

THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IN THE
UNITED STATES BUREAU OF PRISONS

INDIANA STATE
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

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Mark Roland Moran

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Committee on thesis:

[Signature]
Walton Brookover
J. Dewey Amstutz, Chairman

Representative of English Department:

Frederick Sorensen

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM, DEFINITION OF TERMS USED, METHODS
OF TREATMENT, HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM, AND
SOURCES OF DATA

Since 1930 a radical change has been made by the United States Department of Justice in its treatment of men and women committed from Federal courts to institutions in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. There are several reasons for a study of certain aspects of this program. To set down the progressive methods and ideas behind such a program so they can be used as patterns by less up-to-date state and local departments of public welfare would justify such a work. The average citizen does not realize the effort its government makes to reclaim and deter the unfortunate people who have stepped outside the law for various reasons; hence this paper can be informative to the general public. Since twelve years have passed since the inception of the program, something of an evaluation can be made of it. The scope of this treatise is far too limited to encompass the complete workings of the Bureau of Prisons. The part discussed herein deals with the education program in the Bureau, a program that is one of the major factors in the treatment of federal prisoners.

I. THE PROBLEM

In making this study the following objectives were set up: (1) to understand the philosophy or purpose of the educational program; (2) to review the facilities for such a program; and (3) to examine the methods of education used in the prison service.

Much has been written about the preventive side of delinquency and the setting up of deterrents to the progressive involvement in crime. No one doubts the wisdom of organizing boy's clubs, big brother organizations, and using many other methods to save youth from careers in crime. But in society today there are a great many individuals who have failed to come under such good influences regardless of whether or not they were ever exposed to them. How to deal with such people in an enlightened manner is a challenge to good government. The treatment of a great many of these people is the responsibility of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. This Bureau keeps ever in mind that it can exert a great influence on the future citizenship of such people, for most of their charges are institutionalized for a definite length of time. A majority of this prison population will return again to society.* The attitudes of such people returning to society may effect every individual who must live with them. Hence one should know what is being done in prisons.

* See Table III., page 18.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Later in this thesis an outline appears showing the variety of institutions that make up the federal prison service. It is sufficient to say here that there are detentional headquarters or jails, correctional institutions, such as reformatories and a training school for boys, various types of penal institutions such as the one at Terre Haute (Indiana) for short term first offenders or at Alcatraz (California) for prisoners over whom the maximum security possible must be exercised, a special hospital for federal prisoners at Springfield, Missouri, and roadcamps. These various units are under the direct supervision of a Warden or Superintendent, with a central supervising personnel located in Washington, D. C.

The term institution here refers to the physical plant; administration buildings, school, hospital, dining hall, dormitories, recreation rooms, work shops, power house, warehouse, farm buildings, if any, library, chapels, auditorium, disposal and water softening plants, and fire department. Not every institution has all these adjuncts. In this sense we are not referring to the concept institution as used by the sociologist.

Prior to 1930 the prison chaplain, besides his other duties, was in charge of any educational efforts on the part of the inmates. Since 1930 the prison service has gradually built up a faculty in each institution for teaching both trade and academic subjects. A trained supervisor of education,

vocational counselor, civilian instructors, inmate teachers, and instructor foremen can be found as a unit or with modifications in the majority of the institutions.

III. METHOD OF TREATMENT

An attempt is made first of all to understand the philosophy behind the treatment of federal prisoners. Such an understanding is fundamental to the proper approach to each component part of the prison program, such as the educational aspect of the entire program. After one appreciates the thinking behind the practices of the service, one can go on to study the objectives of the program. The opportunities to gain trades and experience, to reorientate the thinking of the prisoners, and other advantages presented to the inmates are reviewed.

In the second section of this thesis an examination is made of the facilities of the educational program to carry out its objectives. It is shown that the varieties of institutions present different needs and that the differences of architecture among similar institutions influence the educational opportunities. In this section the physical equipment and teaching staff are dealt with in detail. Finally the particular training of the administrative and custodial personnel and the related services of the library are touched upon.

The final section of the thesis is the most important. It has to do with the education of the prisoner. It describes

the entrance testing of the inmate, the academic or vocational features of the day and night school, the opportunities for cell study and correspondence courses, the stressing of individualized treatment wherever necessary, and the influence of the length of the prisoner's sentence.

IV. HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

Very little has been written about the educational program of the federal prison service. Therefore, this thesis will not be as satisfactory from a comparative point of view as it would have been were there more to compare it with or review as to method of treatment. A thesis has been written dealing with the educational program of the Federal Reformatory for Women at Alderson, W. Virginia.¹ But, it is the purpose of the present thesis to give an overview of the educational program of all the institutions as the best means of reflecting the philosophy, purpose, and methods of education used by the Bureau of Prisons. In these days when the Congress of the United States is receiving so much criticism² for its part in the prosecution of the war, it may be well to remember that it

¹ Carrie Saloma Riney, "The Origin and Development of the Federal Industrial Institution for Women, Alderson, W. Virginia", (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Kentucky, 1939), p. 87.

² Raymond Clapper, "Watch Out for Dictatorship", Reader's Digest, 41:117, November, 1942.

has accomplished some very worthwhile things, not the least notable of which is the organization of the Bureau of Prisons. Of course, as with most Congressional investigations, things were pretty bad before anything was done about it. A short summary of these conditions may be had under the section titled "Conditions in the Federal Prison Service", in the seventh series United States Prison Service Study Course.³ It traces some of the natural outgrowths of the policy of the Continental Congress to stipulate that the Federal Government should negotiate contracts for boarding its prisoners in State and County institutions.

As late as 1926 there were but three institutions in the Federal system, three overcrowded penitentiaries. Now there are twenty-nine institutions governed by the bureau. After 1930 the educational program gradually began to take form. First of all came supervisors of education in the larger institutions such as Leavenworth and Atlanta penitentiaries. As the need arose, vocational counselors were added where there was a related program carried on with the Federal prison industries.

Because of the growing importance of this activity (Education), a Supervisor of Education has been added to the Bureau staff to assist in guiding the development of the education work. During the coming year, a survey of

³ Studies in Cooperation (United States Prison Service Study Course, Vol. 7. Leavenworth, Kansas, Federal Prison Industries, Inc. Press, 1941), p. 4.

personnel needs of the educational service is planned, inasmuch as the lack of trained civilian teachers, not only in the reformation but in the other units as well, is one of the biggest handicaps with which to contend.⁴

Of later years instructor foremen have been added to the faculty of each institution. These instructors are skilled tradesmen in charge of the various maintenance operations or production units in an institution. Under the direction of the Supervisor of Education instruction is carried on in class periods in the shop and then the theory is put to practice under the guidance of the instructor.

V. SOURCE OF DATA

The annual reports of the various institutions in the Bureau together with a forward by the Washington staff are consolidated and published under the title Federal Offenders. The majority of the data presented are taken from these publications which cover the period 1930 to 1941. Some information has been available in Volume V of the Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures. The 1940 issue of Federal Offender's was especially helpful as it had much valuable statistical material covering the preceding ten years. All of the tables

⁴ Federal Offenders, (A Review of the Work of the Federal Bureau of Prisons During the Year Ending June 30, 1936, Including Statistics of Federal Prisoners and Persons Under Federal Parole and Probation Supervision.), 6:8, June 30, 1936.

have been taken from portions of the tables appearing in this issue, since only certain portions were necessary to illustrate the material covered.

CHAPTER II

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OR PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

There are two things that are outstanding about the Federal prison service, since its reorganization in 1930. First, the tendency has been to get away from institutions with large populations. In Great Britain⁵ the largest prison houses less than 1000 men and the average daily population of the St. Vincent du Paul penitentiary near Montreal, Canada, which is the largest Canadian penitentiary, is 990. When one speaks of the Federal prison service, he is speaking of several small institutions* which are so maintained in keeping with the best principles of penology. Secondly, the stress that has been placed upon the rehabilitation of the inmate is most pronounced. Not only is there a great deal of talk about rehabilitation, but there is a full plan built around this philosophy in order to attain the desired objectives.

Before examining this philosophy and the objectives attained, it is well to gain some concept through the following tables of the prison population of the Federal institutions.

⁵ Federal Offenders, 6:3, June 30, 1936

* See Table VII for average populations.

Perhaps the first question one might ask is what are some of the chief reasons or offenses that have caused men to be incarcerated? The following table (Table I) shows such offenses as counterfeiting, forgery, homicide, immigration act violation, liquor and narcotics act violation, motor vehicle theft, postal law violation, interstate commerce hijacking, white slavery, and other offenses. The factor to be pointed out is that such a conglomeration of offenses is bound to lead to a heterogeneous population, which would of necessity make the education program, or any program, a very flexible thing in order to meet the wide demands of such a group. There is quite a difference between the swarthy gentleman who prefers to have women "hustle" for him and the suave gentleman who has made the mistake of using the mails to defraud.

To get a complete picture of the prison population we must also consider the matter of age groupings. Table II (page 13) shows how the prison faculty must meet the needs of youngsters of early junior high school age, as well as the needs of men sixty-five years of age and older. The type of education in a reformatory will be different in some respects from that of the National Training School for Boys, Washington, D. C., and the tastes of men in the penitentiary group will in many cases be quite different.

Table II (page 13) does not concern the whole population,

TABLE I

FEDERAL PRISON POPULATION BY OFFENSE
FOR THE YEAR 1940⁶

Offense	Number of total Population
Counterfeiting and forgery	1,739
Homicide (of National Bank, Federal Reserve, Government officers)	272
Immigration Act violations	257
Liquor law violations	4,552
Narcotic Drug Act violations	1,673
National Motor Vehicle Theft Act violations	2,431
Postal law violations	1,861
Theft from interstate commerce	377
White Slave Traffic Act violations	559
Other offenses	<u>2,011</u>
Total	15,732

⁶ Table 27. "Population of Federal Penitentiaries, Reformatories, Medical Center, and Prison Camps By Offense", June 30, 1909 to 1940, Federal Offenders, 10:336, June 30, 1940.

but includes only that portion of it that was committed to institutions from the courts in 1940. Of the 10,362 violators committed in 1940 to Federal institutions 6,343 were in the age grouping of twenty-five to forty-four years of age. These men should be in their most productive years of endeavor and there is still an opportunity for them to profit by educational opportunities. One cannot overlook the 2,641 youth in the nine-year span from fifteen through twenty-four. These are indeed a challenge to the Bureau's educational program.

I. A PHILOSOPHY THAT STRESSES REHABILITATION
THROUGH EDUCATION AND OTHER FACTORS

No one can call himself enlightened in the twentieth century and stick to the outmoded "eye for an eye" and "tooth for a tooth" way of thinking. In this age which attempts to study man's relation to society in a scientific manner, the first question raised by the penologist is what made the violator do the thing and how can this criminal tendency be corrected. It is true that almost anybody's reaction to being personally offended is to be emotionally upset and angry. To gain vengeance is generally our historic impulse. But in cool and collected reconsideration we must admit that the personal satisfaction of a punched nose doesn't present a long-range plan for preventing the recurrence of the same situation. When all is weighed, the small personal satisfaction can be easily forgone if in its

TABLE II

COMMITMENTS FROM COURTS TO FEDERAL
INSTITUTIONS FOR 1940, BY AGE⁷

Age	Committments	Age	Committments
15 to 19	721	40 to 44	1,056
20 to 24	1,920	45 to 49	722
25 to 29	2,082	50 to 54	433
30 to 34	1,738	55 to 59	261
35 to 39	1,467	60 to 64	123
		65 and over	109

Total committments 10,632

Breakdown of first two age groups:

15	3	20	344
16	31	21	372
17	126	22	385
18	220	23	427
19	341	24	392

⁷ Table 7. "Committments to Federal Institutions (a) By Age, For Each Fiscal Year Ended, June 30: 1931 to 1940", Federal Offenders, 10:317, June 30, 1940.

place a means for avoiding such occurrences can be developed.

If a man steals a car, insists on producing tax-free liquor illicitly, or offends in many other ways, he can be locked up securely, made to do exceedingly hard labor ten hours a day, and thus pay his debt to society. He can be repressed to the nth degree by sadistic guards who do his thinking for him and maintain a strictly regimented animal-like existence for him. When he has completed such a sentence, it is probable that he will, according to his nature, be more antagonistic, cringing, or introverted than ever. His chances for being something different, or changing his social outlook will be negligible.

It is safe and easy, although expensive, to throw a man into a tool-proof cage and forget him; it is extremely difficult and sometimes hazardous to provide him with a constructive vocational, educational, and moral building program. A hundred and fifty years of experience, however, completely vindicates the efforts of those who recognize that the objective of the prison is something more than retribution, repression, and safekeeping.⁸

The Federal prison service attempts to maintain an environment, so far as possible, that will simulate a normal home environment. There must be decent living conditions, facilities for sound housing and hygienic living, adequate clothing, and wholesome and appetizing food. In addition, a man must have chances for self-betterment and diversion if he is not to deteriorate mentally. The prison service would

⁸ Federal Offenders, 4:10, June 30, 1934

be of little value if it considered its obligations at an end after simply boarding and housing the inmates in a proper fashion. The educational program has within its power the opportunity to exert a constructive influence on each inmate, which will make prisons something besides four secure walls. It endeavors to afford to each man, according to his capacity and background, valuable experience, skills, and ideals that are highly social in their nature.

A philosophy of rehabilitation would not get very far if it did not recognize the various types to be found in the inmate population. Alcatraz or "The Rock" personifies the closest the Bureau comes to stressing the idea of safekeeping at the expense of everything else. However, such a policy is necessary where men have demonstrated that they are desperate criminals and have only a vicious attitude toward society. In passing, it may be noted that even at Alcatraz rehabilitation is attempted, and men who have proven their sincerity to do better are moved to less regimented institutions where they can live freer and more interesting lives.

One has only to read Thrasher's "The Gang"⁹ or Zorbaugh's "The Gold Coast and the Slum"¹⁰ to realize that there are many underprivileged offenders who have been under the heel of a

⁹ Thrasher, F. M., The Gang, Chicago, Illinois, The University of Chicago Press, 1927.

¹⁰ Zorbaugh, H. W., Gold Coast and Slum, Chicago, Illinois, The University of Chicago Press, 1929.

very crude environment. The atmosphere of clean, wholesome living that is provided in Federal institutions should have quite a curative and elevating effect on a person who has known nothing but squalor.

There are those offenders who accidentally happened to do the wrong thing at the right time. Due to some unfortunate accident they have slipped into the toils of the law and the court has deemed that they must pay a penalty in the form of a sentence. The associations thus gained, especially if the individual is susceptible to the influence of stronger personalities, will influence the rest of a person's life. If such an influence is destructive such a person will pay a terrible price for such an accident. Akin to the accidental offender is the criminal who has had the forces of circumstance conspire against him. There are those people who are not strong enough to meet all that adversity places in their paths.

We must deal with those who might be imagined to accept the standards of a given society but whose socialization is so inadequate that they fail to make the anticipated moral and civic adjustments, especially under severe crisis. Many of these may be fairly well balanced, though some of their acts are labeled criminal. They include those offenders who may be said to be victims of unusual situations for which their previous moral training has not prepared them.¹¹

Their personality makeup must always be considered in dealing with them and formulating a plan for their improvement of character.

¹¹ Kimball Young, Personality and Problems of Adjustment, F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1941, Vol. I, pp. 667-8.

The feeble minded and the sorely tempted criminal are problems of a different nature.

There are those more seriously maladjusted individuals whom we label psychotic and whose mental aberrations take a form of depredations toward property or violence against persons, which brings them into the hands of the police.¹²

Medical advice is often essential in such cases. A different program is usually mapped out for such offenders. For instance, the therapeutic value of many educational factors will be stressed for prisoners who fall into this category.

In summation one can say that the treatment of prisoners is on an individual basis. The educational program serves the personal needs of each individual whether he wishes to read and write or study brick-masonry.

One of the governing points of the philosophy of rehabilitation is the fact that the inmate will return to society. On second thought, this seems fairly obvious, but it is quite often lost sight of. A mental hospital often keeps the patients it receives until death claims them. In a crass way society could forget them, if it were that inhuman, as they will not bother society anymore. Table III shows quite plainly that society receives a large portion of penalized men each year. Their release definitely affects the community to which they return.

Since one is especially tax-conscious these days, the

¹² Ibid, I, 668.

TABLE III
 MOVEMENT OF SENTENCED POPULATION FOR
 INSTITUTIONS, 1940¹⁴

Population, beginning of year			16,406
Received during year:			
From courts	*10,632		
Parole violators, condi-			
tional release violators,			
escaped prisoners returned,			
other	651		
Transferred from other			
institutions	<u>2,385</u>	13,668	
Discharged during year:			
Sentence expired, condition-			
ally released, paroled, died,			
escaped, other	11,309		
Transferred to other			
institutions	<u>3,033</u>	<u>14,342</u>	<u>-674</u>
Population end of year			15,732

* This figure corresponds with Table I as it represents court commitments.

¹⁴ Table 28. "Movement Of Sentenced Population For Institutions Operated By Bureau Of Prisons, By Fiscal Years Ended June 30: 1931 to 1940", Federal Offenders, 10:337 June 30, 1940.

question arises, is such a program worth while? Looking at it from the standpoint of cost alone, the rehabilitative program has a definite dollar and cents value. The released criminal will claim his citizenship rights and move back into the community. If he is hardened, confirmed in his habits, has never been exposed to a better way of living, he will not be in the community long before he will be costing it much more than any prison rehabilitative costs would have been when he was imprisoned.

II. PURPOSE OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The 1937 Federal Offender discussing education in general points out that¹³ after several years of experimentation some headway had been made towards selecting those educational methods and curricula which best meet the needs of the prisoners. It is well to remember that there are many types of institutions, and each one had its own particular problems which are peculiar to educational endeavor. It is well to remember also that the prison service was considerably on the pioneer side in its trial and error gropings. It was indeed a milestone for prison education in general when the prison service felt sufficiently experienced to state that it would develop its program around the following four units:

¹³ Federal Offenders, 7:8, June 30, 1937.

Elementary education for illiterates and borderline illiterates, as determined by standardized educational tests.

Modified forms of academic education for these inmates who measure above fourth grade level on standardized educational tests.

Related trades and occupational information classes for vocational trainees and industrial workers.

Special classes such as commercial subjects, languages, and other subjects designed to meet the practical and cultural interests of a selected group of the higher inmates.¹⁵

It is to be noticed that in the above units the chief stress was to be placed on organized classroom instruction. Inmates are also to be permitted to gain skills and experience if they so choose rather than to watch the days slip by until they will be free to follow their old habits of crime once more. There are, to be sure, many reasons and combinations of reasons which cause an individual to be a criminal. However, quite often one of the chief reasons for a man turning to crime is a lack of any legitimate means of livelihood. Thus to help a man gain knowledge as a foundry worker, a plumber's apprentice, machinshop helper, or bricklayer's apprentice will give him the tools to earn his living honestly. To be sure, there are exceptions to this rule, and one will find criminals with a good trade background. There are many men, however, who have never had the opportunity to raise themselves above common

¹⁵ Federal Offenders, 7:8, June 30, 1937.

labor and, as a result in some cases have turned to illegal activities.

It is interesting to note in connection with the trade training offered that many restless youths can use the program as an exploratory effort. They may be able to gravitate to a trade they would not have discovered otherwise. This may have a wholesome, steadying influence on them if they develop a genuine interest in it.

Of a related academic nature is the reorientation of the inmate to his correct role in society. No doubt in the long evenings and the sober weeks that mount up there come to some of the men thoughts as to their present plight and how to correct it. Such a realization can be turned to good profit if there is a teacher who can show the inmate where to look for what he wishes. I speak of those things outside the province of the chaplain in this respect. Such things as civics and possibly ethics can be placed on an academic level of worthwhile achievement for the individual looking for such an adjustment. Through the realm of books and leaders many men have learned there are other approaches to an interpretation of society than the particular approach they have always accepted.

It is surprising the amount of illiteracy one finds in this country where the public school system has had such a tremendous influence on most of our lives. To read and write has always seemed in our democracy a God-given right of the

common man. However, in some institutions illiterates and near illiterates comprise approximately twenty percent of the men admitted. It is little wonder that such men have been led into extra-legal practices. They have not the most rudimentary tools to get along in such a complex society as the twentieth century presents. It is difficult to picture oneself without these most elementary skills. The disadvantages soon mount up against one under such circumstances.

It should be mentioned that the educational program is for the most part built around a purely voluntary enrollment. This is not true in the case of illiterates or near illiterates. In many institutions such cases must take schooling until they have attained a fourth grade level of achievement or have demonstrated their inability to acquire such learning. It is rather pathetic and yet quite wholesome to see a grown man endeavoring to master a primer. It is laudable that the prison service never thinks it too late for a man to take up the first tools toward learning.

CHAPTER III

FACILITIES OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

There are many things to consider when speaking of the facilities of the educational program. As the school rooms and buildings are but a part of the greater unit, the institution, it is important to note the influence of the prison architecture on the educational program. The architecture in the various institutions will be different because of the very nature of each institution. The road camps, jails, reformatories, penitentiaries, and hospitals all present different needs. Perhaps in no other educational organization does the architect have such an important effect (even though the teacher may not be conscious of it).

However, before examining the architectural influence it is well to consider the varieties of institutions in the Prison Bureau. It may be less confusing to grasp the many different facilities of these institutions if one first realizes how different from sister institutions some of the institutions are. It is rather easy to assume that since these institutions are all under one bureau that they are all alike. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The versatility of its governing body in Washington can, incidentally, be appreciated for their immense task in coordinating the bureau's efforts.

I. THE VARIETIES OF INSTITUTIONS

In the following table a composite picture is presented of the different institutions that are operated by the Bureau of Prisons. It is to be noted that the institutions at Terminal Island, California, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and Fort Worth and Dallas, Texas, have been transferred to the War and other departments of the United States Government.¹⁶ When these institutions are spoken of, it should be remembered that they are no longer operated as a part of the Federal prison service. The following table does not include these latter institutions.

There are seven different types of institutions: penitentiaries, reformatories, medical center, correctional institutions, training school, detention headquarters, and prison camps. Each of the foregoing types of institutions may have institutions within their grouping that differ from others in that group in that the class of inmates served is different. The penitentiary group is so set up as to have one institution for intractable offenders, two for habitual tractable offenders, and three for older improvable offenders. The reformatories are broken down into only two categories, one for female offenders and three others for younger male offenders. There are eight correctional institutions, seven of them for short-term offenders, and one for younger improvable offenders. Besides the five prison camps

¹⁶ "Gearing Federal Prisons to the War Effort," The Atlantian, 1:89, January, 1943.

TABLE IV

INSTITUTIONS OF THE BUREAU OF PRISONS¹⁷Penitentiaries

For intractable offenders:
 Alcatraz Island, California
 For habitual tractable offenders:
 Atlanta, Georgia
 Leavenworth, Kansas
 For older improvable offenders:
 Lewisburg, Pennsylvania
 McNeil Island, Washington
 Terre Haute, Indiana

Reformatories:

For younger improvable offenders:
 Chillicothe, Ohio
 El Reno, Oklahoma
 Petersburg, Virginia
 For female offenders:
 Alderson, West Virginia

Medical Center

For physically and mentally maladjusted offenders:
 Springfield, Missouri

Correctional Institutions:

For short-term offenders:
 Ashland, Kentucky
 Danbury, Connecticut
 La Tuna, Texas
 Milan, Michigan
 Sandstone, Minnesota
 Tallahassee, Florida
 Texarkana, Texas
 For younger improvable offenders:
 Englewood, Colorado

Training School:

For male juvenile delinquents:
 Washington, D. C.

Prison Camps:

For improvable offenders, minimum-custody type:
 Kooskia, Idaho
 DuPont, Washington
 Montgomery, Alabama
 Tucson, Arizona
 Mill Point, West Virginia

Detention Headquarters:

For offenders awaiting trial and short-term offenders:
 New Orleans, Louisiana
 New York, New York

¹⁷ "Gearing Federal Prisons To The War Effort", The Atlantian, 1:8, January, 1943.

for improvable offenders, minimum custody type, there are two detentional headquarters for offenders awaiting trial and short-term offenders, one medical center for physically and mentally maladjusted offenders, and a training school for male juvenile delinquents.

These institutions are kept in touch with each other by means of a prison bus service. If an institution feels an inmate would do better in another institution, recommendation for such a transfer is made to the Bureau.

There has been a substantial increase since 1931 in the number of transfers between institutions,.... This increase has been due in large part to the operation of the classification system. Under this system, each Federal institution is responsible for the treatment of the special class or type of prisoners assigned to it. Many inmates are transferred from the institution to which they are first committed to others where they can be more effectively treated.¹⁸

Such transfer between institutions is important in many ways. Educationally speaking, if a different institution such as Chillicothe reformatory has an airplane mechanic's school, it will be to the advantage of the interested inmate to transfer there if his type of custody, abilities, and background would support such a change. Alcatraz penitentiary would not permit the freedom of attendance at classes, whereas a controlled movement to and from school is easily arranged at Leavenworth and Terre Haute penitentiaries. This is due partly to the

¹⁸ Federal Offenders, 11:30, June 30, 1941.

custody of, the inmate and partly to the architectural plan of the institution where cell houses and school are all under one roof. Thus if an inmate were interested in class room education, he might be induced to win a transfer from Alcatraz to Leavenworth through good behavior.

Before going further in this paper, one should not that the educational plant at a detentional headquarters is of necessity less ambitious than the one at a reformatory. The quarters are much smaller, the requirements* of the prisoners are such as to preclude anything but a very simple and modest program. Most prison camps are of the barracks type, as they sometimes are dismantled and moved along with the job as it progresses. Such a nomadic existence would not permit of anything in the way of equipment that is set up in the permanent-type institution.

The early institutions were not designed in some cases with the thought of school attendance in mind. In fact, some of the early educational efforts were started in the prison auditoriums or mess halls, moving to better quarters as the Warden and other officials were impressed with the seriousness of the program. Housing of the school facilities still seems to be one of the most serious problems of some of the institu-

* ... (due to the itinerant nature of their custody; some of the inmates are not yet indicted, some are indicted but not yet arraigned, others are indicted and arraigned, while others are sentenced and awaiting removal to other institutions.)

tions. Some of the newer institutions, such as Englewood, Colorado, have ideal class rooms. However, some of these newer institutions have not been planned properly in this respect. There are eight well-lighted classrooms in the Terre Haute penitentiary, along with supervisory offices and supply rooms. These rooms have movable partitions that can be folded back to make large lecture halls. The equipment is good and is being improved, but, in the summer school the heat is quite a problem. Due to the escape hazard the windows cannot be flung wide open and their design will not permit it. Consequently very few breezes will circulate to aid the perspiring students. Air conditioning units would be quite a boon to the school in the late spring, summer, and early fall months.

II PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT

In some of the institutions the class rooms are but a unit in a larger building. McNeil Island authorities speak of this facility as follows, "..... a building housing administrative offices of a secondary nature as well as the educational department, library, and similar functions."¹⁹ Leavenworth has four cell houses radiating from a rotunda. There is a projection emanating from the back side of the rotunda which houses inside offices, dining room, kitchen, schoolrooms, library, and chapel.

¹⁹ "Gearing Federal Prisons to the War Effort," The Atlantian, 1:24, January, 1943.

INDIANA STATE
LIBRARY

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In a recent report, the authorities at Atlanta have the following to say of their school rooms: "Above the dining room are the prison auditorium (archaic and increasingly inadequate), the educational department (also inadequate) and the beautifully decorated Catholic chapel."²⁰ Lewisburg has nine well-equipped classrooms. The reformatory at Englewood, Colorado, has above its mess hall an auditorium, a well-stocked library, and the classrooms and offices of the educational department.

Some of the institutions have more elaborate facilities. El Reno (Oklahoma) reformatory has a school building and a vocational training building. It seems that equipment and subject matter of a trade type are stressed more in the reformatories. The reformatory type prisoner is usually younger, and therefore more is to be gained by his school attendance. Consequently, educational activities, especially along vocational lines, are stressed even more than at institutions of other types. Some concept of the importance of school activities can be gained from the perspective of the whole Chillicothe reformatory buildings.

...large administration and receiving buildings, four cell blocks (with a capacity of 600 inmates), six dormitories (with a capacity of 1000), two mess halls, a laundry building, a school building, a warehouse, a chair factory, an iron foundry, an airplane mechanic's school and eight vocational shops.²¹

²⁰ Ibid., p. 32

²¹ Ibid., p. 36

A close-up of the airplane mechanic's school is informative concerning the specialized equipment provided for handling a subject of great current interest.

The school building, especially erected for its present purpose, is a semi-hanger and houses not only the shops but schoolrooms, a reference library and a lecture room equipped for moving picture projection. All machinery is of the latest type and each student is supplied with an individual set of high-grade tools especially suited to the work he must do.²²

It can be said generally, that very fine accessory equipment, such as books, materials, and tools, is provided for the schools, regardless of the other facilities of the particular educational department. All the institutions have excellent craft shops where it is practical to do institutional maintenance work under skilled supervision while the inmates are learning a trade. The Prison Bureau has adopted the practice of erecting its institutions with civilian labor, but any buildings added to the institution after the original construction are usually built by the inmates under expert supervision. Such construction work offers a wealth of apprenticeship training. The following indicates a part of the shop equipment at Terre Haute:

The machine shop, for instance, is equipped with heavy duty lathes, a large Marshall and Huschart drill press, a planer and a considerable amount of other modern equipment. In the tin shop there is a large Niagara slip-roll forming machine, an 18-gage capacity combination burring, turning, and boring machine, a 24-gage capacity double seamer, an 18-gage crimping and beading machine, a 36-inch adjustable

22 Ibid., p. 38.

bar folder, a 36-inch squaring shear, and numerous other types of appliances. The carpenter shop has hand saws, power-operated turning lathes, surface planers, mortising machines, hand jointers, rip saws and woodworking devices of all kinds for production on a large scale.²³

Some of the schools have placed a great deal of emphasis on welding in keeping with the times.

Even in the prison camps with their smaller and limited facilities, equipment is set aside for the educational pursuits.

The DuPont, Washington, camp reports the following:

An excellent school has been conducted, teaching a variety of elementary and vocational subjects which improve the employable status of inmates in defense industries. The camp craft shop has also been utilized for this purpose.²⁴

The Danbury correctional institution has the following interesting shop which could be used advantageously in several of the institutions:

Also unique at Danbury is a hobby shop, supervised by a vocational director, where inmates may come, three or four times a week, and do handicraft work in wood, leather, rubber, and other materials.²⁵

III TEACHING STAFF

The teaching staff varies among the institutions in the Federal Prison service. Not every institution has a Supervisor of Education at its head. Some institutions have Assistant

²³ Ibid., p. 47

²⁴ Ibid., p. 86

²⁵ Ibid., p. 52

TABLE V
 INSTITUTIONAL TEACHING STAFFS

Location	Super- visors	Assistant Supervisors	Vocational Counselors	Civilian Instructors	
				Full Time	Part
Alcatraz					
Atlanta	1	2	1	3	
Leavenworth	1	2	1		
Lewisburg	1	1	1	2	4
McNeil Island	1			2	
Terre Haute	1	1		1	
Chillicothe	1	1	1	5	5
El Reno	1	2	1	3	4
Petersburg		1		2	
Alderson		1		5	
Springfield	1				
Ashland		1		1	
Danbury		1		1	3
Englewood		1		2	
La Tuna		1			
Milan		1			
Sandstone		1		1	
Tallahassee		1		1	
Texarkana		1		1	
Washington	1	2	1	9	
New Orleans*				1	
New York*				1	
Du Pont*				1	
Kooskia*				1	
Mill Point*				1	
Montgomery*				1	
Tuscon*				1	

* The Junior Warden's Assistants are also in charge of education work at these institutions.

Per Letter, 2-24-43, Dr. Benjamin Frank, Supervisor of Education, Washington, D. C.

Supervisors at the head of their educational departments. Petersburg reformatory has a Supervising Instructor at the head of its educational department. The type of work at this reformatory is of an agricultural nature. All of the penitentiaries and reformatories with the exception of Petersburg and Alcatraz have a Supervisor of Education. More than one third (35.3%) of the Federal prison population was housed in penitentiaries and approximately one seventh (13.75%) of the Federal prison population was housed in reformatories for the fiscal period 1940-1941.²⁶ Thus it can be said that the Bureau places its best educational effort where it can do the most good.

The organizing of the educational activities in the larger institutions requires the services of a full fledged Supervisor of Education along with a considerable staff. The penitentiary population exceeds in size the reformatory group by more than two and one half times. However, reformatories demand equal or greater teaching staffs as the age grouping necessitates a thorough going educational program. It is interesting to note that although the National Training School for Boys in Washington, D. C., represents only 1.65% of the total of the 1940-1941 population figure, it employs a Supervisor of Education and has a large staff of specialists who know how to deal with delinquent youth.²⁷

²⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

In the larger penitentiaries and other institutions one will find vocational counselors. (See more about the character of their work on page 55). Theirs is the important duty of discovering the vocational aptitudes of the inmates under their charge and working them into some trade training course and job in the prison industries. These men have very important positions as they may lead a man into a new livelihood that will cause him to reject his old habits of earning a living in a criminal manner. The prison industries are operated as a self-sustaining business and must meet the competitive prices and qualities of the private enterprisers who also bid for the Government's business. The vocational counselor must find ways to arrange the jobs so that they may be productively efficient and at the same time prepare a thorough going training program through apprenticeship and moving up to better jobs.

The instructor foremen are not only skilled craftsmen but also have the ability to impart their skills to inmates who are assigned to work under them. These instructor foremen are required to take teacher training courses, make analyses of their jobs, and keep abreast of the better methods of doing things in their particular field. In some of the institutions a lecture period is held right in the vocational shop with use of blackboard and practical demonstrations. After a trainee is past the neophyte stage, he is given a chance to go out on various work assignments that have to do with the maintenance of the

several buildings that make up the institution.

There has been some experimentation with part-time civilian teachers. These are usually teachers who have full-time teaching positions in the nearby community. They conduct a class or two several times a week and are paid on a part-time basis, thus supplementing their own income and providing the prison faculty with professional assistance it could not otherwise afford. Subjects can be offered in this manner that would not justify the hiring of a full time instructor. However, there are also full time paid instructors in certain fields. At Chillicothe reformatory the airplane mechanic's course is taught by three experienced and fully competent engineers.²⁸

The inmate teachers are usually men with some specialized training, but not necessarily with teaching background. If a Supervisor of Education lacks adequate personnel, he usually rounds out his faculty with inmate teachers. It is remarkable the degree of seriousness with which these inmate teachers take their new professional responsibilities. They must attend teacher-training courses conducted by the Supervisor or Assistant Supervisor of Education. They must review subject matter and master it so as to present it in an interesting manner to the students. The effectiveness of their teaching,

²⁸ Ibid., p. 38.

together with that of the rest of the faculty, is evidenced by the raising of the average grade level and the number of inmates completing their grade school requirements.

IV TRAINING OF PRISON PERSONNEL

Every permanent employee who enters the Bureau of Prisons must complete an initial course of study covering the methods and objectives of the federal prison service. This study course introduces the new employee to general policies of achieving healthy and wholesome inmate living, the importance of a definite labor policy, and the treating of the inmate's problems individually, and covers various technical matters such as conditional release and parole. The study course is broken down into five sections, each of which has a written task for performance. Certain sections of Wines, Morris, and Sutherland's criminology books are assigned for reading in connection with this first series study course. Such an induction of the new employee points out a scientific approach to penology through the education of oneself. It is interesting to note for one thing the change of attitude that comes over one when this study course causes the new employee to think of the criminal as a human being to be rehabilitated. Perhaps a later study can be made, comparing the attitude of the employees who have been educated in the science of dealing with the criminal, their views before and after training, and the views of a random

sampling of the general public who have not been educated in the science of penology.

The training of the personnel does not stop after the first series study course is completed. Each year a study course is prepared for all the employees to participate in. They read about it, write opinions on it, and then take an examination. Some special part of the work is gone into by a particular study course. Recently the theme for the study course was the subject of cooperation. This study course attempted to show how the various departments were dependent on each other. Cooperation, it was pointed out, is necessary to a great degree among the different departments if any one of them is to attain the objectives of the prison program. Many of the functions of each department were described in detail so that all of the employees might better understand the work of these departments.

The things that the employees learn in the study courses can be put to immediate application. As a matter of fact, one cannot take his post as a custodial or administrative employee and do a good job without learning first the methods of the service. In attaining the objective of returning the inmate to society as a more responsible citizen, one must encourage the inmates to use their own initiative. The very nature of prison work with its uniform clothing, the same type of food for all except the medical patients who must have special diets, and uniform living quarters, would make it a rather simple matter

to have regimentation creep into the organization. Wise supervision can prevent this by encouraging the inmates to act for themselves within reason and not to have to do everything on a given order. Even where orders need to be given on the job, the best formanship practices as to distinctness of orders and fairness to all are stressed. With regard to the program of training personnel it may be said that all objectives point toward simulating favorable working and living conditions in a free life. It is an attempt to reorientate a man to living in a worthwhile manner in the belief that when he has been introduced to such a way of life he will continue in it after he leaves the jurisdiction of the prison service.

V THE LIBRARY SERVICE

It is important to note that the library service does not consist in cataloguing culls from people's libraries that have been given to the prison service. Appropriations are earmarked for the purchase of wisely selected books and periodicals. The wishes of the inmates and the suggestions of the education department are guiding factors in the selection of books. Trained librarians are employed in several of the institutions. They not only select and catalogue the books, but plan reading programs for individual inmates and conduct studies of world events. In a great many ways the librarian is a teacher. He can reach men who do not wish to participate

in formal education. He can aid the man who is in school by helping him secure the reference and related materials that are necessary adjuncts to his formal training. The importance of a well-stocked library, with adequate supervision is a vital asset to prison education just as it is in any other type of educational effort.

Not much of a composite picture is available on the prison libraries. They are comparatively new as a separate unit. At this writing there are nine librarians employed by the bureau.

CHAPTER IV

METHODS OF EDUCATION IN THE PRISON SERVICE

One thing to remember about the educational program of the Federal prison system, as explained by this paper, is that its interpretation varies from institution to institution. This is in part due to the differences in the types of the inmate population and in part to the flexible organization of the Bureau's educational staff, which encourages each supervisor of education to exercise a great degree of originality in meeting the particular needs of his own institution. It is well to remember also that the educational program is but a related part of a carefully planned pattern. The U. S. Public Health Service units, with their psychiatrists, psychologists, and other specialists, are a part of this pattern. The social service units have a many-sided program, classifying prisoners, preparing parole and release programs for the inmates, and maintaining contacts of various natures between the outside world and the inmates. One cannot pass over lightly the importance of the work provided by the Prison Industries. Many inmates appreciate the opportunity to earn something in the industries. Such work also helps to keep them from getting a psychosis from confinement through taking an interest in something. The chaplains contribute invaluablely to the conduct of the inmates inside the institutions and influence to a great degree the lives of many of these men long after they

have completed their sentences. The librarians are a functional part of this pattern, perhaps more closely related to the educational program than some of the above-mentioned departments. It is sufficient to point out here that each department is a part of a greater whole which is known as the Federal prison service. Although this paper speaks only of the educational program, one should not lose sight of one fact: namely, that many of the other departments must function properly along with the educational service in order to give a closely coordinated effort to rehabilitate the inmates in an individualized manner.

I ENTRANCE AND FOLLOW UP TESTING

The educational service is interested in the literacy of the inmate among other things. A standard achievement test is given to the inmate upon entrance to learn his grade level. If the inmate at the Federal reformatory at Chillicothe does not pass the fifth grade Stanford Achievement Tests, he is required to undergo academic training in order to meet this level.²⁹ There are some who eventually demonstrate that they are mentally incompetent to do this, and they require different planning. It is interesting to note that the average time taken at Chillicothe to meet the fifth grade requirement is from eight to ten weeks. The inmate is tested not only for his academic achievements but also to see what will add most to his personal welfare and best

²⁹ Federal Offenders, 5:100, June 30, 1935.

TABLE VI
EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF INMATES³⁰

Educational Grade Levels	Total	Penitentiaries				Reformatories	
		A	B	C	D (c)	E (c)	F
Number:*							
0.0 - 2.9	905	478	1	147	39	124	116
3.0 - 3.9	422	161	27	69	7	82	76
4.0 - 4.9	889	337	122	129	19	155	127
5.0 - 5.9	912	323	152	133	28	151	125
6.0 - 6.9	729	225	163	95	21	126	99
7.0 - 7.9	690	182	146	97	53	120	92
8.0 - 8.9	537	99	131	114	44	78	71
9.0 - 9.9	450	95	95	87	53	58	62
10.0 - and over	723	105	185	146	119	71	97
Total	6257	2005	1022	1017	383	965	865
Median	5.9	5.1	7.3	6.3	8.6	5.8	5.86

A Atlanta, Georgia D McNeil Island, Washington
B Leavenworth, Kansas E Chillicothe, Ohio
C Lewisburg, Pennsylvania F El Reno, Oklahoma

(c) Based on reports covering only 10 months of the year.

* This table is based on the Stanford Educational Achievement Test. In this test there are three different ways of scoring the subject. However, the prison bureau is interested in this case in determining only his educational grade level. It is given in years and months, going as high as the nine month school year.

³⁰ Inmates Tested At Admission, Classified By Educational Grade Level, For Designated Institutions, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1941. Table J, Federal Offenders, 11:46, June 30, 1941.

interests. This requires much cooperation between the psychologist and the supervisor of education. It is interesting to note that on occasion inmates do not test well under some standardized tests, especially those of the psychologists. They have an unreasoning fear sometimes that if they don't pass some tests they will be "bugged", that is sent to an asylum for the mentally unbalanced. Therefore, the psychologist will often prepare his own tests in order to avoid any chance question that might make a convict think they were trying to prove him unbalanced. Mechanical aptitude and vocational interest tests are also administered to the inmates in those institutions that can offer studies along these lines.

On the bases of these tests the educational department in conjunction with the other departments outlines a program for each individual prisoner. If he is illiterate, plans are made for his gaining a knowledge of reading and writing. If he has evinced an interest in some trade, plans are set forth to work him into a vocational group. Except in the case of the illiterates the recruiting for attendance in the school work is voluntary. The men must show enough initiative to go ahead with the plans made for them. Another general principle that all institutions follow in some manner is the matter of follow-up testing. In its annual 1940 report, Leavenworth states³¹ that

³¹ Federal Offenders, 10:77, June 30, 1940.

at the end of each school term quarter, a standard achievement test is administered. This is a different test from that used for the inmates when they enter the institution. Atlanta penitentiary reports³² that the grade placement level for compulsory students has been raised from 4.1 to 5.0, based on the Stanford Achievement Scale. McNeil Island penitentiary states³³ that at frequent intervals each active vocational trainee is interviewed by the Supervisor of Education or one of his assistants. His work is reviewed and his training problems are discussed. A further check is made with the trainee's foreman both orally and by reviewing a rating sheet of the trainee prepared by the foreman. Lewisburg penitentiary points out³⁴ that its classroom instruction was conducted on a basis of three terms of four months each, with progress tests and promotions at the end of each term.

Testing has proven invaluable in showing the individual institutions where their educational problems lie. The Petersburg reformatory's educational program for illiterates represents the greatest part of its educational work.³⁵ The Stanford Achievement Tests made on the last 500 inmates received, revealed that only

32 Federal Offenders, 10:43, June 30, 1940.

33 Ibid., 8:78, June 30, 1938.

34 Ibid., 8:90, June 30, 1938.

35 Ibid., 10:151, June 30, 1940.

twenty-two per cent were above the grade level 5.0 and that thirty-eight per cent scored below grade 3.0. Only three per cent of the inmates have completed high school. For the illiterates school attendance is mandatory if they are serving sentences of over a year. The New Orleans detention headquarters reports³⁶ that thirty-five per cent of its population may be classed as illiterates and are assigned to school.

Another result of follow-up testing is the revision of certain educational methods that were found to be unsatisfactory. Lewisburg penitentiary has the following interesting study to report:

Previous to this year, men had been classified according to the composite scores achieved on the Stanford test. It was found, however, that about one-third of the men were placed in classes too difficult, while another one-third were placed in grades which proved too easy for them. Accordingly a study was made of five hundred cases, and it was discovered that the errors had been made due to differences in arithmetic ability. On the basis of this study, students have been classified according to their achievement in the English subjects. This has given us a fairly homogeneous group in the English (subjects) at the various grade levels with a wide range in arithmetic ability, and the latter difficulty has been solved by completely individualizing the arithmetic instruction.³⁷

Testing has proven of great value in the educational work of the Federal prison service. It has enabled the service not only to gauge the achievements of each inmate, but also to develop a picture of the field in which its efforts should be

³⁶ Federal Offenders, 10:250, June 30, 1940.

³⁷ Federal Offenders, 7:70, June 30, 1937.

directed based on the achievements of the entire institutional population. The follow up test has shown its value in that an accurate check on the results of the educational system may be made. As noted above as a result of the follow up check a revision of certain methods can be made in order to assure a more service able program.

II DAY AND NIGHT SCHOOL

A. FACTORS GOVERNING ATTENDANCE

The distinction made by this paper between day and night school is not a finely drawn distinction. It will vary from institution to institution as each institution has its own problems. In a prison such as Leavenworth penitentiary which confines most of its activities inside its high walls, inmates are sometimes permitted to pass to and from school and their jobs. Such activity is controlled by means of a written permit. In contrast is the penitentiary at Terre Haute where the new type of architecture has done away with the high restraining walls. This creates a custodial problem which means that inmates working outside the main building enclosure must be escorted wherever they go. Thus the majority of the school work is confined to early evening classes. Then the inmates can go from the connected cell houses to the connected school without escort. The farm work or road work carried on by a particular unit of the service may require that its inmates be on the job during the day.

Of necessity, the school work must be held at night under such circumstances. This is a handicap, as men are very tired sometimes after a day's work. However, an inmate must be intent on self-betterment if he is willing to forgo playing checkers, reading, or listening to the radio in order to study some academic subjects. It is to the credit of the inmates that many do attend night school. Such action is tangible proof of the importance of the education department to the inmates. Still another factor to consider is that some inmates would connive to attend school in the day to get out of work. To be sure, if attended to assiduously, the school work would require laborious efforts. But if such students were admitted to school with the avowed intent of getting out of work, they would be just seat warmers and a detriment to the efforts of the educational service.

The matter of school enrollment has been governed by the facilities for handling the inmates effectively. No attempt was made for sensational early progress, but the educational program has moved along with the thought ever before it of a sound, substantial, permanent program. In the Leavenworth annual report for 1931 it is noted that numbers were at no time considered the objective. During this school year 132 inmate school passes³⁸ were taken up, with the consent of the Supervisor of Education,

³⁸ Federal Offenders, 1:51-2, June 30, 1931.

TABLE VII

EDUCATIONAL WORK IN FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS (a)³⁹

Institutions	Average Prison Population	Education Enrollment By Course				
		Total	A	B	C	D
Alcatraz	288	109				109
Atlanta	2859	2449	830	191	500	928
Leavenworth	2771	939	206	124	62	547
Lewisburg	1448	1032	320	85	328	299
McNeil Island	964	408	105	58	187	58
Petersburg	747	300	213	67	20	
Chillicothe	1288	607	118	320	143	26
El Reno	1023	733	199	46	206	282
Englewood (b)	195	209	59	100	23	27
Washington, D. C.	391	1067	443	270	354	
Alderson	457	138	28	58	52	
El Paso	516	216	38	122	37	19
Milan (b)	492	91	41	14	15	21
Sandstone (b)	356	144	14	8	32	90
San Pedro (b)	433	156	25	18	85	28
Du Pont (b)	123	50	13	30	5	2
Kooskia (b)	117	48	45	3		
Montgomery	300	343	132	73	74	64
New Orleans	340	133	122			11
Springfield	950	138	46	17	28	47
Total	16058	9310	2997	1604	2151	2558

A Academic Courses
B Vocational Courses

C Elective Courses
D Correspondence Courses

(a) Some institutions conducted educational services for such a small part of the year that they are not represented. A few failed to furnish the necessary information.

(b) Educational work was conducted for only part of the year.

³⁹ Average Institutional Population Compared With Average Number Of Enrollments In Principal Types Of Courses For Designated Federal Institutions: Fiscal Year Ended, June 30, 1941, Table K, Federal Offenders, 11:47, June 30, 1941.

because the inmates had not the correct attitude toward the educational service. However, by 1938 there had been a steady increase in the enrollment in the prison service school program to quite a sizeable figure:

During the past year there were reported from all the institutions an average of approximately 6,800 enrollments in the various educational activities. Of this total number of enrollments more than 4,000 men were enrolled in the regularly organized day and evening classes, about 1,600 men were enrolled in cell-study and correspondence courses, and approximately 1,200 were designated as vocational trainees.⁴⁰

It is important to note that with the exception of the required attendance of illiterates, all enrollment is on a voluntary basis. This encourages initiative and brings the inmates to realize that what they do is purely because they wish to do it. Sometimes inmates of the lethargic type will fall by the wayside in their school attendance. Their claims that they know more than the teachers are often belied even in the language they use to express such an opinion. It is doubtful if men would get anything out of the school if it were on anything but a purely voluntary basis. An appreciation of democratic principles of freedom of speech and choice of what a man will do is not denied in the educational program. It is rather discouraging to see some men unable to overcome their lazy habits and to pass up benefits for self-improvement. On the other hand there is something highly admirable in a man who takes advantage of the opportunities

⁴⁰ Federal Offenders, 8:10, June 30, 1938.

presented to him. It is a rather sad commentary, but some men have never had the opportunities for selfbetterment that they find in prison. These cases are not in the majority, but it is not unusual to see a man really exerting a wealth of energy toward acquiring an education, which had never before been within his grasp.

B. CLASS WORK OFFERED

The schools have their classroom work organized to meet the needs of each institution best. In Lewisburg penitentiary the elementary grade work was organized in classes D, C, B, A, and AA, which covered the work of the first eight grades of the public schools. It is interesting to note that whenever a new institution is opened the first concern of the educational department is the organization of classes for the illiterates. Next in importance is the organization of the vocational training courses and the related training in connection with it. The question arises as to what grade level the reading and comprehensive level should be set at for related training. At Chilli-cothe it was organized for this basis at the sixth grade, but many of the men could not profit by such instruction. To solve this problem each inmate was interviewed and his individual program was planned.

One thing that has to be impressed on some of the vocational inmates is the need for general education courses beyond

the fifth grade level. The purpose of this work is to insure a balanced training. A man would be at quite a disadvantage if he would be a mechanic and had no mastery of the common skills of reading and writing and could not keep simple accounts. The instructor foremen of various trade groups also devote class periods in the school or special periods on the job to giving shop information such as shop mathematics, mechanical drawing, materials, tools of the trade, and give practical demonstrations of difficult operations. The following vocational units may be found in a great many of the institutions: auto mechanics, bricklaying, cabinet work, electrical work, foundry work, laundry operation, machine shop practices, painting, plumbing, sheetmetal work, transportation, and welding. Of course, the vocational training at Alderson reformatory for women will vary from these, dressmaking, laundering, cooking, millinery, beauty culture, and needle work being stressed. However, it is possible with the press of defense work that Alderson will be veering towards a good bit of the vocational subjects taught in the men's prisons. The 1940 annual report for Alderson states that enrollment was as follows: academic classes, 326; commercial classes, 123; vocational and home economic classes, 468.⁴¹

Many of the other institutions go in rather heavily for commercial subjects. To be sure an inmate cannot take up

⁴¹ Federal Offenders, 10:164, June 30, 1940.

commercial subjects over night, as a considerable background in English, spelling, and arithmetic is necessary as a sound foundation. However, just as in the case of the vocational mechanics or bricklayer trainees, the typist or stenographer can receive "on the job training". Some inmates who have been fairly skilled at a certain profession may have to give it up forever due to the ethics involved in their civil case. Thus men can devote their time to changing horses in mid stream and going off on a new tack where old associations will not be encountered.

For the vocational trainee, the instructor foreman or superintendent often prepares his own manuals of instruction. Other sources are freely used, and it is the constant duty of some member of the educational staff to keep constantly in touch with the materials available for study in this field. Considerable use is made of a number of manuals developed in the Henry Ford Trade Schools at Dearborn, Michigan.

C. NECESSITY OF SMALL CLASSES

In the class room proper it has been found necessary to keep the classes small. The Leavenworth Annex found that any group of its adults with a definite average educational achievement will usually show wide individual differences in ability in the various subjects in a grade class, or in the various phases of any special subject. As a result, much individual instruction

had to be given and classes ranged from five to fifteen pupils per class. Most prison educational classes are set up on a highly individualized basis. Another feature of organizing class work on an individual basis, is that an inmate may start any course for which he is qualified at any time, and he is not hindered in his progress by late enrollees, nor required to wait for the formation of a new class. This is peculiar to prison necessity but is very important. Except when courts close for a fairly long time in the late summer, there is usually a visit by United States Marshalls to each Federal prison several times each week to deliver prisoners committed from the courts. After these inmates have been segregated for thirty days, they are prospective students when they are admitted to the general prison population. If they were to have to wait until the beginning of the next quarter's work they might have lost their first interest in class work and it would be difficult to interest them in school work. Besides, valuable time would be lost and the prisoners might keep putting off their enrollment from quarter to quarter. As it is, the new inmate can start immediately to put his time to work for himself. Any teacher can sympathize with the teacher who would have a new pupil enter his class every few days. If the class proceeded as a unit, it would seldom get beyond its starting point. Even if late comers were sandwiched in just at the beginning of the courses it would be quite a distraction for the rest of the class if it were not on an individualized basis.

D. CONTENT OF THE SUBJECT MATTER USED

It is to be noted that the subject matter does not necessarily conform to the traditional. Need seems to be the governing requirement to place a subject in the curriculum, although there are undoubtedly some subjects that are desirable but need to be sponsored by the supervisor of education and his assistants. Usually someone within the education department at each institution is delegated to canvass the field of desirable curriculum additions. These are chosen both for their intrinsic worth to the inmate and also for their adaptability to institutional facilities. In many of the institutions not only new courses are being added, but old ones are revised in order that the subject materials will play their part in the maintaining of interest in the educational work. Quite often if a group of ten or more inmates desire a new course and the facilities are available it will be added to the curriculum. Suitable tools are necessary to the proper completion of any task, and in study books are the tools. In addition to the library services mentioned elsewhere in this paper, there is a large technical library in many institutions. As students have need for these books, they may be drawn out by the students for classroom use. The related training program often requires blue print reading text books and books about the strength of materials, at both the elementary and advanced levels. These are all provided at no expense to the inmates. Drafting tools, bookkeeping work sets,

and other materials are made available through this service.

Little mention has been made in this paper of the reformatory for women at Alderson. Perhaps this institution is stranger than any other institution in the Federal penal service. It is apparent that more concern is held at Alderson for social and cultural education. Much of the English work for illiterate Americans and foreigners has been supplemented by night work in the cottages under the direction of the Head Teacher. However, other institutions are improving in this direction. At the Chillicothe reformatory the education department developed a syllabus in Civics and Social Relations which deals with a series of problems affecting the inmate and his mode of living. One can sympathize with the efforts along this line. It is rather a touchy subject and any attempt to directly develop the social conscience of the inmate might be labled by them as 'preaching'. There are a great many inmates who could get value from a tactful course that would show the inmate the relationship of men in society, the necessity of law and its observance.

E. TYPES OF SUPERVISION

One should not overlook the importance of the role of the Vocational Counselor who may be found in the larger institutions such as Leavenworth, Atlanta, and El Reno. These counselors have inaugurated more thorough trade-training courses for the inmates. They have engaged in compiling surveys and analyses of the various

work activities. It is their principal duty to coordinate the efforts of prison industries and the training needs of the inmates. These large-scale industries provide ideal set ups for on the job training of men. The task of studying each job in the particular prison industry at that location is not a small one. Many inmates never know how important a role the vocational counselor plays in shaping the training of these inmates. The inmates may have excellent academic opportunities in connection with a trade, but they cannot take full advantage of these unless there is a well-planned opportunity for the application of the principles they have learned in the classroom. No doubt the instructor foremen play their part, but in the larger prison industries there is a great need for a guiding hand to coordinate instruction and apprentice training.

While the Supervisor of Education may not do any actual teaching, he carefully and frequently observes the class room work. Quite often he must round out his faculty with inmate teachers. In most cases these inmate teachers have not had previous teaching experience, although if they have had some type of special training they are given preference. These men often must meet responsibilities for which they have had no professional training and must thoroughly review courses which they have partly forgotten. The Supervisor of Education must see that these men receive special training and must give their class work closer supervision than if he were supervising an

ordinary group of teachers.

F. A GENERAL VIEW OF THE PRISON SCHOOLS

Atlanta penitentiary states that their academic school day was from 8 A. M. to 4 P. M. on Monday through Friday and had a daily average attendance of 1,201. There were 635 promotions in the elementary and advanced grade school and 165 inmates completed the grade school requirements.⁴² At Leavenworth sixteen per cent (450) of the inmate population was enrolled in some type of vocational training.⁴³ In Lewisburg penitentiary there were seventy-five men enrolled in high school work. These students demonstrated sustained interest and accomplished a great deal.⁴⁴ Some of the institutional educational departments have made arrangements with the state departments of education for the granting of high school credits towards graduation for work done in the high school classes. The Chillicothe reformatory and the Lewisburg penitentiary have both sponsored such activity. It is not unusually difficult to enroll inmates as students. However, it is difficult to stimulate these men to see it through, once they have enrolled in a definite course of study. It is not unusual for a man to become interested in some line of endeavor or in some particular subject matter and keep developing

⁴² Federal Offenders, 10:43, June 30, 1940.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 78-9.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 96-7.

his interest in this field for the duration of his sentence. Men who take advantage of such opportunities must surely be affected by the rehabilitative efforts of the prison service. Perhaps some later investigation can determine the relationship, if any, between men who better themselves through the educational opportunities and the recidivist group in the prison population. It would be of interest to note whether or not these repeaters amongst Federal offenders are those who have participated previously in the educational activities of the prison service, and if so in what way. This study could be further broken down to show whether recidivism was more common among the vocational trainees than the academic students or vice versa.

G. THE NATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Special note should be taken of the National Training School for Boys, Washington, D. C. The average age of the boys in this institution is 17.6 years. The handling of these charges differs in many ways from that of any other group of prisoners in that their extreme youth calls for the special treatment of many of their activities. The educational department in this institution comes in for its share of specialized work.

Instruction is offered to retarded boys in ungraded classes, the curriculum consisting chiefly of elementary studies and handicraft projects. It is a wise program that teaches handicraft to these boys. Many boys clubs advocate the use of

handicraft for the growing boy as it teaches him a constructive outlet for his overabundant energies. Perhaps if many of the training school youth had not had misguided outlets for this energy, they could have been kept from becoming charges of the Federal government. For boys capable of graded work, the studies offered are similar to those offered in the public school. They can go up through the grades and to the senior high school levels. For the smaller group eligible and interested in high school, classes are offered on an individual basis. There are classes in electricity and plumbing. Shop training is offered in printing, auto mechanics, machine and general metals, painting, cabinet making, barbering, laundering, tailoring, and shoe repair.

One big difference between the training school educational methods and those of the reformatories is emphasis on pre-vocational training. This training is an attempt to orient the boy to the field of trades, giving him an overview of many of the general trades. He is thus assisted in discovering interests and skills, rather than in the developing of specialized abilities. Such vocational training is very important to the changing of the habits of the boy offender to more normal habits.

III CELL STUDY

It has been previously pointed out in this paper that the school facilities and the different types of prison architecture

are controlling factors in attendance at school, especially evening school. Some men in some institutions are under such close custody that they cannot go anywhere unless they are under the custody of an officer. Therefore their freedom of movement is seriously curtailed. Then too some men may be housed far away from the school buildings so as to hinder them from evening school attendance. Any activity outside the prison buildings as evening darkens into dusk is carefully observed by those watching the prison from its exterior extremities. The guarding features of penology are more pronounced during the night hours when one cannot see well. It is very important that outside activity be at a minimum so as to immediately detect any surreptitious movement that might be part of an intended prison break. Where the many buildings are connected by corridors the going to and from the school and other activities can be done rather easily, but where such movement is not possible a good many of the men must be confined to their own cell houses during the evening and the night.

If these men wanted to participate in the school activities, it was found necessary to have some method of study that would help the inmate and at the same time take into account the custodial risk. Very early in the new Prison Bureau's existence the educational departments hit upon the idea of cell study as the answer to this problem. This work was set up so as to provide a wide variety of courses, suited to all degrees of

intelligence and previous education. The setting up of these courses was no easy task as the educational supervisors had to arrange a complete course of study somewhat similar to a correspondence course for each subject covered. However, this type of work has proven to be the most practical means of reaching these men.

The supervision of cell study after it has been established means considerable more work that is in some respects ever increasing. McNeil Island penitentiary stated that its educational staff corrects and grades over 5,000 lessons monthly.⁴⁵ Usually the only check on the inmate is through the lessons he turns in to the education department. However, Chillicothe states that one civilian instructor spends two evenings a week in cell houses giving personal coaching and encouragement to those who are carrying on a definite study program.⁴⁶ Usually a single cell is the most suitable type of workshop for this study. It is not unusual for the inmates to discuss their work with the men next to them through the air ventilator that serves their cells.

There is a great degree of similarity between cell study courses and correspondence courses. The correspondence courses are arranged with outside educational agencies which have been approved by the Bureau for such work. It is important to note

⁴⁵ Federal Offenders, 7:60, June 30, 1937.

⁴⁶ Federal Offenders, 10:130, June 30, 1940.

that cell study is planned entirely by the educational department of the particular institution. Some institutions feel that cell study courses fit into prison work better than do correspondence courses. It has been thought that cell study courses maintain better interest than do correspondence courses. In many cases the cell study courses offered are similar to those to be had in the prison's school rooms. It is part of the rehabilitation program of the Bureau of Prisons to reduce the custody of inmates as they become less of a risk and demonstrate their ability to conduct themselves in a law-abiding manner. The theory of this reduction in custody is that as a man nears the end of his sentence he will have reduced his custody to a point where his freedom is much like that which he would enjoy outside the prison. He may go outside the prison enclosure with unarmed guards to the work details on the prison reservation. This minimum custody privilege emphasizes that when an inmate reaches this point he is ready to move back into society. He will have the responsibility of his own conduct and thus when he moves back into society and many new freedoms, the change will not be too much for him to adjust to. It is important to note that as men are reduced in custody they may continue in the classroom those subjects they have started studying in their cells. This unbroken continuity enables the prisoners to make quite a lengthy study of a subject. It familiarizes them with the school before they attend it. Thus the inmate fits into the program more readily when his custody permits him to attend it.

IV CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Arrangements are made with many of the large state universities to secure correspondence courses, at the request of the inmates where such subject matter is not available at the institutional school. At Alcatraz penitentiary, for men who are maximum custody charges, the entire educational program is based on correspondence courses. There are a wide variety of elementary courses under the personal supervision of the person in charge of educational activities. Much of the work for more advanced study is arranged through the extension division of the University of California.

Correspondence course enrollments are also especially heavy in Atlanta, where they formed in 1941 over one-third of all enrollments, and in Leavenworth and Springfield where they made up more than half of all enrollments. Correspondence work was of minor importance in most of the other institutions. El Reno, however, had well over one-third and the Milan correctional institution had nearly two-thirds of their enrollments in correspondence courses.⁴⁷

Quite often correspondence and cell study courses are not distinguished from each other when they are spoken of in prison education work. There is a difference, as the cell study confines itself to a particular institution. Whenever printed matter enters or leaves an institution there is always the possibility of connivance to pass some information to a confederate that should not meet the eyes of the law. It is the practice of the

⁴⁷ Federal Offenders, 11:48, June 30, 1941.

Bureau of Prisons to maintain a careful censorship over matter that might present such an opportunity for connivance. However, there are a great many inmates who do study correspondence courses and often put what they learn to work while they are still incarcerated. It is not unusual for an inmate to take a course in animal husbandry and then go to work on the farm. Occasionally an inmate may desire to take up some special type of farming as he wishes to change entirely his environment from that of a city to that of a rural setting. It is wise for him to learn as much as he can about his prospective new way of living so as to have just that much more of a chance to make it a success. Obviously if he is to make a success of it he will have to secure expert knowledge from specialists whose services can be readily obtained from the university.

V INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT

It has been pointed out several times in this paper that to avoid regimentation and to rehabilitate the inmates, their treatment must be considered for the most part as an individual problem for each inmate. In the case of the juvenile delinquent, The National Training School for Boys basés a great deal of its elementary work on the system of ungraded classes. Such a system departs from the traditional and in doing so gives a flexible method for treating each boy as will do him the most good.

However, it will also have been noted in this paper that

quite often the retarded adults have difficulty in keeping up with their classes due to some particular subject. With individualized treatment an inmate can overcome these hurdles by exercising additional application under the expert guidance of a trained supervisor. Such individualized treatment is most important in the proper handling of the educational program of the prison service, where special emphasis are placed on those things that can influence each and every inmate to do good.

VI THE INFLUENCE OF THE LENGTH OF SENTENCE

In the following table there is to be noted the factor of the length of sentence of each inmate. Some men come to prison to stay but a short time, while a large body of the incoming population are committed for between one and four years. The latter men can undertake a rather ambitious educational program, whereas the extremely short termers will not care to start any long-range program. The New York detentional headquarters took note of this fact in its 1940 report.⁴⁸ It is governed in its educational program by the possibility of continued study of the inmates, either in the institutions to which they are transferred, or in the outside community when they are released or put on probation. The very nature of the detentional institution precludes any other kind of an educational program. Men are

⁴⁸ Federal Offenders, 10:259, June 30, 1940.

TABLE VIII

LENGTH OF SENTENCE COMMITMENTS FOR THE YEAR, 1940⁴⁹

Minority	22	3 years under	
Under 1 year	1450	4 years	1203
1 year exactly	111	4 years under	
1 year and 1 day	2683	5 years	286
Over 1 year and		5 years under	
1 day, under 2		6 years	452
years	1936	6 years under	
2 years, under		10 years	143
3 years	2144	10 years and over	201
	Total 10,631		

⁴⁹ Taken from Table 6, Commitments to Federal Institutions by Length of Sentence For Each Fiscal Year Ended June 30: 1931 to 1940., Federal Offenders, 10:316, June 30, 1940.

kept there pending trial or shortly after they have been sentenced. To many of them the future is very uncertain, and as a result of this their minds are upset and their nerves are unstrung. After a man has been sentenced he knows what is ahead of him and all he has to do is to have the courage to tackle it. But, the man who is on trial, awaiting trial, or awaiting sentence can think of little else. At this detentional headquarters the turnover rate in the educational classes was fifty percent during one three-month semester.

It has been pointed out earlier in this section that inmates are committed almost continuously to the various institutions. Consequently classes had to be so arranged that they could accommodate late enrollees at any time. This has been done by having highly individualized treatment of the inmate's education.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

It is hoped that this paper has served to show on a small scale the operations of the educational program within the Bureau of Prisons. The philosophy and objectives of the Bureau of Prisons have been put to work by the educational department to good advantage. It is a dynamic program that translates into action and accomplishment this philosophy. There have been many obstacles to overcome in setting up such a program within a program. The development has been steady and of a nature that did not lean toward the sensational. Numbers have never been the objective in enrollment, but the enrollment has shown a steady increase. The factor of the custody of the inmate along with the arrangement of the buildings in an institution received a great deal of thought in planning the program. The curriculum offered also had to meet the needs as severe as any ever put on adult education. It had to run from elementary through high school subjects. Sufficient testing was and is necessary for proper placement of the students. The method of having highly individualized classes solved both the problem of dealing with an inmate's weakness in certain subject matter and also solved the matter of continuous enrollment in the prison schools.

The training school for boys, the reformatories, the

penitentiaries, and the various other institutions each present different educational problems under this uniform philosophy. The vocational program with its related training is one that could have easily become antiquated, what with the fast-changing production methods of the present day.

At Chillicothe the first graduate of the airplane mechanics school has been paroled for service with one of the nation's air lines and is reported to be making satisfactory progress. With the assistance of Federal Prison Industries, Inc., a number of vocational instructors have been added to institution staffs to teach vocations particularly allied to defense program needs especially in mechanical trades.⁵⁰

Although nothing has been said in this paper about visual education, the education service uses this means wherever it has been able to secure the proper equipment. There are also special services such as instruction in Braille for the blind at the Springfield medical center.

Perhaps more could be done in the matter of making the inmates socially minded. This is one of the more recent problems tackled by the educational service.

Although enrollment and registration statistics are in themselves important in that they reflect the attitude of prisoners toward educational classes of various kinds, equally significant in the general educational program is the less formally organized educational activity which for want of a better term has been called 'social education'. At the present time inmate advisory councils, inmate publications, and inmate forums constitute the three principal activities which have been developed in the field of social education. Practically every institution now has some form of an inmate council. Each institution, with the exception of one or two of the more recent correctional institutions,

⁵⁰ Federal Offenders, 11:6, June 30, 1941.

is publishing regularly an inmate publication either in printed or mimeographed form, and in some cases the educational department issues weekly or monthly a special educational supplement to the regular publication.⁵¹

This is a rather delicate subject as the inmates would shy away at the thought of being saved or preached at in any sense of the word.

No one realizes better than the educational service the need for more trained teachers. The matter of per capita cost must be considered, and it is the one great factor holding back the hiring of more teachers. It is just possible that the Bureau is overlooking some teaching aids in the custodial force. This force has attracted several men who have excellent educational backgrounds, and in some instances have been teachers before entering the service. If an arrangement could be worked out whereby some part of their custodial time could be used in conducting classes, it would be to the advantage of the inmate and could possibly help the custodial officer know the inmate better.

In some cases where inmates have demonstrated special ability and interest they should be permitted to devote more of their time as students. Education should not be considered, as it is in some cases, to be extra-curricular to the work program. Inmates attending evening classes are quite often concerned more about rest than about study because they are

⁵¹ Federal Offenders, 11:12, June 30, 1941.

tired. To the great number of men who do become good students, even though they are night school students, one can say they are taking to heart the following saying (which appears in the stone border around the Terre Haute penitentiary's dining room). "Whatsoever is brought upon thee take cheerfully and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate for gold is tried in the fire and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity".

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