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Future of Corrections

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Corrections in the Nuclear Age

Oliver J. Keller*

We Don't Use What We Know

Some parallels can be drawn between the arms race and the current mania for prison and jail construction. With respect to the former, Albert Einstein, writing in 1946, said, "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe" (1985:1). With respect to the latter, the 1982 report on American corrections by the Clark Foundation stated, "America's prison population is running out of control . . . we must deal immediately with the overcrowded prisons. They threaten the financial stability of the state governments and the physical safety of the institutions' staffs and inmates" (1982:5-6).

Einstein foresaw the danger of an arms race that may well result in the elimination of the human race, all other species, and the total destruction of all life support systems on this planet. A new mode of thinking about war's usefulness is essential, he said. The historian, Arnold Toynbee, noted that 26 civilizations which flourished and died, all died for the same reason —they clung to established systems far longer than they should have, and eventually collapsed by refusing to yield to new concepts (1982:16).

In American criminal justice, we cling to a corrections model that is not working. While some optimists believe that life is cyclical, and that present policies will eventually reverse, no leadership presently exists at the national level to forecast any dramatic change in this dismal scene. Our present course can lead only to continued criminal behavior, greater violence, and wasted tax dollars. Our present way of thinking addresses only the symptoms, never the roots of the crime problem.

The tragedy of all this is that it does not have to be. In both the arms race and in corrections, knowledge exists to do things differently. In the arms race, the Contadora nations of Mexico, Panama, Colombia, and Venezuela have provided a model for peaceful solutions to conflict (1986:1). In the corrections arena, numerous examples exist of successful alternatives to the costly and criminogenic jails and prisons that plague the American landscape. But, in both our approach to our national safety and the crime problem, we cling to the old. Professor Thomas S. Kuhn, the eminent philosopher of science, writes, ". . . it's clear that our present institutions, in every field from education to politics, have not absorbed the flood of new knowledge now available to them" (1986:16).

Make no mistake about it. We do cling to the old. The Clark Foundation's report of five years ago has had no impact on the national mind. Our prison population, state and federal, soars above the half million mark (*Corrections Digest*, September 24, 1986:1). Prison populations are expected to increase by 6 percent each year for the next five to ten years (*Corrections Digest*, February 18, 1987:1). Despite phenomenal and costly prison construction, estimated to cost American taxpayers over \$70 billion over the next 30 years (Figgie, 1985), the beds will never catch up with the overcrowding. Steven Schlesinger, director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, points out that state and federal population increases represent a demand of roughly 1,000 new beds each week (*Corrections Digest*, September 24, 1986:1). In some southern states, the overflow is handled by tents surrounded by barbed wire or fences.

*The author was director of the Illinois Division for Youth, Secretary of Corrections in Florida, and a member of the U.S. Parole Commission. He was president of the American Correctional Association in 1976.

The Relentless Data

The above figures, of course, relate only to construction. The Figgie report of 1985 reveals that the average cost of confining an inmate for one year in a state prison ranges from between \$15,000 and \$20,000 (Figgie, 1985:139). If we take a median of \$17,500, and use the prison population reported at the end of June 1986 (528,945 inmates), we have the annual cost to the American public of this incarceration —over \$9.2 billion. This figure does not take into consideration the operational costs of the new prisons under construction or on the planning boards. Nor does it include the operational costs of a jail system that, on a daily basis, contains 230,641 persons (*Corrections Digest*, June 4, 1986:1).

Now, if all this incarceration were resulting in a greatly reduced crime rate, an argument might be made for the current construction binge. But, as the Clark Foundation report makes clear, "There is no evidence . . . that imprisonment is any more effective a deterrent for most crimes and for most people than other penalties (1982:13). Gene Guerrero, director of the Atlanta office of the American Civil Liberties Union, explains, "With unemployment at fifty percent among teen-age black males, illiteracy and poverty in general, punishment for people who feel they have nothing to lose is meaningless (Hendricks, 1987:1A). Chronic offenders, even when sent to prison repeatedly, tend to look upon it as an overhead expense of the business they engage in (Silberman, 1978:76). A teacher within one of Pennsylvania's maximum security prisons writes, "The convicted are prevented from committing any more crimes while in prison, but what they learn while serving their sentences makes them more likely to return to crime upon release (*Corrections Digest*, November 5, 1986:6). And return they do. In September of 1986, the Rand Corporation reported that 76 percent of a sample of 286 men released from California prisons were rearrested within three years of their release (*Corrections Digest*, September 10, 1986:1).

One wonders at the number of intelligent individuals who support the greatly increased use of prison for the great mass of law violators. The Figgie report states: "Lawyers and judges express overwhelming support for the building of more prisons (1985:129). Surely, these highly educated individuals must have some concept of the violence, the boredom, the idleness, and the mind-numbing monotony of prison life. They must know about the major upheavals that struck Attica and Santa Fe in past years. They must be aware of the power of prison gangs. They cannot be unaware of the brutality and depravity unleashed when a prison "blows up." And, if they follow correctional news at all, they know disturbances are commonplace. In the last six months of 1986, people were killed or seriously injured in Virginia, West Virginia, New York, and Arizona prisons (*Corrections Digest*, January 21, 1987:4).

Unfortunately, a major obstacle to progress is that no voice of national significance is heard calling attention to the evidence that prisons are by their very nature criminogenic. In the Kennedy administration, the nation was moved to change conditions for the retarded, thanks to the fact that the president's sister was tragically handicapped. No such luck for corrections. In the Reagan administration, the U.S. Attorney's Task Force on Violent Crime emphasized only the expenditure of \$2 billion for more prisons (U.S. Dept. of Justice). Nothing was said about alternatives. While violent criminals must be placed in secure custody, the Task Force might have pointed out that many American prisons are filled with nonviolent offenders who can be controlled in far less expensive, more open facilities. Here, many of them would be able to pay for part of their maintenance, earn dollars to support their families, and pay taxes. Their departure from the nation's bastilles would reserve the existing lock-ups for the truly dangerous.

At a time when state and federal prisons are dangerously overcrowded, the Reagan administration has pursued an unfortunate policy initiated by President Carter—the withdrawal of federal funds badly needed to aid the states in coping with crime. While critics may contend that some of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funds were misspent (Serrill, 1976:3), those working in the field can point to many innovative alternatives, especially in the juvenile field, that were used to replace large institutions. The federal money supplied the “carrot” needed to coax matching state dollars from tight-fisted state legislatures.

The Political Obstacles

The American political system probably presents the most serious obstacle to a new approach to corrections. Almost every change of state administration brings a changing of the guard. Competent administrators are often removed from office simply because the incoming governor wants to “put in his own team.” Frequently, these new appointees are selected for political reasons. These periodic “massacres” (Travisono, 1982:1), do not lead to stability or progress in corrections. Those who do survive usually keep their mouths shut rather than appear to advocate alternatives that might be viewed as unorthodox. Obedient bureaucrats are the result, providing no leadership, and only too ready to maintain the status quo.

“Knee-jerk” is the best way to describe the way most state politicians respond to issues relating to crime. When a sensational and sordid offense hits the headlines, politicians vie with one another to be the most punitive. Mandatory sentences are increasingly popular (Krajik and Gettinger, 1982:28). Throughout the country, lawmakers have made it easier to bind young children over to the adult courts. In New York, where a youth of sixteen is treated as an adult criminal, the general assembly passed legislation that can bring children as young as thirteen into the criminal court. After commenting that this “visionary legislation” has not “wiped out crime,” Hunter Hurst, director of the National Center for Juvenile Justice, points out that “it has almost doubled the time required to process three out of four cases and has boosted the cost accordingly (Hurst, 1986).

Few legislators reveal any genuine, long-term interest in what goes on in jails, prisons, or juvenile institutions. After all, they have no constituency among the inmates or their families. At election time, it is customary to “wave the bloody shirt,” frightening the public with imaginary increases in crime. According to the Clark Foundation, “Our fear comes partly from the misinterpretation of statistics and the ‘hyping’ of crime trends by people who should know better—mainly politicians and journalists (1982:6).

Correctional Stagnation and the Scholars

As the Clark Foundation indicates, a second major obstacle to new thinking about corrections is those who write about it. One of the most damaging was Robert Martinson. In the 1970’s, Martinson, a professor and researcher, found he struck pay dirt by declaiming, “Nothing works” (Malloy, January 4, 1975:1). Presumably, he was basing his statements on a massive report prepared by a team of workers for the state of New York. Martinson later recanted, but by then the damage had been done. Those who wanted greater use of prisons had found their champion. The then president of the Florida Senate copied Martinson’s statements for his colleagues, arguing that money spent on new treatment approaches was money wasted. The lead author of the original New York report, Douglas Lipton, eventually declared Martinson’s statements to be

inaccurate (1977:32). Unfortunately, at the time Martinson was advancing his views to the eager national media, Lipton chose to remain silent —another obedient bureaucrat.

The old, traditional “hard-line” approach continues to be in vogue, partially because of other authors who offer simple solutions to a complex national problem. In 1975, James Q. Wilson, a Harvard political scientist, advocated greater use of incarceration to reduce crime. Despite the fact that 138 new prisons have been built since 1979 (*Corrections Digest*, December 17, 1986:1), and despite a prison and jail population that has doubled since Wilson wrote his book (U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1986:1), the reduction in criminal acts anticipated by Wilson has not occurred.

Writing in conjunction with a psychologist, Wilson is now proposing that criminals are generally different from most of us (Wilson and Herrnstein, 1986). This, as will be shown, may portend some ominous correctional techniques. Fortunately, there are other authors who have been quick to dissect and expose Wilson’s work. Before a major correctional gathering in Alexandria, Virginia, in the summer of 1986, Leon Kamin, a Princeton professor and co-author of the book, *Not in Our Genes*, stated that Wilson and his co-author “have sold people a bill of goods” (Kamin, 1986).

A number of correctional professionals accept the hoary tenet that criminals are different from “good people,” despite ample evidence to the contrary. This may explain why the federal Bureau of Prisons has accepted the writings of Samuel Yochelson, a psychiatrist, and Stanton Samenow, a clinical psychologist, who made headlines in 1977 by publishing *The Criminal Personality*. Although their “research” has been exposed as nothing more than sweeping generalizations, inadequately supported, and loaded with contradictions, Yochelson and Samenow assert, “We have described the criminal population as a different breed . . . with an entirely different set of thinking patterns” (1976:50). The press loved it, using such headlines as: “You Can Stop Feeling Sorry for Criminals; Criminals are Born, Not Made.”

Appearing about the same time as *The Criminal Personality* was Charles Silberman’s, *Criminal Violence, Criminal Justice*. Since it provided no simplistic explanation for crime, it did not receive the media attention of some of its competition. Silberman makes it clear that crime is, to greater or lesser degree, an extremely prevalent human phenomenon. He points to the billions of dollars lost annually to employee theft, the fact that “some entire industries appear riddled with fraud,” and that “an overwhelming majority of people have committed at least one crime without detection and a substantial portion have broken the law more than once” (1976:41).

But old ideas die hard. The concept that the criminal is a creature apart keeps surfacing. It is a dangerous concept, because, if offenders are “different,” it is easier to treat them as objects, open to experimentation. Dr. Peter Breggin, a psychiatrist and director of the Center for the Study of Psychiatry in Bethesda, Maryland, says, “One needs to keep an eye on what is done in the name of psychiatry. In Nazi Germany, the killing of mental patients, retardates, homosexuals, and Gypsies was done under psychiatric auspices, that took place before the Jews were exterminated” (1986). In the 1970’s, Breggin took more than a year from his private practice to fight the movement in corrections toward psychosurgery of troublesome prisoners. He has also warned against similar experimentation with psychiatric drugs, charging that permanent neurological disorders can result from their use.

The personal villainy, selfishness, envy, and greed of many brilliant persons with advanced degrees make them unsuited for work with other human beings. The corrections field is full of them. Paul Hahn, who heads the Criminal Justice program at Xavier

University and who worked for many years in the juvenile field, advises, "Beware the hard-core professional, the counselor with the tight nine to five schedule, or the administrator whose primary concern is his own advancement rather than the welfare of those in his care. These people use their professional credentials to cover their personal callousness" (1986).

The Lengthening Shadow

One of the major weaknesses in correctional research is that, while techniques and processes are evaluated, human dynamics are generally disregarded. Only recently do researchers appear to recognize the wisdom of Ralph Waldo Emerson's dictum: "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man" (Bartlett, 1943:411).

In the Rand Corporation's 1985 study of promising intervention strategies for chronic juvenile offenders, Frank Zimring and Peter Greenwood observed, "The most striking ingredient that these programs share is their exceptional staff" (1985:45). The staff who changed and motivated severely delinquent youth are described as cheerful, hard-working, patient, with a common sense of purpose, and with pride and confidence in what they were doing. These adults had become "significant others" in the eyes of the adolescents with whom they worked.

The person who heads the corrections program is, of course, the key. In the words of Professor Benedict Alper of Boston College, "You need a 'psychological dowser' — a person specially gifted with the ability to recognize persons talented in helping others. This 'dowser' has an uncanny knack to perceive in others the qualities and capacities necessary to influence the conduct and attitudes of young people, to recognize the potential for growth, and to encourage and guide it" (1987).

Gisela Konopka, professor emeritus of the University of Minnesota, has emphasized that human relationships, not coercion, are the key to lasting change (1986). Daniel Glaser, in his scholarly study of prisons and parole more than 20 years ago, observed that the prison caseworkers "have relatively little impact on inmates" (1964:147). Rather, the work supervisors were the ones credited by former prisoners as chiefly responsible for redirecting their lives. The common factors were: friendliness and fairness; personal interest and encouragement. John Conrad, a prolific writer in the corrections field, has described the quite different approaches of two California parole officers. The first, an authoritarian personality primarily concerned with surveillance, had a high rate of failure among his caseload. The second, relaxed and helpful, with office hours geared to suit his parolees' work schedules, had many successes (1981:145-162).

In considering probation, one is reminded that where caseloads are kept to ten to twenty, and where intensive interaction between staff and probationers becomes a reality, successful outcomes, together with considerable savings, are often the result. A carefully conducted study by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services recommended intensive probation "in lieu of more restrictive placements" (Tollett, 1985:15).

Simply reducing the caseloads, of course, is not the answer. Old-line probation officers, accustomed to unmanageable caseloads of 60 and above, may be unable to break away from the paperwork that has justified their existence. They have become "office-bound." Such old-timers may also resist using volunteers, arguing that their work is so confidential that any reliance on volunteers would be "unprofessional." They forget that the individual who started the entire probation movement in the 1840's was a volunteer — a Boston shoemaker named John Augustus.

Augustus' concept of providing guidance and supervision on a personal basis is as good today as it was 140 years ago. The tragedy is that penurious state and local governments have so underfunded probation and parole that the lack of personnel makes close interaction impossible. No wonder judges, police, and the public have expressed little confidence in community supervision. The addition of volunteers, working under trained and enthusiastic probation/parole officers, can work wonders. Jerome Miller, a major spokesman for innovative correctional methods, describes successful programs as "those where an offender has an advocate who works with him at least 30 hours a week, a kind of paid or volunteer buddy . . . programs that demonstrate care for the individual as well as supervising him" (Miller and Hoelter, 1982:13). All of this can be accomplished at far less expense than placement in large institutions, where the cost per inmate far exceeds the tuition and fees of the most expensive Ivy League universities.

The Plague of Scale-Economics

American corrections has been plagued by "bigness"—big caseloads, big institutions. The earliest prisons and reform schools established the model. The sheer size of these institutions makes surveillance difficult, thereby allowing predators to prey on weaker prisoners. In the juvenile field, countless authors—Clifford Shaw, Albert Deutsch, Willard Motley, Howard James, Kenneth Wooden, Patrick Murphy, to name a few—have, for more than half a century, told of the destructive influence of large facilities (Shaw, 1931; Motley, 1947; Deutsch, 1950; James, 1970; Murphy, 1975; and Wooden, 1976). Yet, once a judge has ruled out probation, the large institution continues to house the majority of committed juvenile and adult offenders.

The most recent study of the California Youth Authority (CYA), (1986) by the Commonwealth Research Institute presents a litany of everything that has been said before: "The hard truth is that the CYA cannot protect its inmates. . . The vulnerability of inmates to attack is most apparent at night when young men are bedded down in a dormitory which is overseen by a single guard. . . Much of this violence stems from the large scale and dormitory design of Youth Authority facilities, which promote the formation and ascendancy of prison gangs" (Lerner, 1986:12-14).

It is outrageous that a young car thief, properly deprived of his liberty and sentenced to a state institution, should be assaulted and sodomized because the state fails to protect him from prison "wolves." The Commonwealth Research Institute study reveals how a 140-pound youth was repeatedly raped. "One Youth Authority counselor who worked with Sam alleges that inmates took Polaroid pictures of him being sexually attacked by other inmates." Sam "attempted suicide twice, first by cutting himself and then by hanging." Eventually, when all his efforts to be transferred to a less dangerous institution failed, Sam did succeed in ending his life—after first writing an essay on teen suicide for one of his classes (Lerner, 1986:22).

Corrections is rife with similar tragedies. An investigation in 1970 by the South Carolina Attorney General's office revealed the following:

Sexual brutality in the form of forced and oral sodomy occurred at the John G. Richards School for Boys. The administration policy of hiring inmates with serious criminal records as "patrol boys" to police smaller boys. . . unwittingly contributed to the problem of sexual brutality and physical violence. . .

Because of widespread homosexual activity, venereal disease was contracted on campus. . . the administrative response to which was simply a shot of penicillin with no investigation or follow-up (1970:5).

Correctional administrators and politicians are both responsible for such stupidity. They should not be protected from litigation in the state courts under any principle of sovereign immunity. In March of 1986, 34 states, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico were all operating prisons under court orders for violation of constitutional rights of inmates (*Corrections Digest*, March 12, 1986:3). What further evidence is needed of the sorry state of American corrections?

In working with "troubled" humans of all types, the maxim "small is beautiful" has always made sense. Tragically, many decision-makers never grasp that concept. They think solely in terms of the lowest possible cost per day per inmate, with one result being dormitories where rapes and assaults prevail. Years ago, Erving Goffman outlined the dangers inherent in large institutions, whether for mental patients or prisoners (1961:74). Invariably, two cultures exist —the keepers and the kept. The inmate sub-culture in large institutions effectively resists staff efforts. While size alone does not spell success, the close interaction and the relationships that develop in a small facility have greater likelihood of redirecting damaged lives. Intelligent and concerned staff can make the razor wire, steel doors, and TV monitors largely unnecessary.

Millerism and the Future

Jerome Miller proved that it could be done. As the new director for youth corrections in Massachusetts in 1969, Miller tried without success to change the "climate" of the large juvenile institutions. With the support of the governor and a few key legislators, Miller did what had never been done before —he closed the training schools and moved their youthful populations to contractual facilities under private ownership (Serrill, 1975:3). An uproar ensued, with many law enforcement figures and judges calling for Miller's scalp. Yet, seventeen years later, Massachusetts has never reverted to mass public institutions for its juvenile offenders. Despite several changes in state administrations, and the inevitable replacement of directors, Massachusetts stands foremost among all the major states in its refusal to use large institutions for its delinquents. The juvenile crime rate, despite dire predictions, did not soar (Loughran, 1986:18).

Lloyd Ohlin, professor emeritus at Harvard University's Center on Crime and Delinquency, has conducted meticulous research on the "Jerry Miller experience" since its inception. In the summer of 1986, Ohlin told a conference, "I believe the changes made in Massachusetts are secure" (1986). Utah has successfully followed the Massachusetts example. Unfortunately most state juvenile systems still rely on large institutions. In a rural community, a large training school or prison means jobs. To a state representative or senator from such an area, the mere hint of closing "our institution" is like a red flag to a bull.

In speaking of changes in Massachusetts, Lloyd Ohlin also called attention to a major weakness in the whole corrections process —aftercare. A number of residential programs do appear to have been successful in motivating and redirecting delinquents, but all may be for naught without subsequent support. Ohlin comments, "Good effects are often wiped out upon return to the community. Rehabilitation must be linked with reintegration. We need to focus our efforts on the community" (1986).

Typically, aftercare has faced the same problem as probation; a limited staff "pushing paper," while those "under supervision" are left largely to their own devices. The importance of working with both offenders and their families has received only scant attention. And, without the recruitment of trained volunteers, one doubts that meaningful guidance and supervision can ever occur.

The Fateful Lure of Privatization

Nor can one assume that shifting institutional populations to privately operated facilities is a panacea. As the move toward "privatization" gains momentum, serious questions arise as to the control private entrepreneurs should exercise over persons convicted by the courts and sentenced to state custody. The American Bar Association has raised a number of questions: to what degree can a private operator, under contract with the state, discipline a prisoner or remove "good time"? In addition, who is liable in the event an escape brings injury to others (*Corrections Digest*, February 4, 1987:7-8)?

With the mounting number of inmates, and with overflowing state institutions, some businessmen see "gold in them thar hills." Ira Schwartz, director of the Hubert Humphrey Institute, has made available a British Broadcasting cassette tape, entitled "The Child-Fixers." The BBC reporters came to the United States and investigated several private hospitals in Minnesota. Hospital administrators, they discovered, had concluded that some hospital units had become financially unproductive. They closed them, only to reopen with major advertising campaigns for adolescent in-patient treatment. Children of very tender years are being housed in locked wards, exposed to behavior modification and "quiet rooms," and usually remain about as long as the insurance money for "psychiatric care" lasts.

In the corrections field, a comparable situation could prevail. If a private operator's income depends upon keeping the beds full, what incentive is there to move prisoners to community supervision? Kenneth Schoen, speaking for the Clark Foundation, expresses concern "for those entering corrections with the aim of making money from holding prisoners" (1986).

Like the military-industrial complex, which has been involved for many years in producing awesome numbers of megaton bombs and nuclear missiles, private entrepreneurs can become very difficult to stop when major funding is involved. Paid lobbyists can beseege and court legislative decisionmakers. Through media contacts, they can keep the public in such a panic about "dangerous criminals" that anything other than incarceration is viewed as "coddling law-breakers."

The Way Forward

So—after all of the above, what direction should corrections take in the next few decades? A review of the previous material reflects the following far-from-new recommendations:

(1) A stop to the costly, ineffective erection of more huge prisons, recognizing that they are primarily "schools for crime."

(2) The development of relatively small, more open correctional facilities for nonviolent adult offenders, involving work release, community service, and restitution.

(3) The reinstatement of major federal anticrime funding to match with state appropriations.

(4) The appointment of qualified correctional administrators with firm contracts of at least six years.

(5) The revocation of laws that allow children to be placed in adult jails and prisons.

(6) The quick exposure as charlatans of those who offer simplistic, quick-fix solutions to the crime problem.

(7) A more courageous body of corrections professionals, willing to speak boldly to the politicians, press, and public.

(8) Much greater recognition among corrections researchers of the importance of staff dynamics in the success or failure of correctional treatment.

(9) The greatly expanded use of intensive probation, plus the added contributions of one-on-one volunteer assistants.

(10) The development of small, community-based facilities for the vast bulk of juvenile offenders, utilizing to the utmost schools, jobs, and other community resources, and calling for family participation to the greatest degree possible.

(11) The prosecution of corrections administrators and elected officials who can be shown to have neglected their responsibility to protect inmates in serious jeopardy due to the brutal and dangerous conditions of their confinement.

(12) A new emphasis on the importance of aftercare support for prisoners leaving residential centers; like probation, this would involve the use of citizen volunteers.

(13) A constant evaluation of what goes on in private correctional programs, especially those which operate for profit.

Given the above wish list, what is the likelihood that any of it will come to pass by 2012?

A great deal of this list might be accomplished if the following, quite unlikely, development occurred. If the president of the United States became truly concerned about crime in this country, and became informed about the tragic mess now existing, he could instigate a tremendous impetus for change. Long overdue reforms would begin to appear by the end of a year.

Any such change in presidential thinking about crime is highly unlikely. American policymakers, including presidents, seem mired in anachronistic ways of dealing with the problem. Researchers Stephen Gottfredson and Ralph Taylor report that, in surveying decisionmakers in Maryland, they found that, despite a brief move toward community-based alternatives, "Reform efforts begun in 1979 were abandoned by early 1981. . . the state's policies again swung toward capital construction, and away from community-based alternatives" (1983:8). The two researchers added, "Despite the addition of several hundred new prison beds over the course of the past two years, the present inmate population is such that the new facilities being proposed—even if they were to open tomorrow— would be seriously crowded upon opening" (1983:8).

Fortunately, Gottfredson and Taylor offer some light at the end of the tunnel. They assert that Maryland's correctional administrators had misread the public's mind about coping with crime. The general public, when questioned, was far more inclined toward rehabilitation than those who controlled the state dollars. The researchers conclude, "Contrary to popularly accepted opinion, we found the general public to be very supportive of precisely the change strategies which the state was unable to implement" (1983:14).

If humanity is to survive in a world that faces nuclear annihilation, only active citizen concern and involvement can reverse the present global madness. As President John Kennedy said in 1961, "Mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind" (1961). New modes of thinking, to use Einstein's phrase, are essential.

The analogy holds for corrections. If we are to stop the endless flow of billions of tax dollars into institutions that do not protect the public from further crime, public support must be mobilized for alternative strategies. Nor are these harum-scarum schemes. Although too limited in number, they exist in several states and can produce evidence of their cost effectiveness and ability to reduce crime. The major obstacle is the reluctance to change. Too many American decisionmakers, in and out of corrections,

seem wedded to the old. America's industrial "rust belt" is just one more example of the refusal to change old modes of thinking.

Years ago, in Minnesota, a small, nonprofit organization, the Citizens Council on Delinquency and Crime, persuaded top executives of banks, lumber companies, railroads, and the 3-M Company to study prison conditions first-hand. These business leaders—the decisionmakers in their own firms—learned how the criminal justice system worked in Minnesota. In the words of Allan Hubanks, the agency's former director, "When these top citizens later appeared before a legislative committee and demanded change, you could hear a pin drop. The legislature knew these lay leaders had done their homework" (1987). Hubanks warns that, unless the presidents and chief executive officers of the major corporations comprise the citizens council, it will not have the same influence. Once council members begin to send lower-level personnel to represent them, the council falls apart.

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) followed the same model in the early 1960's, but failed, in most instances, to bring together the "power people" who can persuade governors and key legislators. In one mid-western state, for example, top executives, after agreeing to serve on the citizens corrections council, received no follow-up contacts. Moreover, the NCCD representative lacked both the background and aplomb to deal comfortably with the presidents of major corporations. The face remains, however, that when the key people in each state want change, it will occur.

Corrections lacks a constituency. Although the general public may be more interested in rehabilitation than politicians give them credit, the average citizen does not spend many hours reflecting on how to make the corrections system more effective. Change comes when a few people with power understand the cost benefits of alternative approaches. They then persuade others, including the press and the politicians.

If we continue on the present punitive, costly, ineffective track, the future will present a sorry spectacle—and with no reduction in criminal behavior. By adopting alternative strategies already known to us, costs can be greatly reduced, and many offenders directed in a more productive way. Conservatism versus liberalism is not the issue. The bottom line—no matter what the political philosophy—is that American corrections is correcting nothing. Society does not benefit by confining a \$500 burglar at an annual cost of more than \$17,000. A system characterized by assaults, riots, homosexual rapes, murders, suicides, self-mutilations, and predatory gangs can hardly be producing a healthy human product. In the past fifteen years, states and counties have erected more correctional facilities than in the previous one hundred. What we have to show for it is a growing criminal population, and governments on the verge of bankruptcy, unable to provide other essential human services. As in the arms race, with its nuclear madness, a new mode of thinking is required. Time is of the essence (Hutto, 1985).

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