esteem and behaviour within the prison setting;

- be supported by a resettlement/throughcare network involving prisoners, work instructors, other prison and probation staff, and key outside agencies, and link prisoners' work experiences to those they might experience outside.'

Comments

The three developments outlined above by no means include all the Service's current activity to improve regimes. Omitted, for example, are the work of the separate HQ policy groups on regimes for women and for juveniles, the expansion of accredited offending behaviour programmes, increased provision of drugs treatment, and a pilot scheme to address better the needs of prisoners with sentences too short for sentence planning. But they are enough to show some of the directions in which the Service is trying to move, and a few comments are now in order.

Welfare to Work appears to offer participating inmates very much more than did the general run of pre-release courses (pp. 165-166). The Prison Service said it was

based on 'what works' (Woolfenden 1998: 21), and certainly it would appear to address many of the points emerging from the Brunel research (p. 200). One's chief criticisms of it would be that, like other pre-release programmes, it still focuses on the period shortly before the prisoner's release instead of involving the whole sentence, and that little mention is made of prison work instructors.

Education policy is now heavily weighted towards increasing prisoners' basic employability. This is all to the good, as is the emphasis on joint working between teachers and work instructors (and other staff). But it is not clear that vocational training leading to NVQs is receiving any more attention than in 1995-96 (see p. 157), or that adult inmates who are not participants in Welfare to Work or the PAES have any better chance of being offered vocational guidance than was the case three years ago.

The PAES is a hopeful development, as yet in its early stages. The inclusion among its eight pilot establishments of three local prisons should be a good test of the scheme's ability to withstand population pressures, which are usually greatest at locals. The target of 30 hours a week of purposeful activity (to be achieved over the three-year CSR period) is clearly higher than the target for the whole system of 24 hours for 1998-99, and the 23.3 hours actually achieved in 1997-98 (HM Prison Service 1999a: 37); even so one may remark that 30 hours a week is only six hours a day Monday to Friday, which leaves plenty of room for further improvement.

The PAES guidance on prison work echoes a good many of the criteria for judging work which the Service set in 1992 (pp. 93-94). But it also moves significantly towards some of the Brunel recommendations in Chapter 10. Work should have a primary purpose of preparing the prisoner for employment on release; prison jobs should be matched to outside labour markets; prison workers should be given scope to exercise responsibility; and a throughcare network involving work instructors and other people should link inmates' work with employment outside: all these things should be done 'where possible'.

Throughout the PAES guidance is the theme of co-ordination between all disciplines and activities within the prison so that the inmate has an integrated

experience focused on his or her criminogenic needs, whether they be for basic education, work training, offending behaviour programmes, or several such things. And prison managers are exhorted to co-ordinate their pay structures and incentive schemes with such provision so that prisoners are not discouraged from taking up the activities they need. All this sits well with the Brunel recommendation for a holistic approach (p. 209). But another concern from the Brunel research, for continuity and co-ordination of regimes between prisons, finds little expression in the PAES. (Admittedly, the PAES at present involves only eight prisons scattered over the country.) The development of community prisons catering for different groups of prisoners, or of regional clusters with the same purpose, as envisaged by Woolf (Woolf and Tumim 1991: 24-25) and the Inspectorate (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1993: 86-87) has made very little progress (though in some areas governors of neighbouring establishments try to approach it). Substantial moves in this direction are unlikely as long as the prison population remains near its present high level.

And it should be noted that in mid 1999 the general picture of kinds of prison work (in so far as it was obtainable from PES industry statistics) was not substantially different from that shown in Table 1 (p. 110), despite the development of some new industries employing small numbers of prisoners. The largest industrial group was still clothing and textiles, at least 52 prisons having such workshops, and the next largest was contract services (51 prisons) where nearly all the work was still unskilled; these two groups between them provided 59% of the PES employment places. Moreover, although some prisons' pay schemes allowed some individuals to earn over £30 a week (mainly in kitchens and contract workshops), the average pay throughout the Service was still less than £8 and there was no intention of a general move towards 'real wages'. These two important facts show that, despite the good intentions demonstrated by the PAES and the other regime developments discussed here, the Service in 1999 has still a very long way to go.

Finally in this section one may comment that the wide variation in regime provision between prisons, even between establishments of the same type, which the Inspectorate observed six years ago (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 1993) continues. The Service's Annual Report for 1998-99 shows, for example (on p. 73) that over the 33 Category C prisons the average weekly hours of purposeful activity ranged between

18.0 (at Mount) and 50.1 (at Kirklevington). (For the two prisons which had participated in the Brunel research, Channings Wood and Highpoint, the figures were 30.5 and 23.2 respectively.) While such differences probably have several explanations they suggest that governors' freedom to run their own establishments, encouraged in some respects by Woolf (Woolf and Tumim 1991: paras. 12.74, 12.79, 14.145-14.148) may have drawbacks as well as advantages, and that there are limits to the improvement that HQ can achieve by persuasion from the centre.

In conclusion

The developments outlined and discussed on pp. 228-234 are signs that the Prison Service is renewing efforts towards rehabilitation (while nevertheless not relaxing the strong grip on security which has been such a feature of recent years). The use of programmes well based on research evidence, together with pilot testing and evaluation, gives more hope of positive results than did the 'treatment and training' rhetoric of earlier decades which ended in disillusion. And if in due time the government's encouragement of restorative justice, and its wider policies to reduce social deprivation, bear fruit, the public mood may become more comfortable and generous, and more willing for money to be spent on prisons in ways which could help to reduce the social exclusion of their inmates.

But there are also several examples of tendencies and pressures in the opposite direction. First, one may observe that the Welfare to Work initiative, welcome though it is, is still a pre-release measure which concentrates on the latter stages of an offender's sentence and does not pretend to address more fundamental and long-term work and training needs. Second, a message that what happens in prison before the pre-release period is separate and irrelevant, is inherent in a document published by the Department for Education and Employment in 1998. This has the impressive title National Framework Document to assist in the development of local agreements between the Prison Service, Probation Services, Training and Enterprise Councils, Benefits Agency and the Employment Service to improve the employment prospects of offenders, and it is endorsed by all the bodies mentioned. At first sight one would expect it to include ways in which these bodies could work together to improve

prisoners' work and training, but instead it is all about how people under probation supervision, including *ex*-prisoners, can be helped to claim DSS benefit (the Jobseekers Allowance) and look for jobs or training once they are released. There is practically no hint of any connection with what goes on inside the prison.

Third, as discussed on p. 227, the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997 acts to *increase* the exclusion of some offenders; it is a 'tough' measure imitating US 'three strikes and you're out' laws. And lastly there is the government's intention, announced in December 1998, to implement Part V of the Police Act 1997 which will enable any employer to obtain the criminal record of anyone who applies to them for a job. (See <u>Safer Society</u> no. 2, 1999: 6.) One would agree that for certain kinds of employment, such as child care, the protection of vulnerable persons justifies machinery for excluding certain kinds of applicants. But to give all employers carte blanche to demand a criminal record certificate from any job applicant[9] is tantamount to inviting them to exclude all ex-offenders from jobs. It is in direct opposition to the efforts of prisons and other agencies at rehabilitation, and can only be regarded as destructive. This measure and the implementation of the Crime (Sentences) Act are prime examples of how the present government, concerned to reduce social exclusion in many respects, is acting to increase it in other ways which impinge on the treatment of offenders. Thus the conflicting pressures still operate.

And even if, in some ideal and distant future, prisons achieved much more for their inmates than they do now, there would remain a point beyond which they could not go. Imprisonment *necessarily* entails social exclusion, being a procedure which consists in removing the offender from society. David Garland, discussing punishment, points out (Garland 1990: 288-289) that imprisonment pursues several objectives at once, including the control of crime through reformation and deterrence, the containment of troublesome individuals, the incapacitation of dangerous ones, and retribution in a form acceptable to modern sensibilities. In addition to its instrumental functions imprisonment is an expression of society's values, of attitudes towards deviance. At the present time, bearing in mind the huge numbers of people now imprisoned, one may pay heed to Coyle's reminder that prisons continue the tradition of exile (Coyle 1994: 129), and to Rutherford's telling phrase 'the pull towards elimination' (Rutherford 1997: 132).

236

The present writer's view is that prison should be available as a sanction of last resort, and mainly for the small number of offenders who are dangerous and cannot be controlled in any other way. The Brunel study focussed on work, not other aspects of prison life, but the researchers were left in little doubt that for most people a prison sentence is, overall, an unpleasant experience. Prisons are very complex (and expensive) institutions; and despite the Prison Service's efforts to improve regimes (efforts which should continue, and have a long way to go) imprisonment will probably remain, in the words of King and McDermott (1995: 283), 'a massive process of social de-skilling.' It should therefore be used as little as possible.

Garland says of punishment:

'...however necessary it sometimes is, and however useful in certain respects, punishment is always beset by irresolvable tensions. However well it is organised, and however humanely administered, punishment is inescapably marked by moral contradiction and unwanted irony...' (Garland 1990: 292).

It is but a short step from there to speaking of the tension between social exclusion and social inclusion. The Brunel study, and the discussion of it in this thesis, have shown that the tension between the pressures for exclusion and inclusion is well illustrated by the issues surrounding prison work.

Notes to Chapter 11

1. Figures are stated to the nearest 1,000. Those up to 1997 are taken from <u>Prison Statistics England and Wales 1992</u> (Home Office 1994), Figure 1.2 and Table 1.5, and from the corresponding publication for 1997 (Home Office 1998c), Figure 1.3 and Table 1.4. The figure for 1998 was supplied by the Home Office. References to end 1992 and mid 1984 are to the seasonally adjusted figures.

2. For discussion of this point in regard to the Oxford pilot study of judges (Ashworth et al. 1984) see Ashworth and Hough 1996: 783.

3. Conferences 'Crime and Disorder Act: implications for policy and practice', held on 19 November, 26 November and 3 December 1998, by the Scarman Centre for the Study of Public Order, University of Leicester.

4. In an address 'Reintegrating a Lost Generation, Diverting the New Generation' to the annual general meeting of NACRO on 10 November 1998, and published in 1999 (Safer Society 2: 2-4).

5. At 23 July 1999 the number of prisoners under home detention curfew was 2,106, a similar figure to those for preceding months. The population in prison on that day was 65,544, a decrease of 809 from the corresponding day in 1998 (www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/statistics, 14 August 1999).

6. Annual lecture to the Prison Reform Trust, and published in Prison Report 45: 20-21.

7. Besides the cited sources, these descriptions use information supplied by Prison Service HQ in discussions with the writer in July and August 1999.

8. This summary is taken from HQ's small descriptive card promoting the PAES.

9. A certificate, moreover, for which the applicant will have to *pay*, the fee being estimated at £10.

APPENDIX 1

PRISONERS' COMMITMENT TO WORK

(See p. 128. This material from the Brunel study has not been previously reported.)

Early in the prison interview inmates were asked what importance they attached to work (ordinary legitimate work outside prison) and why. The researchers assessed their replies in the light of other things they said about their work histories, including experiences of unemployment and efforts to find a job. From this information the researchers placed each respondent on a 5-point scale of commitment to work. This was an untested and over-simplified measure, but was nonetheless thought to be useful, and 164 inmates were so placed. Table A1.1 shows the distribution.

Table A1.1: Prisoners' commitment to work

Scale point	Inmates rated	
	n	%
1. Strong commitment	74	45
2. Fairly strong commitment	42	26
3. Some willingness, but not keen	24	15
4. Little interest	13	8
5. No interest	11	7
Total	164	(101)

The following remarks made by three people who were placed respectively at points 1, 3 and 5 on the scale give some indication of its flavour.

R510 (point 1): 'If I can get work I will. No matter what the work is I'll do it....I don't like lazing about.'

R586 (point 3): 'I don't think work's important. If society was a bit more generous you wouldn't have to work so much.'

R667 (point 5): 'I can't see the point of working for £250 a week when I can earn that in a day ducking and diving. People who work normally end up as cabbages....it's existing, not life or living.'

Despite what the case of R667 might suggest, work and crime were not necessarily alternatives. Some people were in prison for non-acquisitive offences quite unrelated to the question of work; others had earned their living by work but at the same time were not averse to some acquisitive crime when opportunity arose (e.g. buying stolen goods peddled at building sites); others again said they would prefer to work if a job with reasonable pay were available, but if not they would steal or burgle 'because you can't live on the dole'. People's criminal histories and motivations for offending were quite complex.

Table A1.1 shows that nearly 71% of the sample were judged to have a strong or fairly strong commitment to work. Positive statistical correlations were found between the commitment scale and the following: the respondent's level of occupational skill; steadiness of work record, as measured by the duration of the longest job ever held; and whether the respondent had been mainly employed, unemployed or in some other state during the 12 months preceding the current sentence. These correlations were to be expected. Indeed in some cases the researcher allowed steadiness of work record to influence the judgement about commitment, while being aware of the statistical objection to doing so and of the fact that people who simply could not find a job during the 1990s recession could very well become discouraged from trying. The commitment scale was a flawed instrument.

However, what was most interesting was the high level of commitment to work found among some of the most disadvantaged respondents. Points 1 or 2 on the scale were allotted to 44% of the unskilled (who comprised 20% of the whole sample), 33% of people who had never had a job lasting as much as a year (22% of sample), and 49% of those who had been mainly unemployed during the 12 months before being sent to prison (41% of sample). Altogether the evidence was that the 164 prisoners were, on the whole, highly committed to work even though many of them had had severe difficulties in getting it.

Length of criminal record, as measured by the number of previous convictions and number of previous custodial sentences, was negatively correlated with the commitment scale as might be expected. Nonetheless 58% of people with at least five previous convictions (who comprised 56% of the whole sample), and 49% of those with at least three previous custodial sentences (37% of sample), were placed at points 1 or 2 of the scale. Age showed no relationship with commitment to work.

Towards the end of the prison interview 101 people who were within three months of release were asked what things could help them avoid serious crime in future (see p. 129). For this subset of cases the distribution of the commitment scale, and its correlations with other variables, were very similar to those for the whole sample of 164.

APPENDIX 2

PERCEPTIONS BY STAFF AND PRISONERS OF THE AIMS AND PURPOSES OF PRISON WORK

(See pp. 66-67, 70, 138-141)

Table A2.1: Staff perceptions of official reasons for providing inmates with work in prison

Reason	% rating reason as very important or fairly important to Prison Service HQ (N= 81-97)
To give inmates time out of cell, something to do	88
To keep them busy, stop them causing trouble	86
To give them skills which could help them get a job after release	80
To train them in work habits which could help them get a job after release	79
To help keep the prison running	78
To inculcate the work ethic, encourage inmates to respect legitimate work	71
Prisoners, like other people, ought to work as a contribution to society	70
Because work builds character	62
To give them the opportunity to earn money	61
As a commercial enterprise, to offset the costs of the prison system	60
To encourage them to contribute to the community life of the prison	59
They've always done it, so they just go on	44
To provide or maintain jobs for the staff	20
To punish inmates, because prison work is punishment	6

Table A2.2: Staff views of what would be good reasons for providing inmates with work in prison

Reason	% rating reason as very good or fairly good (N= 82-96)
To train inmates in work habits which could help them get a job after release	95
To give them skills which could help them get a job after release	94
To give them time out of cell, something to do	92
To inculcate the work ethic, encourage inmates to respect legitimate work	87
To give them the opportunity to earn money	84
To encourage them to contribute to the community life of the prison	79
To keep them busy, stop them causing trouble	78
Because work builds character	76
Prisoners, like other people, ought to work as a contribution to society	72
To provide positive activity for its own sake	72
To help keep the prison running	62
As a commercial enterprise, to offset the costs of the prison system	53
To provide or maintain jobs for the staff	16
To punish inmates, because prison work is punishment	2

Table A2.3: Inmates' reasons for working in prison, as stated by themselves

Reason	% rating reason as very important or fairly important (N=122-134)
To get through my sentence without trouble, as soon as possible	92
Something to do, to pass the time	84
Opportunity to get out of cell	81
To get a little bit of money	73
Interesting activity, helps to take my mind off prison	69
Opportunity to mix with other people, chat	60
To work off excess mental energy	59
I feel I ought to work, like other people in society	58
To comply with prison regulations	54
Learning or using work skills which might help me to get a job after release	52
Some prison jobs have good perks	47
To contribute to the community life of the prison	46
Getting work habits which might help me to get a job after release	45
To get a good parole report	42
I only work because the authorities make me	27
Working makes me feel less guilty about my crime	10

Table A2.4: Staff perceptions of inmates' reasons for working in prison

Reason	% of staff rating reason as very important or fairly important to inmates (N=84-95)
To get a little bit of money	94
Something to do, to pass the time	92
Opportunity to get out of cell	92
To get through their sentence without trouble, as soon as they can	87
Opportunity to mix with other people, chat	87
Interesting activity, takes their minds off prison	79
Illegitimate perks of some prison jobs	77
To get a good parole report	75
They expect to work	56
Learning or using work skills which might help them to get a job after release	54
They only work because they are made to	51
Getting work habits which might help them to get a job after release	43
To contribute to the community life of the prison	17
To feel they are making a positive contribution to society	13
To relieve feelings of guilt	8

Table A2.5: Inmates' perceptions of official reasons for providing them with work in prison

Reason	% rating reason as very important or fairly important to the authorities (N=123-133)
To keep inmates busy, stop them causing trouble	80
To help keep the prison running	73
To give inmates time out of cell, something to do	70
They think prisoners, like other people in society, ought to work	65
To make money for the prison	56
To use inmates as cheap labour	56
So that they know where the prisoners are	56
To train them in work habits which could help them to get a job after release	55
To encourage them to respect legitimate work	53
To give them skills which could help them to get a job after release	46
To make jobs for the staff	38
They think work builds character	38
To punish inmates, because prison work is punishment	29

APPENDIX 3

EX-PRISONERS' REACTIONS TO BEING UNEMPLOYED

(See p. 171. This material from the Brunel study has not been previously reported.)

Fifty-nine people who were unemployed at the time of the follow-up interview were asked how they felt about it. The majority (63%) spoke of negative feelings: frustration, depression, boredom, loneliness, feeling useless, worrying about money. Several responses implied a sense of social exclusion, as in the following examples.

R544: 'It's horrible. Other people you see go out on a Friday night to enjoy themselves, you're stuck in the house because you've got no money.'

R537: 'It's a bit degrading, signing on every two weeks....I feel self-conscious.'

R528: 'Terrible. You lose your self-respect - a second-class citizen.'

A much smaller proportion (15%) were stoical or accepting, including a few who had hardly ever had a job, and others who remarked that they did not feel too bad because millions of other people were unemployed too. R531 said being out of work did not seem strange, but when he saw so many people signing on he thought, 'What's the country coming to?' The remaining 22% gave a variety of other answers.

When the unemployed were asked how they spent their time there were many different responses. The most frequent were: socialising with friends, including girlfriends or boyfriends (68%); doing jobs around the home (39%); caring for their families, like R572 who said, 'I have prime time with the wife and kids' (27%); visiting relatives (20%); jobhunting (15%); sports and hobbies (12%). But for the majority these activities and others did not adequately compensate for the unhappiness of being out of work.

REFERENCES

Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (1993) The Cost to British Industry: basic skills and the workforce, London: ALBSU (now the Basic Skills Agency). As cited by the Prison Service in discussion with the present writer.

Advisory Council on the Penal System (1968) The Regime for Long-Term Prisoners in Conditions of Maximum Security (the Radzinowicz Report), London: HMSO.

Andrews D.A. and Bonta J. (1994) The Psychology of Criminal Conduct, Cincinnati: Anderson. As cited by D. Andrews, 'The psychology of criminal conduct and effective treatment', in J. McGuire (ed.) (1995) What Works: Reducing Reoffending, Chichester: Wiley: 35-62.

Ashworth A. and Hough M. (1996) 'Sentencing and the climate of opinion', Criminal Law Review 1996: 776-787.

Ashworth A., Genders E., Mansfield G., Peay J. and Player E. (1984) Sentencing in the Crown Court: an exploratory study, Oxford: Centre for Criminological Research, University of Oxford. As cited by Ashworth and Hough 1996: 779.

Bazemore G. (1998) 'Restorative justice and earned redemption: communities, victims and offender reintegration', American Behavioral Scientist 41: 768-813.

Berghman J. (1995) 'Social exclusion in Europe: policy context and analytical framework' in G. Room (ed.) Beyond the Threshold: the measurement and analysis of social exclusion, Bristol: The Policy Press.

Bingham, Lord (Lord Chief Justice) (1997) Justice for the Young and The Sentence of the Court, London: Prison Reform Trust and the Police Foundation.

Bottoms A. (1995) 'The philosophy and politics of punishment and sentencing' in C.M.V. Clarkson and R. Morgan (eds) The Politics of Sentencing Reform, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bottoms A.E. and Stevenson S. (1992) '"What went wrong?": criminal justice policy in England and Wales, 1945-70' in D. Downes (ed.) Unravelling Criminal Justice, London: Macmillan.

Braithwaite J. (1980) Prisons Education and Work, Phillip, ACT: Australian Institute of Criminology.

---- (1989) Crime, Shame and Reintegration, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Braithwaite J. and Mugford S. (1994) 'Conditions of successful reintegration ceremonies', British Journal of Criminology 34: 139-171.

Brody S.R. (1976) The Effectiveness of Sentencing: a review of the literature, Home Office Research Study 35, London: HMSO.

Brook L. and Cape E. (1995) 'Libertarianism in retreat?' in R. Jowell, J. Curtice, A. Park, L. Brook and D. Ahrendt (eds) British Social Attitudes: the 12th report (Social and Community Planning Research), Aldershot: Dartmouth.

Burchell B. (1994) 'The effects of labour market position, job insecurity, and unemployment on psychological health' in Gallie, Marsh and Vogler (eds) 1994: 188-212.

Burnett R. (1992) The Dynamics of Recidivism: summary report, Oxford: Centre for Criminological Research, University of Oxford.

Caird R. (1974) A Good and Useful Life, London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon.

Commins P. (ed.) (1993) Combatting Exclusion in Ireland 1990-1994: a Midway Report, Dublin: SICCDA.

Cooper M.H. and King R.D. (1965) 'Social and economic problems of prisoners' work', in P. Halmos (ed.) <u>Sociological Studies in the British Penal Services</u>, The Sociological Review, Monograph no. 9, Keele: University of Keele.

Coyle A. (1994) 'My brother's keeper: relationships in prison', in J. Burnside and N. Baker (eds) <u>Relational Justice: repairing the breach</u>, Winchester: Waterside Press.

<u>Crime and Disorder Act 1998</u>.

<u>Crime (Sentences) Act 1997</u>.

<u>Criminal Justice Act 1967</u>, as cited by Home Office 1969: 16, 17.

<u>Criminal Justice Act 1988</u>.

<u>Criminal Justice Act 1991</u>.

<u>Criminal Justice Act 1993</u>.

<u>Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994</u>.

Crow I., Richardson P., Riddington C. and Simon F. (1989) <u>Unemployment, Crime, and Offenders</u>, London: Routledge.

Davies M. (1995) 'Prisons as social firms: the way forward for prison industry?' in Prison Reform Trust, <u>'A Good and Useful Life': Constructive Prison Regimes</u>, London: PRT: 35-48.

Davies R. (1997) 'Restorative justice - a window of opportunity', <u>Prison Service Journal</u> no. 114: 27-33.

Dawson S. (1972) <u>Industrial Work in a Prison Context: problems and potential</u>. Unpublished report to the Home Office, cited with the permission of the author and the Home Office.

---- (1975) 'Power and influence in prison workshops', in P. Abell (ed.) Organisations as Bargaining and Influence Systems, London: Heinemann: 151-186.

De Haan A. (1998) '"Social exclusion": an alternative concept for the study of deprivation?', Institute of Development Studies Bulletin 29, 1: 10-19.

Department for Education and Employment (1998) National Framework Document to assist in the development of local agreements between the Prison Service, Probation Services, Training and Enterprise Councils, Benefits Agency and the Employment Service to improve the employment prospects of offenders, Sheffield: DfEE.

Departmental Committee on the Employment of Prisoners (1933) Report Part 1: Employment of Prisoners, Cmd 4462, London: HMSO.

Departmental Committee on Prisons (the Gladstone Committee) (1895) Report and Minutes of Evidence, C.7702, London: HMSO.

Dobash R.P., Dobash R.E. and Gutteridge S. (1986) The Imprisonment of Women, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Dodd T. and Hunter P. (1992) The National Prison Survey 1991: a report to the Home Office of a study of prisoners in England and Wales carried out by the Social Survey Division of OPCS, London: HMSO.

Donnison D. (1997) 'Creating a safer society', Social Policy and Administration 31, 5: 3-21.

Downes D. and Morgan R. (1997) 'Dumping the "hostages to fortune"? the politics of law and order in post-war Britain' in M. Maguire, R. Morgan and R. Reiner (eds) The Oxford Handbook of Criminology (second edition), Oxford: Clarendon Press: 87-134.

Du Cane E. (1885) The Punishment and Prevention of Crime, London: Macmillan.

Duffin C. (1999) 'Home detention curfew: your questions answered', Prison Report 46: 23.

Dunbar I. (1985) A Sense of Direction, London: Home Office.

Dunbar I. and Langdon A. (1998) Tough Justice: Sentencing and Penal Policies in the 1990s, London: Blackstone Press.

Employment Department (1993) Partnership Initiatives: Helping Offenders into Training and Work, Developing Good Practice/Equal Opportunities Series, Sheffield: Employment Department.

Fabiano, E., LaPlante J. and Loza A. (1996) 'Employability: from research to practice', Forum on Corrections Research 8, 1: 23-28.

Fisher J.M. and Kelly E.N.G. (1988) The Use of Accommodation to Motivate Workshop Inmates, DPS Report Series II, 162, Prison Department, unpublished.

Flynn N. (1993) Missing Links: recommendations for productive partnerships between TECs and the Prison Service, London: LAWTEC Ltd/ELTEC/Apex Trust.

---- (1995) 'Making workshops work', Prison Report 30: 26-27.

Foster J. and Hope T. (1993) Housing, Community and Crime: the impact of the Priority Estates Project, Home Office Research Study 131, London: HMSO, as cited by Murie 1997: 32-34.

Fox L.W. (1952) The English Prison and Borstal Systems, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Gallie D. and Marsh C. (1994) 'The experience of unemployment' in Gallie, Marsh and Vogler (eds) 1994: 1-30.

Gallie D. and Vogler C. (1994) 'Unemployment and attitudes to work' in Gallie, Marsh and Vogler (eds) 1994: 115-153.

Gallie D., Gershuny J. and Vogler C. (1994) 'Unemployment, the household, and social networks' in Gallie, Marsh and Vogler (eds) 1994: 231-263.

Gallie D., Marsh C. and Vogler C. (eds) (1994) Social Change and the Experience of Unemployment, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Garland D. (1990) Punishment and Modern Society, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Gershuny J. (1994) 'The psychological consequences of unemployment: an assessment of the Jahoda thesis' in Gallie, Marsh and Vogler (eds) 1994: 213-230.

Gillis C., Robinson D. and Porporino F. (1996) 'Inmate employment: the increasingly influential role of generic work skills', Forum on Corrections Research, 8, 1: 18-20.

Glaser D. (1964) The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System, New York: Bobbs-Merrill.

Goldblatt P. and Lewis C. (eds) (1998) Reducing Offending: an assessment of research evidence on ways of dealing with offending behaviour, Home Office Research Study no. 187, London: Home Office.

Graham J. and Bowling B. (1995) Young People and Crime, Home Office Research Study 145, London: Home Office.

Grunhut M. (1948) Penal Reform, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hagell A., Newburn T. and Rowlingson K. (1995) Financial Difficulties on Release from Prison, London: Policy Studies Institute.

Harding C., Hines B., Ireland R. and Rawlings P. (1985) Imprisonment in England and Wales: A Concise History, London: Croom Helm.

Hawkins G. (1983) 'Prison labor and prison industries' in M. Tonry and N. Morris (eds) Crime and Justice: an annual review of research, 5: 85-127.

Hirschi T (1969) Causes of Delinquency, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hirschi T., Hindelang M.J. and Weis J. (1981) 'The status of self-report measures' in M. Klein and K. Teilman (eds) Handbook of Criminal Justice, Newbury Park: Sage.

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (1989) Annual Report for 1988, HC 491, London: HMSO.

---- (1993) Doing Time or Using Time, Cm 2128, London: HMSO.

---- (1996) Annual Report 1995-96, HC 44, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1997a) HM Prison Holloway, London: Home Office.

---- (1997b) Women in Prison, London: Home Office.

---- (1998) Annual Report for April 1996 - November 1997, HC 763, London: The Stationery Office.

HM Commissioners of Prisons/Prison Department/Prison Service (annually) Annual Reports, Command Papers/House of Commons Papers, London: HMSO/The Stationery Office.

HM Prison Holloway Board of Visitors (1996) Annual Report 1995, London: HM Prison Holloway.

HM Prison Service (1991a) Briefing 29, 31 January 1991, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1991b) The Way Ahead: National Vocational Qualifications (leaflet), London: Home Office.

---- (1992) <u>Briefing</u> 51, 14 July 1992, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1993a) <u>Briefing</u> 57, 12 February 1993, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1993b) <u>Briefing</u> 66, 30 November 1993, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1993c) <u>Director General's Newsletter</u>, 2 September 1993, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1994) <u>Advice to Governors</u>, 20 January 1994, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1995a) <u>Briefing</u> 89, 18 December 1995, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1995b) <u>Corporate Plan 1995-98</u>, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1995c) <u>Director General's Newsletter</u>, 15 March 1995, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1995d) <u>Report of the Review of Sentence Planning 1994/5</u>, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1996) <u>Briefing</u> 94, 28 June 1996, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1997) <u>Manual for the Revised Model of Sentence Management and Planning</u>, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1998a) <u>Briefing</u> (monthly) July 1998, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1998b) 'Board endorses education', <u>Prison Service News</u> 16, 167: 4.

---- (1999a) <u>Corporate Plan 1999-2000 to 2001-2002; Business Plan 1999-2000</u>, London: HM Prison Service.

---- (1999b) <u>Purposeful Activity Expansion Scheme (PAES) Workbook</u>, London: HM Prison Service.

HM Treasury (1998a) <u>Modern Public Services for Britain: Investing in Reform</u>, Cm 4011, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1998b) <u>Comprehensive Spending Review Aims and Objectives</u>, London: HM Treasury.

Home Office (1945) <u>Prisons and Borstals</u>, London: HMSO.

---- (1959) <u>Penal Practice in a Changing Society: Aspects of Future Development (England and Wales)</u>, Cmnd 645, London: HMSO.

---- (1969) <u>People in Prison: England and Wales</u>, Cmnd 4214, London: HMSO.

---- (1984) <u>Circular Instruction 55/84</u>, London: Home Office.

---- (1988) <u>Punishment, Custody and the Community</u>, Cm 424, London: HMSO.

---- (1991) <u>Custody, Care and Justice: The Way Forward for the Prison Service in England and Wales</u>, Cm 1647, London: HMSO.

---- (1993) <u>Prison Statistics England and Wales 1991</u>, Cm 2157, London: HMSO.

---- (1994) <u>Prison Statistics England and Wales 1992</u>, Cm 2581, London: HMSO.

---- (1995) <u>Statistical Bulletin: Projection of Long-Term Trends in the Prison Population to 2002</u>, London: Home Office.

---- (1996a) <u>Prison Statistics England and Wales 1995</u>, Cm 3355, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1996b) <u>Protecting the Public: the government's strategy on crime in England and Wales</u>, Cm 3190, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1996c) <u>Statistical Bulletin: Projection of Long-Term Trends in the Prison Population to 2004</u>, London: Home Office.

---- (1997a) <u>No More Excuses - A New Approach to Tackling Youth Crime in England and Wales</u>, Cm 3809, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1997b) <u>Prison Statistics England and Wales 1996</u>, Cm 3732, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1998a) <u>Alternatives to Prison Sentences: the Government reply to the third report from the Home Affairs Committee Session 1997-98, HC 486</u>, Cm 4164, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1998b) <u>Circular 38/1998: Implementation of Crime and Disorder Act 1998</u>, London: Home Office.

---- (1998c) <u>Prison Statistics England and Wales 1997</u>, Cm 4017, London: The Stationery Office.

---- (1999) <u>Reducing Crime and Tackling its Causes: a briefing note on the Crime Reduction Programme</u>, London: Home Office.

Home Office and Employment Department (1992) <u>Employment in Prisons and for Ex-Offenders: the government reply to the first report from the Employment Committee Session 1991-92, HC 30</u>, Cm 1387, London: HMSO.

Home Office and Scottish Home Department (1961) <u>Work for Prisoners: Report of the Advisory Council on the Employment of Prisoners</u>, London: HMSO.

Home Office, Scottish Office and Northern Ireland Office (1979) <u>Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the United Kingdom Prison Services</u> (the May Report), Cmnd 7673. London: HMSO.

Hough M. and Roberts J. (1998) Attitudes to punishment: findings from the British Crime Survey, Home Office Research Study 179, London: Home Office.

House of Commons Parliamentary Debates 25 July 1997, London: The Stationery Office.

----- Parliamentary Debates 30 July 1997, London: The Stationery Office.

House of Commons Employment Committee (1991) Employment in Prisons and for Ex-Offenders, HC 30, London: HMSO.

House of Commons Home Affairs Committee (1998) Alternatives to Prison Sentences, HC 486, London: The Stationery Office.

Hudson B. (1998) 'Restorative justice: the challenge of sexual and racial violence', Journal of Law and Society 25, 2: 237-256.

Ignatieff M. (1978) A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850, London: Macmillan.

Institute of Employment Research (1995) Review of the Economy and Employment 1995: Occupational Assessment, Coventry: University of Warwick.

---- (1996) Review of the Economy and Employment 1996/97: Labour Market Assessment, Coventry: University of Warwick.

Jahoda M. (1982) Employment and Unemployment: a social-psychological analysis, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

James A.L., Bottomley A.K., Liebling A. and Clare E. (1997) Privatizing Prisons: Rhetoric and Reality, London: Sage.

Jones H. and Cornes P. (1977) Open Prisons, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

King R.D. and Elliott K.W. (1978) <u>Albany: Birth of a Prison - end of an era</u>, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

King R.D. and McDermott K. (1989) 'British prisons 1970-1987: the ever-deepening crisis', <u>British Journal of Criminology</u>, 29: 107-128.

---- (1995) <u>The State of Our Prisons</u>, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

King R.D. and Morgan R. (1980) <u>The Future of the Prison System</u>, Farnborough: Gower.

Lampard R. (1994) 'An examination of the relationship between marital dissolution and unemployment' in Gallie, Marsh and Vogler (eds) 1994: 264-298.

Learmont J. (1995) <u>Review of Prison Service Security in England and Wales and the Escape from Parkhurst Prison on Tuesday 3rd January 1995</u>, Cm 3020, London: HMSO.

Legge K. (1978) 'Work in prison: the process of inversion', <u>British Journal of Criminology</u> 18: 16-22.

Letkemann P. (1973) <u>Crime as Work</u>, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Levitas R. (1996) 'The concept of social exclusion and the new Durkheimian hegemony', <u>Critical Social Policy</u> 16, 1: 5-20.

Liebling A., Muir G., Rose G. and Bottoms A. (1997) <u>An Evaluation of Incentives and Earned Privileges: final report to the Prison Service</u>, Cambridge: Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge.

Lightman E.S. (1979) <u>Industrial Work by Inmates in Correctional Institutions</u>, Report 7903, Centre for Industrial Relations, University of Toronto. Toronto: University of Toronto.

259

---- (1982) 'The private employer and the prison industry', British Journal of Criminology, 22: 36-48.

Lipton D., Martinson R. and Wilks J. (1975) Effectiveness of Correctional Treatment - a survey of treatment evaluation studies, Springfield: Praeger. As cited by Brody 1976.

McElrea F. (1994) 'Justice in the community: the New Zealand experience' in J. Burnside and N. Baker (eds) Relational Justice: repairing the breach, Winchester: Waterside Press.

McGregor A. and McConnachie M. (1995) 'Social exclusion, urban regeneration and economic reintegration', Urban Studies 32, 10: 1587-1600.

McGuire J. and Priestley P. (1995) 'Reviewing "What Works?": past, present and future' in J. McGuire (ed.) What Works? Reducing Reoffending, Chichester: Wiley.

McHutchison J. (1991) NSW Corrective Service Industries and Offender Post-release Employment, Research Bulletin 14, NSW Department of Corrective Services, Sydney: NSW Department of Corrective Services.

McIvor G. (1992) Sentenced to Serve, Aldershot: Avebury.

McLaren K. (1992) Reducing Reoffending: What Works Now, Wellington: New Zealand Department of Justice.

Maguire K. (1996) 'Prison industry programs and inmate institutional behaviour', Forum on Corrections Research 8, 1: 39-42.

Maguire M., Peroud B. and Raynor P. (1996) Automatic Conditional Release: the first two years, Home Office Research Study 156, London: Home Office.

Marshall T.F. and Merry S. (1990) Crime and Accountability: victim/offender mediation in practice, London: HMSO.

Marshall T.H. (1950) <u>Citizenship and Social Class</u>, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Republished 1992 in Marshall T.H. and Bottomore T., <u>Citizenship and Social Class</u>, London: Pluto Press.

May C. (1988) 'Prison workshop hours', <u>Research Bulletin</u> 25, Research and Planning Unit, London: Home Office: 5-8.

Mayhew P. and van Dijk J.J.M. (1997) <u>Criminal Victimisation in Eleven Industrialised Countries</u>, The Hague: Research and Documentation Centre.

Mirrlees-Black C. and Allen J. (1998) <u>Concern About Crime: findings from the 1998 British Crime Survey</u>, Research Findings 83, London: Home Office.

Mirrlees-Black C., Budd T., Partridge S. and Mayhew P. (1998) <u>The 1998 British Crime Survey: England and Wales</u>, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 21/98, London: Home Office.

Morris A., Wilkinson C., Tisi A., Woodrow J. and Rockley A. (1995) <u>Managing the Needs of Female Prisoners</u>, London: Home Office.

Motiuk L. (1996) 'Targeting employment patterns to reduce offender risk and need', <u>Forum on Corrections Research</u> 8, 1: 24.

Motiuk L. and Belcourt R. (1996) 'CORCAN participation and post-release recidivism', <u>Forum on Corrections Research</u> 8, 1: 15-17.

Mott J. (1985) <u>Adult Prisons in England and Wales 1970-1982: a review of the findings of social research</u>, Home Office Research Study 84, London: HMSO.

Mountbatten, Lord (1966) <u>Report of the Inquiry into Prison Escapes and Security</u>, Cmnd 3175, London: HMSO.

Mullin C. (1999) 'Reintegrating a lost generation, diverting the new generation', <u>Safer Society</u> 2: 2-4.

Murie A. (1997) 'Linking housing changes to crime', Social Policy and Administration 31, 5: 22-36.

National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (1993) Opening the Doors: the resettlement of prisoners in the community, London: NACRO.

National Audit Office (1987) Home Office Prison Department: Objectives, Organisation and Management of the Prison Service Industries and Farms: report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, HC 93, London: HMSO.

Odegard E. (1995) 'Legality and legitimacy - on attitudes to drugs and social sanctions', British Journal of Criminology 35: 525-542.

Pahl R.E. (1988) 'Epilogue: on work' in R.E. Pahl (ed.) On Work: Historical, Comparative and Theoretical Approaches, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Pateman C. (1988) 'The patriarchal welfare state' in A. Gutmann (ed.) Democracy and the Welfare State. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Penal Affairs Consortium (1996) Prisons - Some Current Developments, London: Penal Affairs Consortium.

Penitentiary Act 1779. As cited by Harding et al 1985: 117.

Pitts J. (1999) 'The new youth justice: great expectations and dodgy plumbing', Safer Society 3: 20-21.

Pitts J. and Hope T. (1997) 'The local politics of inclusion: the state and community safety', Social Policy and Administration 31, 5: 37-58.

Pixley J. (1993) Citizenship and Employment, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Police Act 1997.

Prison Act 1865. As cited by Harding et al 1985: 157-60.

Prison Act 1877.

Prison Rules 1949. SI 1949/1073.

Prison Rules 1964. SI 1964/388.

Prison Rules 1999. SI 1999/728.

Prison Service Industries and Farms (1993) Central Services: Working for Prisons - for work in prisons, London: HM Prison Service.

Prison Service Industries and Farms Board of Management (1994) Chairman's Report 1992-93, London: HM Prison Service.

Prisoners' Earnings Act 1996.

Rajan A. (1992) 1990s: Where Will the New Jobs Be? Tunbridge Wells: Institute of Careers Guidance and the Centre for Research in Employment and Technology in Europe.

Ramsbotham D. (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons) (1997) 'Why we need to reform our prisons', Reader's Digest January 1997.

Ritchie J. and Spencer L. (1994) 'Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research' in A. Bryman and R.G. Burgess (eds) Analysing Qualitative Data, London: Routledge: 173-194.

Rodgers G., Gore C. and Figueiredo J.B. (1995) Social Exclusion: rhetoric, reality, responses, Geneva: International Institute for Labour Studies.

Room G. (1995) 'Poverty and social exclusion: the new European agenda for policy and research' in G. Room (ed.) Beyond the Threshold: the measurement and analysis of social exclusion, Bristol: The Policy Press.

Ruggles-Brise E. (1921) The English Prison System, London: Macmillan.

Rusche G. and Kirchheimer O. (1939) Punishment and Social Structure. As cited by Hawkins 1983: 91-92.

Rutherford A. (1997) 'Criminal policy and the eliminative ideal', Social Policy and Administration 31, 5: 116-135.

Safer Society (1999) 'Criminal record checks announced', Safer Society 2: 6.

Saylor W.G. and Gaes G.G. (1996) 'The effect of prison employment and vocational/apprenticeship training on long-term recidivism', Forum on Corrections Research, 8, 1: 12-14.

Seward E. (1999) 'Board and lodging deductions', Prison Report 47: 5.

Simon F.H. (1999) Prisoners' Work and Vocational Training, London: Routledge.

Simon F. and Corbett C. (1996a) An Evaluation of Prison Work and Training, London: Home Office.

---- (1996b) 'Work regimes in prison' in N.Squires and J. Strobl (eds) Healthy Prisons: a vision for the future. Liverpool: University of Liverpool: 235-242.

Simon F. and Crow I. (1990) Training Young Offenders: a comparative study of Youth Training Schemes and Youth Custody Centres, London: NACRO.

Sinfield A. (1981) What Unemployment Means, Oxford: Martin Robertson.

Skills and Enterprise Network (1991) Labour Market and Skill Trends 1992/93, Nottingham: Employment Department.

---- (1997) Labour Market and Skill Trends 1997/98, Nottingham: Department for Education and Employment.

Smartt U. and Vagg J. (1998) 'Prison works? contemporary developments in prison labour', Prison Service Journal 120: 7-12.

Smith D. and Stewart J. (1997) 'Probation and social exclusion', Social Policy and Administration 31, 5: 96-115.

Social Exclusion Unit (1997) Social Exclusion Unit: purpose, work priorities and working methods, London: Cabinet Office.

---- (1999) Reports, as listed at www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/seu/index.htm.

Straw J. (1998) 'Making prisons work', Prison Report 45: 20-21.

Thames Valley Police et al. (1998) Restorative Justice in the Thames Valley: joint statement by the Crown Prosecution, Police, Prison and Probation Services, Kidlington: Thames Valley Police.

Vass A.A. (1990) Alternatives to Prison: Punishment, Custody and the Community, London: Sage.

Walker A. and Walker C. (eds) (1997) Britain Divided: the growth of social exclusion in the 1980s and 1990s, London: CPAG Ltd.

Walker N. (1985) Sentencing: Theory, Law and Practice, London: Butterworths.

Walker N. and Padfield N. (1996) Sentencing: Theory, Law and Practice (second edition), London: Butterworths.

West T. (1997) <u>Prisons of Promise</u>, Winchester: Waterside Press.

White P., Woodbridge J. and Flack K. (1999) <u>Projections of Long Term Trends in the Prison Population to 2006</u>, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 1/99, London: Home Office.

Woodcock J. (1994) <u>Report of the Inquiry into the Escape of Six Prisoners from the Special Security Unit at Whitemoor Prison, Cambridgeshire, on Friday 9th September 1994</u>, Cm 2741, London: HMSO.

Woolf, Lord Justice H. and Tumim, Judge S. (1991) <u>Prison Disturbances April 1990: Report of an Inquiry</u>, Cm 1456, London: HMSO.

Woolfenden T. (1998) 'Welfare to Work: the Prison Service dimension', <u>Prison Service Journal</u> 120: 21-23.

Wright M. (1987) 'What the public wants: surveys of the general public, including victims', <u>Justice of the Peace</u> 151: 105-107.

---- (1996) <u>Justice for Victims and Offenders: a restorative response to crime</u> (second edition), Winchester: Waterside Press.