

# Only pigs are behind bars at N.B. reformatory

"The pigs are the only things behind bars out here" - So comments one guard on the nature of the minimum security arrangement at the New Brunswick Central Reformatory.

This institution and its inmates have become a concern of Action Corps workers during the past year. Just what is it like out there?? The guys themselves are about sixteen to twenty-five, averaging about seventeen with the odd exception who has ripened to the tender age of forty (or maybe his wrinkles are from cares rather than age, or just maybe he is a victim of progeria.

where. There are no armed guards - inmates go about their business under the watchful eye of the correctional officers. The world is viewed through bars only by our afore-mentioned pigs in the livestock building or the very rare inmate whose ill favoured actions earn for him the darkness of solitary confinement in what is aptly termed "The Hole" Reformatory attendance ranges from 30 to 55, depending on fluctuating jail populations and categories of classification of offenders.

Although once you have worn "the blues" outside opportunities may not be so gold-

visitors come Saturday and Sunday; hair may grow to any length; ceramics and handicrafts are now offered; incentive pay of \$.55/day keeps you in tobacco and stamps; and a sports program, though somewhat limited by winter facilities, exists for those who are interested.

The institution is in many ways almost a self contained unit, the co-ordination of which is the job of the superintendent, Mr. Evans. Most of the employees are correctional officers whose business it is to count heads, supervise activities, and fill some of the responsible positions in the employ-

ment schemes. Among other staff members are a social worker, a school teacher, and a part-time psychologist (would that he and some others worked full-time!)

long term objectives more profitable for both the individual and society. It is here within this current though slow movement towards adequate rehabilitation that Action Corps is trying to work. There are specific problems. Financial limitations are number one. A second is that "The Farm" is physically and socially isolated in a way that forms a wide communication gap. Education needs more emphasis, the average inmate having only Grade Seven schooling. Matters of the mind ought to be encouraged rather than channelling too much energy into manual labour. Recreational innovations are needed, along with some positive form of frustration outlet. Liaison between freed inmates and possible employers is badly required, as are more psychologists and social workers who could perhaps help the inmates untangle some twisted attitudes and cope with those internal pressures that plague us all but out there find little release. While individuality is something that we protect jealously, No. 43 looks at his blue denims, his bare walls, small dresser, and rigidly aligned cot, and perhaps wishes that something of his was just a little different from that of No. 42.

Action Corps has gone out to the reformatory twice a week all year. With the underlying hope that we could help them find some new and stimulating (?) subjects to think about, and aid in some way towards rehabilitation, group discussions were held on topics such as law, pollution, birth control, religion, philosophy, politics, motor mechanics, job application, and safe driving. Some topics (e.g. motor mechanics) effectively elicited response from the guys, but due to a lack of qualified or even interested volunteers, were abandoned.

A book drive was held on campus in the fall, and a number of books were collected. To date these books rest in state (mostly state), in room 38 of the SUB; while attempts are being made to find adequate shelving for them at the Reformatory. Some whisperings are in the wind about a portable classroom to be used for library-educational purposes, but only time and action will realize this goal.

Also, on the weekend of February the 25th, a New Brunswick, and possibly a Canadian first will be held at the NB Central Reformatory - a Winter Carnival. The agenda is amazing especially considering the limitations any correctional system must have. Snow sculptures, a tour of the UNB campus (la du da!), a sleigh ride, bingo, roulette, broomball, a dance, an open house, a variety show, handicrafts display, and a sports night are some of the activities planned for the weekend. Inmate committees are working with the assistance of Action Corps workers, staunchly supported by the administration of the institution. Much assistance with the carnival (prizes, equipment, supervision, refreshments, etc) has been provided by the Correctional system. This program will determine the nature of future endeavours.

Plans for the remainder of this year, as well as next are indefinite. What we need are interested and concerned individuals willing to commit some of their time and energies to constructive change. A mechanics course, Legal Aid discussions, religion, politics, music, drama and other programs are presently under consideration. Be realistic; the only difference between you and "them" is this - they've been caught! If you don't soon get off your asses, and help us build, you're going to get busted! Got it?



Outside of the Farm.

Their maximum vacation here is two years minus one day - anyone whose sentence is even the one day beyond that passes out of the provincial jurisdiction that can place him in N.B. and becomes the responsibility of the Federal government.

What are they in for? Peace disturbing, petty theft, occasional offences under the fish and game act, problems with child support, "borrowing" cars and accidentally forgetting to return them, break and entry, and last but not least - pushing: all these are common - no rapists or murders! There are two types of inmate attitudes; those who feel major changes are necessary, and those who content themselves with living in what they consider comfort and security. Either attitude suggests change is needed some-

en, all sorts of employment opportunities exist while you're "in". Cutting pulp and firewood, assembling picnic tables, doing laundry, scrubbing floors, raising cattle and pigs, and general farm labour are just some of the jobs to be done. The work isn't that hard - few blisters are in evidence - and food seems better than certain campus facilities!

Unnecessary restrictions exist, but even in the last few months a lot of positive changes have been made, and at last it seems that somewhere wheels have started to turn. A new temporary absence system is underway: night school, high school and weekday jobs are offered to a number of inmates, a positive rehabilitative step towards making them useful "outmates"! Letters, formerly limited, now flow quite freely;

ment schemes. Among other staff members are a social worker, a school teacher, and a part-time psychologist (would that he and some others worked full-time!)

Now for the problems - it seems that the basic one is just a slight matter of definition. Are we defining our "system" and consequently this institution, as correctional or penal in matter? Considering short-term objectives, a penal set up might work - for two years less twenty-four hours society would be protected from the offender ..... after that, who knows?

Considering correction through rehabilitation as an alternative to varying punishments, perhaps positive reinforcements, psychology, therapy, and occupational guidance will yield realization of

## Not enough loan money

By JEAN DENNING

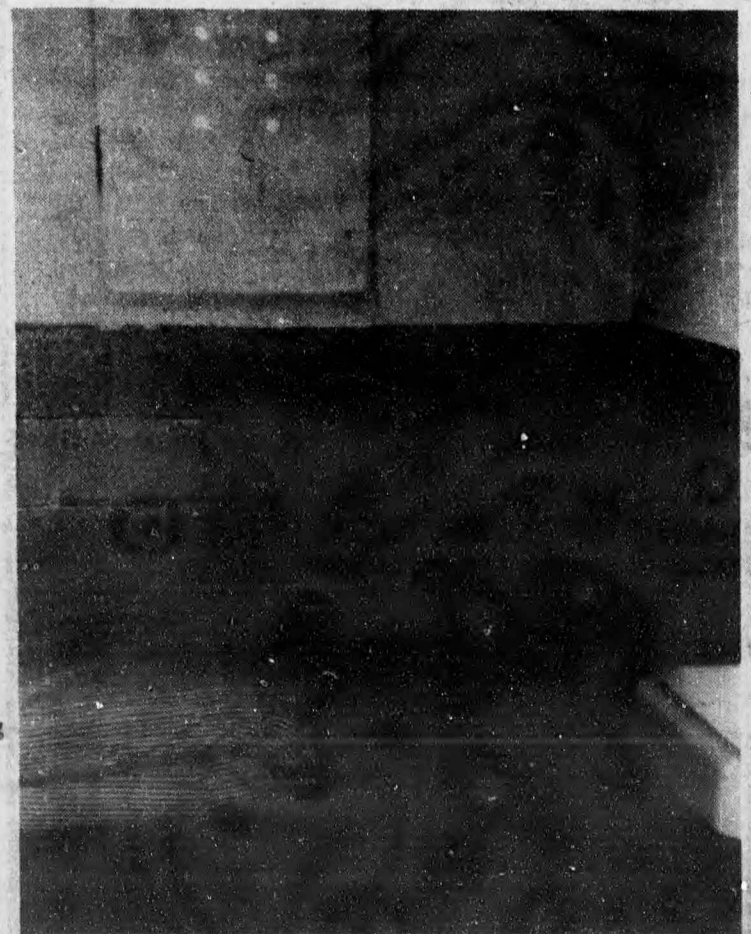
Because of the increase in student requirements, the amount of money allotted for student's use will not be sufficient this year to cover the demand. R.B. Mills - Director of Student Aid for the province of N.B. says that "It is pre-

mature to say how much the increase would be in student loans next year, but there will definitely be an increase." For an overall picture of the student loan situation, he has provided the following information.

In 1970 there was 8,010 students supported with loans

and last year the government spent 6 1/2 million dollars on loans and \$2,015,000 on bursaries. This year due to the lack of summer jobs and increasing fees and tuitions the number of students to be supported has greatly increased. So far the government has spent \$6,785,000 in loans and \$2,275,000 in bursaries.

This year T.C. made an impact on these figures but next year with everyone paying tuition the impact will be far greater. Next year the government hopes to be able to pay \$1400 for every \$1000 paid out this year. As it stands the situation for students can be grim but with the appeals it will not be critical.



Living quarters inside the Farm.

**CONCERT** WITH RITA COOLIDGE  
 \* RICKER COLLEGE, HOULTON, MAINE  
 FEBRUARY 26th, Saturday Evening,  
 PUTNAM GYM 8:00 p.m.  
 ADMISSION: \$3.00