

going gets tough. Hence, the role of the pre-release worker is of the greatest importance in drawing out the attitudes and expectations of the inmate and relating them to the purposes and practices of the field services. The institutional classification staff should coordinate the efforts of the various after-care agencies in pre-release; but, as much as possible, the after-care agencies should maintain their own pre-release representatives and relationships in the institution.

The pre-release work of the non-official after-care representative is to create the bridge by which the man will pass from the institution to the community, from institutional maintenance to self-maintenance and from an ordered and organized existence to a competitive economic existence where choice and problem solving are essential to survival.

Not only may anxiety need to be stimulated and focused by the institutional representative, but the agency's policies and practices should be interpreted. This enables the man to adjust his expectations of service to the reality of agency potentials and limitations. Of greater importance is that this is the opportunity to individualize the man and his problems and see him not as a statistic but as a person.

It is at this point that the pre-release worker realizes that, in many cases, the inmate comes to the interview with little realistic knowledge of his problems or of the problems of the agency from which he may expect extravagant and unrealistic assistance. He may have beginning insight about these matters and show flashes of understanding. Skillful interviewing and careful interpretation are important to foster such insight, and careful evaluation is needed to avoid the trap of thinking the interview to be more successful than it really was. Apparently insightful behaviour may speedily disappear on return to the prison population or on eventual release. The inmate may come to the agency as though the pre-release interview had not taken place. Then, once again, the agency worker must re-interpret and seek to induce recall of pre-release planning so that the current programme can go forward.

Full documentation should flow from this pre-release period to the after-care agency for use in the community branch to which the man intends to go. When this occurs before he is released, there is opportunity for that branch to raise questions about the man, his problems, his plans, and his resources. Thus, before the man leaves the institution, he knows that he is going to meet a worker by appointment; he knows that the worker knows about him and he in turn knows about the agency.

A recent study of Prisoners Perceptions of Parole was made in the Ontario region by Lois James of the Institute of Criminology of the University of Toronto and published in December, 1971. A number of significant inmate attitudes were expressed. "Sixty-one percent of the sample and 32 percent of parole applicants claimed to have seen no one from an outside agency. Of those who had, 49 percent mentioned the John Howard Society". In this connection, it should be remembered that the non-official agencies become involved in parole preparation with inmates only on referral of the case by the Parole Service.

This referral usually involves a community assessment in which an appraisal is made of the inmate's family, job, community assets and liabilities with an estimate of the practicality of his plan. This also involves an interview with the inmate by the after-care

representative in the institution. This information is all summarized and a report is made to the parole service with observations regarding supervision. If the parole is granted and the agency is asked to supervise, the inmate is again interviewed with the focus on the agency's services, the process of supervision and the inmate's plans.

In some cases men who had their parole revoked by the Parole Board blame the supervising agency. It is easier to project blame on someone else than to accept it and deal with it internally. When such revocations and failures occur among men who are status figures in the inmate population, it causes much comment among staff and inmates and creates the need for constant interpretation by the after-care agency. This is difficult since confidentiality prevents disclosure of case records except by official channels, and direct refutation of the man's story would create further defensiveness on his part. Over the years solid, accepting agency service will have to demonstrate its own worth.

The inmate should make his application for parole at least five months prior to his P.E.R. date. This is at one-third of sentence or four years whichever is the lesser and for two year sentenced inmates at nine months. Inmates undergoing preventive detention are reviewed annually and those undergoing life imprisonment at seven years or ten years in the case of committed murderers. The referral to the after-care agency is scheduled to be made at two months prior to the P.E.R. date giving them one month to make the community assessment and return it to the parole service. This scheduling is inadequate and should be advanced one month giving two months for the making of the investigation in the community, a discussion of this with the inmate, the reorganization of the plan if necessary and the compilation of the final community assessment report for the parole service. This would then still leave one month for the preparation of the case presentation for the Parole Board panel by the parole service.

But even the present timing does not always happen and in some cases the community assessment may not be available to the Parole Board panel. Many things may delay the referral from the parole service. The inmate may not make his application at the stated five months date in advance of his P.E.R., there may be delay in the institutional reports, there may be complications in his plan, the parole service staff may be under heavy work pressure or may be reduced by illness, vacations, transfer or resignation.

The same problems beset the after-care agencies in the community. These assessments are sometimes most difficult to complete as the persons concerned are not available on demand as the inmate is in the institution. Friends, relatives, prospective employers often have to be traced. Sometimes they have no telephones to facilitate the arranging of appointments. Sometimes they are not anxious to cooperate. Frequently they may be absent from home for a period of time. They often delay or do not reply to letters. All these factors complicate the agency's task and may cause delay.

Frequently the referral is not made till some time after the standard two month referral date and in a significant number of cases not longer than a week or ten days may be given. Cases have been referred after the P.E.R. date. This means that the agency has inadequate time to complete the enquiry and return the report one