

day parole: Belmont

There are at present about forty young people living in a place called the 'Belmont Rehabilitation Centre', going out into our city every morning to work or learn, and then returning to the 'lockup' every evening.

Perhaps 'lockup' is a bad word for this place because for these inmates, there are no locks on the doors, no bars, no guards. The only thing that keeps them returning to the centre every night is the knowledge that if they don't, they will be sought out by the police, charges of being "unlawfully at large" will be pressed against them, and then they really WILL be behind bars.

These people, and others like them from a place called the 'Grierson Centre', operate under a system called 'day Parole', a system that's somewhere between actual detention in a jail and true parole; for while in true parole, a person completes his sentence right in the community while under supervision, in day parole a person spends a part of the day in a useful endeavor in the community, and is under supervision in an 'institute' the rest of the time.

I say an 'institute' and not a 'penal institute' because of the atmosphere of the Belmont Rehab Centre, the place I went to visit. It seemed much more like a residence than a jail, with dorms and a cafeteria. As a matter of fact, it seemed a lot like the University residences, except the food is probably better at Belmont.

Of the forty people who leave Belmont every morning, thirty go to work, nine go to various other educational institutes like Strathcona

High, AVC, and NAIT, and one . . . one of these people come to U of A.

The person who goes to U of A (I'll call him Joe Science, since he is in science) was busted last May, just after he finished his first year at U of A. He was busted for both possession and pushing of drugs, and was sentenced to eleven months in the Fort Saskatchewan jail.

Since the laws state that a prisoner must serve at least one third of his sentence in an institution, Joe could not be given immediate parole in order to attend the U of A summer session. So he was put on day parole.

From the time Joe leaves the institute at 7:00 a.m. till he returns at 6:30 p.m., he is free to use his time as he wishes in lectures, labs, study periods or whatever. There are no guards following him around, no supervision whatsoever. And as far as extra-curricular activities go, although Joe has not asked for any time to participate, and although it is frowned upon by the Centre, I was given to understand that arrangements could be made if he were to convince the Powers That Be of a sincere desire to participate.

One of the most difficult things for Day Parolees to adjust to is the daily transition from confinement to freedom and then back to confinement. This can make the months drag on. But happily, for Joe this period will soon be over. He will soon be eligible for full parole, and relatively complete freedom.

day care survives turmoil

The chairman of last year's day care commission, Lynne van der Voet, is "cautiously optimistic" that a community board for the HUB day care centre will be appointed soon.

Van der Voet and a number of others from the university community who had worked with her over the summer to get the centre operational, met last week with representatives of the Students' Union to iron out differences which had developed between the two groups over representing the board.

The board must be constituted soon in order for the centre to qualify for its government operational subsidy for September.

Van der Voet was careful to explain that since the centre is funded by subsidies from three levels of government, its services are for the community and not exclusively for U of A students. With a long waiting list, applicants are accepted on a priority basis from single parent families, families in which one parent is putting the other through school or in which both parents are students, and

Cookson appointed

F.B. Cookson, an outspoken defender of the University Health Service in its budgetary battles with the Board of Governors, is to be appointed acting director of the centre as of January 1.

The announcement was made at a closed meeting of the UHS committee Tuesday. Francis Macri, graduate student member of the committee, reported that Cookson will assume the post now held by Michael Ball when Ball begins a year's leave of absence in January.

In addition to being a physician on the centre's staff, Cookson is a member of the UHS committee, the GFC executive, and the GFC ad hoc committee on the role and future development of the UHS.

At Tuesday's meeting it was decided that future meetings of the committee would again be opened to the press.

from the community at large according to need.

Walking through the day care centre one is impressed with the amount of space provided. Besides three separate play areas, there is also a fairly large and well equipped kitchen. The knee high (to an adult) sinks and the two bathrooms that contain child sized facilities, are designed especially for the children.

The centre is planned to accommodate sixty children from three years to school age. However, slightly younger children may sometime be accepted at the discretion of the director, Dianne Dalley. The children are divided into three groups of twenty, each group being in constant attendance by a supervisor and her assistant.

Since the city requires that the centre provide each child with two thirds of his daily food needs, it also staffs a cook and cook's assistant. Besides providing morning and afternoon snacks, they serve a hot full course meal at noon.

One would expect day care of this quality to be fairly expensive, but at HUB, cost to the parent is assessed on a sliding fee scale. This means parents pay what they can afford, anywhere from \$10.00 to \$80.00 a month, \$80.00 being the highest anyone would pay, with the balance paid by the city subsidy.

Van der Voet explained that it was the willingness of the SU to provide the centre with low rent and interest free loans that helped them to obtain the government subsidization which is what will keep the centre in operation. She said that 20% of the \$83,000 subsidy is provided by the city, the remaining 80% being divided equally between the provincial and Federal governments. The centre also receives an annual \$3,000 subsidy from the non academic staff of the U of A.

Because subsidization is based on the number of children in daily attendance, the centre will remain open through the spring and summer. They hope to fill vacancies with children of summer school students, and will also likely take grade one age brothers and sisters of children already attending the centre. They are welcoming applications from students planning to attend intersession and summer session classes. Applications can be given to Dianne Dalley at the HUB Day Care Centre. ac

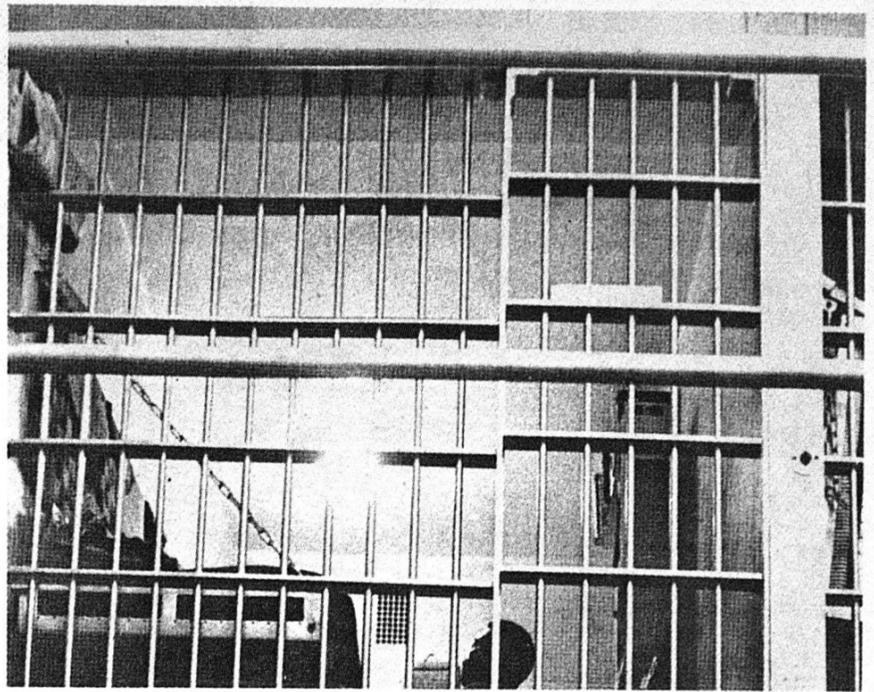


Photo by Warren Levicoff from "Creation: The Arts in Prison"

Cons on campus

Not everybody on this campus has come here directly from high school, although these people are in the majority. A varied assortment of students with different backgrounds make up the minority, and among these are a number of people who have graduated from a different type of institution, namely "the pen". Most of these are here on parole for relatively minor offences such as possession of pot or other 'light' drugs. But some are here for more serious offences, and two such people are 'Max' and 'Peter' (not their real names).

Both these people have spent time in penitentiaries, in the medieval type of institution where people are locked up out of contact with society for years on end, and then released with the unrealistic hope that they will have adjusted to it through non-interaction.

'Max' is a guy who just got off full parole at the end of August - a tall slender young man with dark eyes and darker hair and a self-assured yet watchful manner. He's full of stories and lore of the prisons, he knows his way around them. . . as he should, he's been in enough of them.

The story of Max's that interested me most was about his first attempt to attend the U of A back in the fall of 1968, just after he had been let out on full parole after serving two years of a six year sentence for armed robbery. Some 'concerned students' took it on themselves to steal his books and mess up a couple of his chemistry experiments. He is sure that these students were Fraternity members. Max found out who the ringleader of these students was, beat the snot out of him, and promptly quit

University. He subsequently returned and has since been doing well in the honors psychology program. Since then he has completed his sentence and 'paid his debt to society'.

Peter is another day parole on campus. He's from the Grierson Centre, which is set up on slightly more liberal lines than is the provincially run Belmont Rehabilitation Centre. At Grierson, the inmates take more of a hand in running their own affairs. They decide on punishments for minor infractions of rules, and have more relaxed rules for the granting of evening passes.

Peter was busted in Vancouver in April of 1970 for breaking and entering, theft and possession of marijuana. He had rented two motel rooms-one for living in and one to store the loot from his B & E jobs-but inadvertently left the key to the motel room he lived in in the 'dummy' room on the night the cops decided to pull a raid. When they checked out the second motel room, the cops found not only Peter, but also the grass.

Peter has no complaints at all about the way the day parole system is set up, nor against the University. He says it took a lot of perseverance to arrange his admittance to the U of A because all communication had to be through a series of letters, and because he had to buck the regular prison 'establishment'.

Neither he nor Max had any kind words to say about the National Parole Board. Max says its patently useless since it only releases under supervision those people who don't need supervision anyhow. And, to quote Peter, its "generally a fuckup".

abortion coalition:

The U of A Committee for Abortion Law Repeal will hold its first meeting of the year tonight in room 104 SUB.

This fall the group is circulating a new petition which actually calls for repeal of the laws and is in proper parliamentary format so that it may be officially registered with the House of Commons. They intend to make the question an issue in the federal elections and hope all people will make themselves aware of their candidate's stand.

To date, the group's main activities have consisted of initiating and holding a referendum which resulted in a vote of 80% in favor of repeal. The committee has also organized debates, participated in radio programmes, distributed literature including birth control information, as well as carried a massive petitioning campaign.

The U of A Committee for Abortion Law Repeal was formed last year as adjunct to the Edmonton Coalition for Abortion Law Repeal at a time when the movement to repeal the abortion laws was beginning to consolidate and organize itself. More recently, a cross-country conference was held in Winnipeg on March 18-20 which launched the Canadian Women's Coalition to Repeal Abortion Laws and our monthly Journal "Spokeswoman". The Edmonton Coalition became the Edmonton Chapter of the Canadian Women's Coalition.

All those who agree that every mother must be a willing mother, every child a wanted child and that the state has no right to enforce motherhood - that is each woman's right to decide if and when she will bear children, are encouraged to attend.