

September 1999

PREPARATIONS FOR 19TH APCCA WELL ADVANCED

On August 9, 1999 a meeting was held in Shanghai with the Organizing Committee for the 19th APCCA and the APCCA Coordinator, David Biles.

Mr. Biles was welcomed to Shanghai by Mr. Du Zhongxing, Director General of the Prison Administration Bureau of China, who welcomed the APCCA Coordinator and thanked him for the advice and assistance he had provided to the organizing committee. Mr. Du reported that the Minister of Justice, Gao Changli was taking a close interest in the 19th APCCA and was likely to officiate at the opening of the conference.

Mr. Du tabled the proposed agenda for the conference and invited comments from Professor Biles. He strongly endorsed the program, as outlined, with suggestions for minor modifications, which were readily accepted.

A note was made of the change of venue for the conference from the original site. The Peace Hotel, to the Huaxia Hotel. This was prompted by the more attractive discounts available at the new site, as well as somewhat larger conference facilities.

Conference organisation and supporting material were reviewed and everyone was satisfied with the arrangements. Professor Biles congratulated Mr. Du and his committee on the excellent preparations made and he expressed his full confidence for a successful conference.

BILES VISITS PRISONS IN MONGOLIA

During the 18th APCCA in Vancouver the leader of the delegation from Mongolia, Major General L. Garamjil, invited the APCCA Coordinator, Professor David Biles, to visit his country as a guest of the General Executive Department of Court Decision Of Mongolia. The

visit took place from August 11th to 17th, following a planning meeting in Shanghai which Professor Biles attended to discuss Preparations for the 19th APCCA.

During his visit, Professor Biles toured five of the 28 prisons in Mongolia and had discussions with correctional officials in the national capital Ulaanbaatar. He also visited the town of Harhovin where he visited the local prison and toured an historic monastery nearby. Before leaving Mongolia, Professor Biles presented an oral report on his impressions to a senior group of prison officials. Upon his return to Australia he followed up with a written report and a number of recommendations for change. Professor Biles expressed his appreciation for the hospitality of his hosts and the opportunity to learn about the history and culture of Mongolia.

NEW ZEALAND - MAORI FOCUS UNITS

The New Zealand Department of Corrections announced in May two new Maori focus prison units bringing the total throughout the country to three.

Phil McCarthy, General Manager Public Service, says he is delighted that the two new units will open later this year at prisons in the North Island.

"A recent evaluation of the first Maori focus unit highlighted just how important it is to involve local iwi.whanu (family) and Maori service providers to address the needs of Maori and to work towards reducing "re-offending rates" says Mr. McCarthy."

"As a Department we have identified reducing Maori offending as a priority area. We know that more than half the inmate population nationally is Maori despite the fact that Maori make up only 14.5% of the general population. Therefore it is crucial that when we look at reducing "re-offending", we have to look at what has a proven track record and what works."

A recent evaluation on Te Whare Tirohanga Maori, the first focus unit, indicated it had been successful in changing inmates' attitudes.

Haami Piripi, Manager Cultural Perspectives Policy and Service Development, says the units build upon Maori programs that seek to bring about changes in behaviour using Maori values and disciplines.

"Feedback about the first unit has been excellent with whanau members in particular commenting on the incredible changes they observed in their family member."

"Whanau days play an important part in the success of the units and foster a positive atmosphere in the unit."

The Department has identified half a dozen core programs to form the basis of all of its rehabilitation programs.

SINGAPORE - CHILDREN WITH MOTHERS INCARCERATED IN CHANGI WOMENS PRISON/DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE

Save the Children Singapore is a non-profit organisation that was incorporated in 1995 and became a society 1996. It focuses on resilience, to help children prevent, minimise and overcome the damaging effects of adversity.

Ms Goh Slang Sin, the author, is a researcher with STCS, and has been working full-time on this project since August 1998.

Traditionally, there has been little in the way of identification of the specific needs and services of families and children of female prisoners. Realising this, Save the Children collaborated with the Singapore Prisons Department on a project aimed at understanding the issues and meeting the needs of children with mothers in the DRC or prison.

The initial research showed that mothers in the DRC or prison are generally ill educated, unemployed or in low pay jobs and yet prior to their incarceration provided the principal financial support for the family.

Many of the women were hard core addicts, increasing the trauma on their children. However, many of these mothers remained committed as long term caregivers in spite of multiple and sometimes lengthy sentences.

To support them and their children four programs have been introduced into the system.

- An eight-week "Parenting Program" teaching "problem solving" skills to assist mothers in coping with their children.
- A Nursery and Children's Playgroup which provided support for a small group of mothers who are able to keep their infant children for up to three years in their care while in custody as well as weekly play group sessions for mothers and their visiting children.
- A Play and Wait Program that aims at making the prison visit for children a more positive experience leading to a better chance of a successful reunion on the mother's release.
- Open visits for mothers and children only where the child can be the main focus.

STCS is committed to minimising the damaging effects caused to children by the adversities they face as a result of the incarceration of these women.

CORRECTIONS ON THE INTERNET

Australian Institute of Criminology

<http://www.aic.gov.au>

This is the web site for the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC). The Institute is the national focus for the study of crime and criminal justice in Australia, and for the dissemination of criminal justice information. The Institute draws on information supplied to it by a wide variety of sources and its policy advice is objective and independent.

The web site contains an enormous amount of information, much of which is of particular interest to corrections practitioners. For example, there is full text of proceedings of AIC conferences and papers in the Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice series, as well as special sections on restorative justice and alcohol and illicit drug use, statistical information, media releases and news of forthcoming conferences.

Thai Department of Corrections

<http://www.correct.go.th/>

The Thai Department of Corrections web site was launched early in 1999. The site can be read in either Thai or English. Attractively and colourfully presented, it contains an executive list, an outline of the Department's mission and responsibilities, a list of the main prisons, description of the treatment program, and statistics.

The site also has a facility which enables you to send an email message to an inmate in the Department's custody.

CORRECTIONS IN PRINT - MAGAZINES

"Let's Talk"

"Let's Talk" is published every two months by the Communications Sector of the Correctional Service of Canada.

Produced in an attractive magazine-style format, with numerous colour photographs, the publication is certainly one of the most impressive correctional staff magazines in the world today. It is presented in both French and English. It contains an editorial from the Commissioner, feature articles about major new initiatives, sector reports, interviews with staff, and detailed news about developments in the Department's various regions around Canada.

For further information please contact,

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"American Jails"

"American Jails" is published bimonthly by the American Jail Association.

Similar in format and content to "Corrections Today" published by the American Correctional Association, it is one of the main general interest magazines for corrections professionals in the world today.

The magazine contains news of recent developments in jails, mainly in the USA, with some regular international coverage as well. It has regular feature articles on such topics as health, industries, privatization, security issues, and innovative programs, with many in interesting contributions from experts in the field.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CORRECTIONS IN PRINT - BOOK REVIEW

"The Three Pillars of Public Management: Secrets of Sustained Success". By Ole Ingstrup and Paul Crookall. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1998. 246 pages.

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The Three Pillars of Public Management, by Ole Ingstrup and Paul Crookall, is one of a breed of newer studies surrounding the management of public organizations. The prevalent practice in the past has been to translate private-sector management methods, techniques, and theories to public-sector organizations. This has often been met with little success. A plethora of works exist that wax on the perennial themes of the inferiority or wastefulness of public organizations over their private counterparts, or the false but popular notion of civil servants "feeding at the public trough". In short, these works tend to concentrate on what is wrong, not right, with public-service agencies.

The Three Pillars is a somewhat novel addition to the public-administration field, precisely because it starts from the premise that public agencies are different from private-sector companies. They often fail at transferring private-sector management methods to their very singular set of circumstances, not because they are poorly managed, but because they answer to a differing set of priorities, the profit motive being virtually absent from the equation. Based on empirical data from public service agencies from around the world representing a wide range of countries, this is a descriptive work that draws its conclusions from the evidence at hand. From this it extrapolates a model that public-service agencies can follow if they wish to pursue excellence and be a source of added value for their political masters and the public-at-large.

The author's findings result from responses to surveys that were sent to several dozen organizations in fourteen countries. Well-performing organizations displayed characteristics whose elements make up three pillars: Aim, Character, and Execution - erected on a firm foundation of Socratic dialogue and questioning. The authors call this the "ACES" model. Within each of the three pillars are three sub-elements required to "build" the pillar. Aim requires mission, leadership, and accountability; Character requires attention to people, communication, and trust; and Execution requires management tools, teamwork, and skilful and patient change management. Each chapter is filled with examples and descriptions of best practices that public agencies can strive to emulate to achieve sustained success.

Of specific interest to the reviewer were the chapters on Mission, Accountability, Trust and Change Management, since these are areas that have impacted on the Canadian Public Service in general, and on the Correctional Service of Canada in particular, during the 1990s.

The authors' critique of the management faddishness that has pervaded the 1990s, especially the "re-engineering" fad of the mid-90s, is compelling. The chapter on Character relates an engaging anecdote about the Lebanese Civil Service Board, a remarkable example of tenacity under the most trying of circumstances. At the end of each chapter is a set of questions that can help public organizations on their way to achieving sustained success and responsible, ethical management of public monies.

Overall, this book is very useful and timely for both students and practitioners of public administration, particularly as countries throughout the world are either resetting or just beginning to establish the foundations of open and transparent public administration.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Room For One More?

Police in Johannesburg, South Africa, stopped a Toyota HiAce minibus, which looked a trifle overloaded. The vehicle, theoretically capable of carrying 10 passengers, contained 18 adults and six children. Police also discovered that there was no steering wheel - the driver was navigating by means of a plumbers wrench.

Jailhouse Rock

Prisoners occupying cells at a West Midlands police station in England complained that late-night music from a disco had been disturbing their sleep. Inmates awaiting trial at Bilston Street police station sent a message to the disc jockey asking him to turn it down.

Fun for the Whole Family

Despite the designation on the new Ohio, USA state highway map, officials aren't exactly recommending that tourists book a holiday at the new "Fort Dodge Recreational Facility". That's because the facility is actually the new state correctional facility. "Oh, my God!" said Department of Transportation Director Darrel Rensink when he was handed a copy of the faulty map, which had a print run of 1.7 million copies. The prison offers basketball,

volleyball and other pastimes for inmates, but Warden John Thalacker said he hasn't yet met any disappointed tourists who were looking for a recreational facility.

Stealing From Prisoners

Prisoners at the Fulham Correctional Centre in Victoria, Australia were helping out on restoration work at a local historic Powder Magazine, dismantling the Magazine property's front fence and old-style gate. The prisoners laid them to one side during a brief absence. Only two hours later, the gate had been stolen. But a sign which had been attached to the gate warning that the property was under security surveillance had been left behind!

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