

013203
Presented by JIS
4/6/69

MINISTRY PAPER NO. 30

PRISON SERVICE

The Prison Service continues to seek improvements in the following spheres:-

- (a) rehabilitation of prisoners;
- (b) provision of proper facilities; and
- (c) training of the staff.

A. Rehabilitation

Workshop Training

The importance of providing prisoners with training in trades which may enable them to find suitable employment on release has been long recognised. The present system of fragmentation of training has led to a situation in which the training facilities available, by way of both equipment and instructors, are inadequate.

Proposals for providing prisoners with a higher degree of training have already been agreed on and steps are being taken to implement them as funds become available. The new system will provide intense training in one or two skills only at any one prison, thus making it possible for adequate staff and equipment to be provided at each. The training provided will be in such trades as welding, motor mechanics, metal work, woodwork, tailoring and needlework, and at each of the prisons a fully equipped workshop with qualified instructors will be established.

Industries

The industries operated by the Prison Service, e.g. farming, continue to provide prisoners with the opportunity of acquiring skills.

Mention should also be made of the potential revenue-earning capacity of some of the industries i.e., the bakery, which obtained a bread milling machine for the production of bread of a finer texture such as required by the hospitals.

Education

During the year a branch of the Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library was established at the General Penitentiary to serve both the men and women's prison. Branch libraries have now been established at all prisons.

/...

Prisoners' After-Care Service

An efficient after-care system is essential if the high rate of recidivism among the Jamaican prison population is to be reduced and proposals for the setting up of a statutory body to operate such a system have been submitted by the Howard League of Jamaica and are now under study by the Government.

The main proposals include the intensification of pre-release training schemes, a period of compulsory after-care for certain categories of prisoners on release, the establishment of a pre-release hostel for long-term prisoners and the recruitment of professional and voluntary workers. Generally speaking, these proposals seek to encourage joint effort by the Government and private bodies in the rehabilitation of prisoners.

B. Facilities

Set out below is the average prison population over the years:-

1959/60	-	2,154
1960/61	-	2,144
1961/62	-	2,135
1962/63	-	2,082
1963/64	-	2,075
1964/65	-	1,939
1965/66	-	2,060

The average population for 1966/67 has been 2,177 divided among the various prisons as follows:-

General Penitentiary (Male)	-	947
General Penitentiary (Female)	-	54
St. Catherine	-	675
Richmond Farm	-	222
Fort Augusta	-	190
Hill Top	-	89

Accommodation for prisoners is generally satisfactory, with the population at the St. Catherine District, Richmond Farm and Hill Top Prisons being usually below the capacity of these prisons. However, at the General Penitentiary (Male) overcrowding occasionally occurs.

/...

C. Staff Training

During the year, emphasis was placed on In-Service training which was designed not only to acquaint the prison officers with their daily routine duties, but also to inculcate in them a technical approach in the concept of rehabilitation of prisoners.

Four senior officers attended the Overseas Prison Officers Course in the United Kingdom sponsored by the University of Overseas Development. Other officers underwent local courses in Farming, Librarianship and Motor Mechanics.

Reports by the Visiting Committees have been satisfactory with regard to the facilities in the Prisons.

Ministry of Development & Welfare
Kingston
15th May, 1967.

M.P. No. W90/88/01