



# Behind The Wire

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Society abounds with rumours of what supposedly occurs in jail. As an inmate of a prison near Christchurch for three years, I had the opportunity to see first hand, the conditions and anomalies of the New Zealand prison system. I also saw the degradation and humiliation of many old men, shattered families and the interminable helplessness which tends to follow inmates and their families through the prison system.

Although prison is intended as punishment to teach the convicted felon a lesson, no inmate leaves prison without an intense feeling of anger and bitterness at those who put him there and maybe in some small way at himself. Human life often loses its value for inmates and revenge attacks are frequently planned against those who made the complaint which led to the inmate being imprisoned. Jail does not stop crime. Maybe it slows the tendency of the criminal to be caught, but once a man or woman has been imprisoned the threat of prison ceases to be a deterrent. Length of time matters little to most inmates Who hasn't heard the rumours about what happens if you bend over in the shower to pick up the soap? Most will have heard but probably don't know the truthfulness of this story. What about child molesters, do all those nasty violent things really happen to them in prison? Just how hard is prison life? What happens to the families of inmates while their loved ones languish in prison? Is it true prisoners are fed bread and water and left alone in a tiny stone cell day and night? If not, what do they eat and what are their cells really like? The answers to these questions and many more are contained in this book, Behind The Wire. It is a hard core and accurate account of prison life as witnessed, first hand

## **THE STATE OF NEW ZEALAND JUSTICE:**

Whatever you think of the justice system, law and order, prison, there is a fundamental flaw in all of it - it is corrupt and manifestly responsible for the social ills it sets out to remedy.

So you think that people deserve to have their freedom taken by the Police? They don't! New Zealand has one of the most punished and imprisoned societies in the world, worse than some dictatorships and that, is a fact! Why in Gods name do we set out to steal the freedom of people who steal several times, who commit non threatening, non violent offences which can be dealt with in many other ways, for silly driving offences? It's to criminalise people, particularly Maori so the government can keep an eye on them! Anyone the government deems a threat to their security is locked up. I made a complaint about just such a thing in the 1990s and guess what, I was locked up without proper explanation, for 4 years and 3 months. Am I bitter? Fuck yeah! So are the tens of thousands of other disaffected Kiwis who have been treated like shit by the Justice and Police departments in New Zealand. We are not as democratic as you think.

I call the cops "Freedom Stealers". They lie and cheat you to force a confession over something that may or may not have happened. They do not care about the truth, they care only about conviction - at the end of which I might add - they shit on both the convict and the victim! If you make a complaint, rest assured that the cops will not come near you again the moment the case is over. They just move on - it's nothing but business to them and in their wake, hatred, abuse, revenge, lies, destroyed lives and shattered victims with no follow up. That is the chief reason for repeat criminals.

What you hear about first time criminals getting forced into prison, then learning new crimes is absolutely true. The last thing on the planet that should ever be done to a human being is to lock him or her in a cage like a dog, then expect you can break them. They simply adapt! Think about that.... You can only whip a dog a certain amount of times until it bites your face off. Remember this! There are two distinct societies in New Zealand. Those who have been in prison and who are marked forever, with no chance of a normal life, and those who put them there. Make no mistake - any criminal will tell you, "It's them and us!". That is so true... why would a human being not hate someone who stole his freedom?, they wouldn't! Criminals believe in "revenge for life!".

We've all seen video of the fight clubs in Mt Eden Prison. Why do you think that's unusual? It's gone on forever, as has the contraband smuggling. Even screws smuggle stuff in for cash, or to avoid their families being harmed if they don't. Crims make their own booze! Drugs are piss easy to get, just like anything else. If it can fit up your ass, it can get into the jail! It's none of the public's business what goes on in prisons. When you lock men up like dogs, you throw away your entitlement for them to think of you as human!

Therein lies the problem; you take away the man in the cage's self worth, you destroy your human value in his eyes! Now you are his inferior, his prey, not his equal.

Read on to see a documentary view of NZ jails in the 1990s.

## **THE SYSTEM :**

There are far wider implications affecting people other than those who had been accused or convicted of any crime. A fact which seemed to have escaped the notice at almost everyone in society was the large social group surrounding every person, in every community, who had been forced between the huge wheels of the justice system.

When the police arrive to arrest the man of the house, his wife and children can only watch, as he is dragged away from them, perhaps for many years. They may weep, they may plead with the police not to take him away or they may even shout abuse at police. whatever they do, the arrested man is now forever in the system. The only choice to be made with regard to the situation is whether or not to support the man. The system controls everything else from that point on.

Questions are regularly asked by members of the public. "Why is there so much crime?"

"Why do so many people re-offend?"

"Why do people not want to get involved in the solution of crime?"

and "Why is there nothing the police can do to stop crime? "

Although the catch phrase "Justice must not only be done it must be seen to be done ", is constantly echoed in the halls of justice, all too often justice is seen "not to be done ". Most guilty inmates will freely admit their crimes, but there are many who insist they are innocent. These men have frequently been convicted on nothing more than the testimony of the Police, counsellor or social worker prepared witnesses or complainant. Many families and friends of an accused have called loud and long for an inquiry into a specific case, because no other evidence was presented, but prepared testimony. The entire social circle of the convicted man is affected by such a conviction. They will be deeply hurt and very angry that their loved one or friend has been adversely affected by a decision they see as "unjust ". This type of decision made by the justice system will often seriously damage the respect the accuseds' social circle has for the law. From that point on, they will be hesitant in coming forward, even if their evidence could solve a violent crime.

The social circle of the complainant in the case may feel they too have been unfairly treated by the Justice system. Maybe they believed the man convicted of committing a crime against a member of their social circle, has been handed down too lenient a sentence and will shout abuse at the family of the convicted man as they leave court. They may go on television with their complaints against the sentence or throw petrol bombs at the home of the accused's family as though the mother and children of the man were to blame for the accused's' alleged crimes. They may even insult the accused's' family members loudly in the street so others

will hear. Whatever they do, the system has not been seen by either side as having worked. The end result may well be disrespect or even hatred of the law, at a time when all people are needed to pull together to fight crime.

The divisions caused between social groups by the very system which is designed to protect them, are tearing at the cords which bind society together. Having said that, it surely must appear to the public at large that the police are acting fairly and within the law they are supposed to uphold. People who have been woken from their sleep in the middle of the night to a police firearm in their face may not agree that the police always act in the best interests of the public. In 1993 there was an incident where a man and his wife were surrounded on their own property and forced to lie in the dirt. Police guns hovered only millimetres from the couples heads. A member of the public had telephoned the police to say a gunshot had been heard on the neighbours property. The call turned out to be nothing but the two innocent victims did not see it that way.

In another incident, an innocent woman and her family were raided by police, who kicked in the door of their home, in the middle of the night. Their home was ransacked by police who were searching for evidence in relation to a crime supposedly committed by a person who lived at the house. The suspect had not lived at the house for some time. The police had made a terrible mistake and were made to apologise to the family.

In yet another case, a man had committed a sexual offence and had sought help from the STOP program to prevent him from re-offending. When the offence came to the notice of police, the man was told by the STOP program to go to the police station to be interviewed. He was told there would be no problem because he was voluntarily attending the STOP program for sex offenders. When he was interviewed by the police, he was told, if he pleaded guilty, he would be placed on the police diversion scheme and would not go to jail. Up until then the man had been led to believe by the STOP program he would not even have to go to court. The man went to the police station, expecting to be home in an hour or so. Unfortunately he was locked in the police cells instead, and later sent to prison. The man, as with thousands of others, learned you must never trust a deal made by the police.

An interesting fact is, many men seeking help to stop sex offending attend the STOP program, nationwide. Many of them are arrested by police at the very same STOP program. It appears to be a police trap.

It was announced in a National newspaper that in the year 1993-94, 1600 complaints were laid against the police. In the same article it was revealed that only 3 of those complaints were found in favour of the complainant, a result which may appear to be somewhat irreconcilable to many in the community. Many of the complaints

were laid by people such as those earlier mentioned in connection with searches, violence and situations where police presented firearms. The job of the police can not always be straight forward. There are obviously occasions where they must protect themselves if they believe their lives to be at risk. In these incidences it could be considered as reasonable for them to carry and even present weapons. The recent murder of an unarmed Hastings police officer may well represent what could happen if they do not. Any member of the public would not consider this practice unreasonable if it was their life at risk from a rampaging gunman. If a mistake is made, then surely that is what it is.

In a recent television documentary on the New Zealand court system, the Justice Department revealed that in excess of 100,000 people appear before the courts annually. Of those, 80% apparently plead guilty. The court system is bogged down by the remaining 20%. If for some reason all of those appearing were to plead not guilty, the result would be catastrophic. There is already a long waiting list of those accused who are awaiting trial. This would present a more serious problem, what to do with the accused. Any accused on remand would be kept imprisoned for long periods of time, denying his right to a 11Speedy'4 trial, which could be seized upon by lawyers as a reason to dismiss charges. The only way for the system to guarantee the accused would be given a trial at all would be to try all those on remand first. This would leave a growing backlog of minor or at least not so serious crimes. Many may not get to court for years, if at all. A late night news special on television in 1995 revealed that this has occurred in the United States. A particular county has become so restricted by financial constraints they must leave many criminals to walk the streets. There is no money to build more jails, people are convicted then released because there is nowhere to imprison them and revenue gathering fines go uncollected because there is no one to enforce them. The crime rate has soared and years are waited out until a court date can be arranged.

Trials are a very expensive business. If a defendant was paying the costs of his own lawyer, he could expect to pay anything in excess of \$50,000, win or lose. The legal costs to the public are much higher than this in that police and justice officials' salaries, investigation, remand in custody, transport and witness costs come to many tens, or hundreds' of thousands of dollars. One recent sex abuse case cost the taxpayer around one million dollars and the so-called "Poisoned professor" case in Christchurch cost the tax payer almost two million dollars. These were only two of the many cases in New Zealand each year. The cost of justice is incredibly expensive, unless a guilty plea is elicited.

State money to finance the justice system is just as limited as any other area. Courts and police rely on accused pleading guilty to

avoid crippling costs. For that reason it could be reasonable to expect pressure to be applied to any accused, by any sector of law enforcement, to force a guilty plea. This would prevent the justice system from becoming any more clogged than it already is. After all, taxes can't keep rising to cover the costs. Sooner or later the money runs out

. Right from the arrest, nothing in the Justice system goes the defendant's way. During the initial interview with police the suspect is questioned intensely and with the use of psychological pressure. When a question is asked, it is put in such a way that denial would be futile. The required answer can easily be elicited to fit the question. Each question to which the suspect provides a negative or inconclusive answer receives a prompt by the interviewing detective. After a denial to an allegation the detective may add, "Come on----, you know you 're guilty and I know you re guilty. Why don't you just admit it and save us all a lot of trouble". This prompt will be repeated often by the interviewer during the course of interrogation. Another form of pressure is the raising of a disbelieving eyebrow by the detective. The suspect will often feel pressured into an answer, any answer just to get the detective off his back. This form of pressure, though subtle, is very powerful. In itself it is a form of suggestion to the suspect. Once an answer has been obtained, the detective will dismantle it with innuendo, disbelief and persuasion of shame he's strenuously applied to the suspect. Never at any time will the detective consider the suspect may be innocent. Indeed it is not the job of the police to prove he is. They will only believe the suspect is guilty and will use any and all methods to prove it.

Unfortunately, as many as 12% of all accused in New Zealand prisons may well be innocent men.

Other pressure applied by the police includes the use of news media coverage. One must not underestimate the power of this form of pressure. A man having been denied anonymity by the police use of the media will sit in his remand cell, frightened he may be attacked and killed by another prisoner. The man will be too afraid for his safety should he be released on bail, he will often instruct his lawyer not to make a bail application. It is in reality, safer for the man to remain in prison. While the man remains locked up, he will have very limited access to his lawyer. True he will not be able to get near his alleged victims, but he will not be able to do anything to protect himself or clear his name either. In that sense, anyone who is remanded in custody will usually be convicted. This is a devastating position for any man to be in. In essence he will feel forced to go to remand prison to protect his safety, knowing there is little or nothing he can do to protect himself in the legal sense, whilst in jail. Police, in opposing bail are aware of this.

There is little difference in court. When the accused is brought into

the dock, he will often be jeered at and threats made against him. Little or nothing will be done to the persons making the threats because in the mind of the police, the accused is guilty, even though there has as yet been no trial. The news media will have smeared details of the alleged crimes throughout the city and often even the entire country. This accused has already been denied the chance of a fair trial News reports, though updated as charges are dropped and others laid, make more of an issue of the new charges, playing down the fact that some, if not most charges have been dropped.

The Christchurch Civic Crèche case was a good example of this. The whole of the country watched as the accused, Peter Ellis was crucified by the media. It was in the papers, on the radio and beamed into the home of every New Zealander. The country was divided over his guilt or innocence which was to many, unproven. The trial of Peter Ellis was conducted in the media, not the courtroom, using only information carefully selected by the respective media to generate the highest ratings.

Lawyers themselves can be the defendant's worst nightmare. For a first time defendant the legal process will be frightening. The defendant will have to cope with the loss of his family, freedom, abuse and threats, police intimidation and innuendo, attacks on his family and friends and a feeling of incredible helplessness. To add to this, his lawyer will be loathe to offer any advice as to which way to plead or handle the situation, for fear of being accused later of failing to correctly advise his client. In his fear and confusion, the defendant will have no idea what to do, constantly making the wrong decisions. Police will be relying on this confusion to ensure a simpler conviction. They will indeed visit the man in prison, telling him they have enough evidence to convict him, that he is going to jail no matter what he does and the only choice he has is for how long. Many men plead guilty just to stop the mental torment applied by the Justice system, even though they may be innocent. Without a guilty plea, the Justice system will not run smoothly. That plea is depended on at all levels and with 80% of all accused pleading guilty, either the system works or innocent men, unable to cope with the duress, are being wrongfully convicted of crimes they never committed. In the dock, the defendant tries to avoid looking at the people in the gallery. He knows only too well he is the centre of attention. The defendant has nothing to say in court, unless he has a trial. His lawyer will say all that is necessary. When the judge looks at the defendant and asks "How does the defendant plead ", he is addressing the defendants lawyer. The defendant may have something to say. but now will not be the time. It will be an embarrassing, frightening and confusing time for him.

On the first appearance in court it will be decided whether or not the defendant will be granted name suppression or bail. If he has

not asked his lawyer to apply to the court for either of these, he will not be given them. Bail would allow the defendant the freedom to help himself while name suppression is often the difference between a fair or unfair trial. If the lawyer fails to apply for either of these, or refuses after the defendant has asked him to, as often happens, he will be assisting the crown in its' prosecution of his client. There are many cases each year when a lawyer is put before the bar association for failing to provide the best representation for his client. Because the lawyer is so often the only chance for an accused to gain his freedom, many people end up in prison unjustly. The days are long gone when everyone believed in justice being done properly. A man in Christchurch recently gained a retrial and subsequent release due to misrepresentation by his lawyer. There had not been enough evidence to convict the man in his first trial, so little in fact, it took the judge in the second trial only a day and a half to dismiss the defendant. The jury in that second trial had already found the man guilty at that point but did not get the chance to air its' verdict. Only the insight of a thinking judge saved the man from being re-convicted and sent back to prison. Unfortunately the accused was considered guilty from the outset of proceedings.

## **POLICE SEARCH :**

There is nothing more dehumanizing than having your borne searched by police. When the knock comes at the door, unless the resident has seen the police arrive, he has no idea of what is about to transpire. First, the detective leading the search will identify himself and hand a search warrant to the person who answers the door. He will then be asked if he minds if the police conduct a search of his premises. If the resident refuses, he will be told he has no right to do so and told to stand aside. He will then be handed the search warrant as the police, both men and women, push past him and enter his home. If asked what they are looking for, the police will answer, "don't you know?", or "read the warrant".

From that moment, things get very hectic. Drawers are pulled out and emptied onto the floor, as are all cupboards, boxes, bags etc. Contents are piled on the floor as police go through all items of property, whether it belongs to the person named on the search warrant, or not. The resident is stunned and tries to read the search warrant. Specified at the top of the warrant will be the nature of evidence or property sought. The warrant will also contain the description of all buildings and specific parts of that, or adjoining properties. It will not contain the exact nature of the offence of which the resident is suspected and he will not be informed by the police unless he is arrested.

Confused, angry and frightened, the resident watches as the police move around to the rear of his dwelling. They walk into every outbuilding, moving everything around and poking into every nook and cranny, hoping to find some piece of evidence to link the resident, or someone who lives at the dwelling, to an offence. At this point the resident is still unaware of the nature of the offence. He will ask the detective again, "What's going on, what are you looking for?", and will again be told, "Come on (first name), you know what you've done". If the resident asks again, he will probably be threatened with arrest for "Obstructing an officer in the course of his duty". If a friend or relative arrives at the dwelling during the search, he will initially be advised to leave. If he stays to comfort his friend, police will want to know who he is and where he lives, his connection to the resident and suggest they may pay him a visit later. If the visitor attempts to extract information or inform his friend of his rights, he will be warned by the police he will be arrested.

Any assistance offered to the resident in any way by anyone will be treated with aggression by the police. There have been cases where an elderly person has been threatened in this way while going to the aid of a son or daughter. While the search continues, the resident, whether youthful or elderly, man or woman, must watch as police poke through their personal belongings. They must endure

the embarrassment of police handling underwear and other personal possessions as sarcastic and insulting comments are made. The final indignity must then be suffered as police search through a hamper of dirty laundry in the washing machine waiting to be washed. For many whose homes are searched in this way, the indignity can be too much and they break down and cry. This will not deter the police, who will smirk sarcastically at each other. No attempt will be made to pacify or comfort the person being searched.

During the search, items of property will be held up and examined as police ask, "Hello, what have we got here", insinuating impropriety of some kind. Any item, no matter how valuable will be listed then thrown into Council rubbish bags. The resident will watch as his whole life is turned inside out, then trashed as though insignificant.

The resident at no time during the search is cautioned nor read any rights, neither is he spoken to by any of the police searching his home. Ultimately, the only right he has is to watch helplessly, while the police turn his home upside down. A search can take several hours, often finding nothing incriminating. The police will leave. There will be no apology given. The resident is then left to clean up the mess which resembles the results of a burglar ransacking the house during a break in. The police are not responsible for restoring the property after carrying out a search. If at any time the resident is cautioned or told not to leave the premises, it should be clear to him he is going to be arrested. If the suspect is asked to accompany the detective in charge to the police station, and asks "Am I under arrest?", the detective will probably say "No, but I'll arrest you if you want me to". Although not under arrest, if the suspect then refuses to go with the detective, he will be arrested under sec 315. This is an arrest without a warrant, based on the police believing they have probable cause to believe the suspect has committed an offence against the law. Contrary to popular opinion the police do have the right to arrest a suspect without a search warrant. When this occurs, police prefer the resident, now a suspect, not contact his solicitor. If he does not ask to telephone for one, the police will not offer the choice. They will prefer to interview the suspect without the interference of a lawyer.

Finally, the suspect is conveyed to the police station where he will be interrogated for several hours. Probably the last thing he will see for the next few years is his home disappearing into the distance, from the back seat of a police car.

**POLICE :**

After the police have completed their search of the suspect's premises and taken him into custody, the questioning process begins. There may be an attempt made by police to question the suspect in the car on the way to the police station. No answer should be made to any question asked in this way, no matter how innocent the questions may seem. At all stages of interview police will try to gain the confidence of the suspect. A suspect who has never been questioned by police will not know this tactic. He may answer freely, putting his freedom at risk. At no time should any suspect communicate with police without the presence of his lawyer. Once at the police Station the suspect should be cautioned before making any statement to police. He should then be asked if he requires a lawyer to be present. The suspect should answer "Yes", then say nothing until his lawyer arrives at the police station. At this time the suspect should be allowed to speak to his lawyer who will give him instructions, which will normally be to make no statement and reply "No comment" to all questions. If the suspect is unable to do this or he does not understand the instructions, he should ask his lawyer to remain in the room throughout the interview. This will prevent the suspect from being pressured into making any statement or comment which could be damaging to his chances of a quality defence. Questioning is a harrowing experience. It begins simply enough with the suspects name, how long he 'd lived at his present address then quickly turns into an allegation that he 'd committed some kind of crime. Initially the accusation will hit the suspect like a ton of bricks. The suspect will break into a cold sweat. whether or not he is guilty of anything. If he has not asked for a lawyer and makes a statement to the police, he will usually regret it because in many cases the initial statement is often the convicting evidence. A confession can be elicited under duress with simple police manipulation of the facts. It is their job to obtain the truth, a confession and a conviction. The lengths and methods they use are up to the individual policeman. The use of pressure to obtain a confession at a time when the suspect may be distraught, frightened and confused is unfair and unreliable. Statements elicited under this form of pressure are often untrue. Police will try to persuade suspects to confess and make it easier on their loved ones. This makes it almost impossible for the accused to withdraw a guilty plea at a later date, when he realizes he has made a terrible mistake. Attempting to change a plea from guilty to not guilty on the grounds that the suspect wanted to protect certain persons is not generally permitted. Pressure may be applied by police informing the suspect they intend to tell the judge he was unco-operative and this will make sure he does not get bail. Often the suspect has not yet been arrested but arrest in itself can be a

technical point. Unless it has been made clear to the suspect he is under arrest, or he may not leave the police station, he is free to go and may do so at any time. If the suspect attempts to leave, and if the police believe he has committed an offence, he will be arrested under section 315 of the Crimes act 1961. An arrest warrant will not be required for this and it will not be necessary for the arresting officer to state in technical language, either a caution or the fact that the suspect is now under arrest. If the suspect does leave however, police pressure will be more intense if he is later arrested. There are often allegations of police brutality by the suspect during an interview. One hears of telephone books being placed on the person of a suspect and struck with a baton. who hasn 't heard that police will beat a suspect, without leaving marks if he doesn 't tell them what they want to hear. Accounts of these forms of police brutality were evident, though not prolific, in prison. Most inmates told of their verbal abuse of the police who then retaliated physically, often causing the suspect injury. No one spoke of being beaten to force them to make a confession. The interview seemed to be a cat and mouse game. Some police had a reasonable idea who was guilty but showed no partiality to those they thought may be innocent Others could not or would not make the distinction. Ideally it would be helpful if suspects were able to feel they were receiving fair treatment. Most police are genuinely interested in getting the truth from a suspect and investigate reported crimes thoroughly. Unfortunately some do not. Occasionally, police are accused of acting prejudicially towards certain suspects. This would mean the suspect, once arrested and held in a remand prison, was hounded by police still seeking a confession. This was nearly always spontaneous and was not done in the presence of a lawyer. A remanded inmate has the right to refuse to speak to police. If he makes a statement, the consequences are his responsibility. At the end of the interview the suspect would either be released if there was insufficient evidence to prosecute him, or he would be taken into custody. This would be either 'Protective ' custody, if police felt he was at risk from attack from persons associated with complainants or members of the public, or custody to appear in court the following day. Upon completion of the interview the suspect would be told what type of custody he was being placed in. Police custody, the police cells, is noisy, smelly and degrading and it can be a huge shock for a first timer. On delivery to the lock up, the suspect is stripped of his watch, wallet, money, tie, shoe laces, credit cards and everything else except his clothing. A receipt for his property is issued and he is asked to sign the back of it. On the back of the receipt form is a pre-printed statement that the suspect has been asked if he requires a lawyer and has declined. If this is not true for the individual suspect, he should not sign it. After details have been taken and the receipt signed the suspect is taken

to a cell. On the way he will be issued with 3 blankets and a pillow. when he reaches his cell he will be asked to surrender his shoes. They will be left in the corridor outside his cell. Later he will be taken to a room where he will be photographed and finger printed. Visitors or a lawyer will generally be permitted on request. Any visit will take place under supervision and there will be no physical contact. Meals should be provided if the suspect is in custody over meal times although there are cases where suspects have been denied food until the following day. Sleeping in the police cells is difficult They are quite small and cold. Many contain nothing but a combination stainless steel hand basin and toilet and a concrete slab for a bed. Mattresses are plastic covered, for hygiene not comfort, and the three blankets are often insufficient to provide warmth. Sleeping on a concrete slab in the middle of winter is very cold, no matter how good the heating is. All through the night the police move around. Doors are slammed which keep most prisoners awake. Many were very tired and irritable for their court appearance in the morning. Prisoners are asked if they require a shower. Breakfast then comes around on a trolley. It is similar to that in prison, cereal, toast and tea. After breakfast all prisoners are placed in the day room where they wait. Because smoking is not permitted most prisoners are desperate for a cigarette. A policeman may bring cigarettes to those requiring them. Eventually the prisoners will be taken individually into a viewing room, where several detectives sit behind a blinding light and made to stand on two red footprints painted on the floor. Behind the prisoner is a height scale on the wall, Details of the prisoners alleged crimes are read out and he is recorded on video as the detectives pass derisive comments about the charges. After this, the prisoner is then taken back to his cell where he waits for the prison van ride to court.

At around 8.30am, the prisoners from the night's roundup are bundled into a police van and driven to court. Sex accused and those requiring protection would be placed in the front section of the van. All others went in to the rear. All along the way, those in the rear of the police van abused and threatened the already terrified men in the front. There was a Perspex divider to prevent those men in the rear from attacking the ones in the front. When the van pulled into the loading dock beneath the court, the two groups were removed from the van and led to separate cell beside the courtroom. Here they would wait until called to appear before the judge.

Police attitudes at court depended upon the accused and the nature of the accusation. Many of those men appearing in court had been there many times and were often well known by particular police officers. Some police were on first name terms with some of the prisoners and talked to them as though they were friends. The rest of the prisoners were either ignored by the police, or comments

were made about the nature of their allegations in such a way that all other prisoners knew what they were accused of. This could be particularly dangerous for men accused of indecencies against children although rapists didn't seem to matter. Police would look in through the peep hole in the cell door where a child sex accused was being held, and smirk at him. Many made comments such as "Dirty bastard... He needs shooting". All comments were made so loudly that the accused would hear them.

Not all police conducted themselves in this manner at court. Some were there to simply do their job. One particular older policeman took a sex accused cups of tea and checked regularly to ensure no harm had come to him. time went by and the accused's case dragged on, that same policeman stood outside the court and watched the accused's elderly father and other members of his family being assaulted by friends of the complainant. Many other uniformed police watched the same incident but did nothing to stop it. Quite often, innocent family members are left feeling violated by the police they 'd always thought would protect them. This feeling is often passed onto the defendant who will then plead guilty under the delusion he is protecting his family.

### **CHARGES :**

Penalties exist in prison for infractions of the law. the same as in outside society. There are many ways an inmate can find himself on a charge. Insubordination, disobeying an officer, smoking in a no smoking area, taking drugs and getting caught, assaulting another inmate or a guard are just some of the ways.

Having charged an inmate, the guard would write him up in the incident report for his shift. As soon as practicable, the inmate would be called before the unit and custody managers. His charge would then be read out and the inmate asked how he pleaded. Most inmates pleaded guilty to the charges which were usually minor and often seemingly insignificant to the observer. Having pleaded guilty the inmate would be given a dressing down by the custody and /or unit manager, then sentenced. If on the other hand the inmate pleaded not guilty. this would cause annoyance to the prison administration because they would have to prove their case before a Visiting Justice. It was widely known among the inmates there was no real way to defend any charge because of the nature in which it was investigated by prison authorities. Most inmates complained of threats made to them by the prison administration that if they pleaded not guilty, they would be locked in the pound until they had changed their mind. There was no place for any contrary inmate in prison.

Once the conviction had been achieved, it was time for sentencing. Since all minor charges were heard in the prison, the penalties were not great. An inmate would be sentenced to be confined to his cell for a number of days. This was referred to as "Cc's" and meant the inmate was confined to his cell with no radio, television, cigarettes etc. He was let out of his cell once a day for a shower. Often, other inmates would pass cigarettes, radios or small televisions into the cell so the inmate on Cc's wouldn't "do it hard ". Guards knew this went on. They acted only when it was made obvious. This punishment could be any duration from 2 to 28 days.

Other inmates would be sentenced to "OP 's ",(off privileges). This meant they would be locked in their cells after dinner, and would not be allowed to participate in recreation time. If the inmate was in a work wing, he would be sent out to work, but locked up after dinner. Those inmates were allowed to keep their televisions, radios and cigarettes. Fines were imposed either as the punishment or in conjunction with either or both of the former. Prison wages to the inmate would be withheld for the number of days or weeks. This was called 'Loss of pay . Because inmates were paid so little in the way of wages, it seemed ridiculous to punish them by withholding \$2.90 by way of a fine. More serious offences were brought before the Visiting Justice. Offences such as assaulting a guard or inmate or theft which were not serious enough to justify outside court were

heard by the "VJ ". Sentences would include CC's, OP's and/or loss of pay. The VJ however was able to include loss of remission as a punishment. This would mean the inmate would not be eligible for early parole as a punishment for his offence. Although this angered many inmates, they found it preferable to outside court, in which they could receive more prison time.

Along with the earlier mentioned punishments, the pound was imposed on inmates. The pound was a grey concrete block room containing nothing but a concrete slab with a thin foam mattress on which the inmate slept, and a combination Stainless Steel toilet bowl and hand basin. Although there was heating of a kind, it seldom worked. In a Prison near Christchurch an inmate became so cold in the pound, he was taken out the following morning suffering from the effects of Hypothermia. This was accepted by prison officials as an occupational hazard of inmates who do not follow the rules. Many inmates wondered if death by Hypothermia would be accepted likewise While in the pound inmates are not permitted visitors, cigarettes, television, radio or phone calls. They have one shower per day and are checked on the hour by guards to make sure they have not committed suicide or damaged themselves in any way. Medical staff check several times per day as well. There are yards in the pound, although only one inmate at a time may enter them. Although meant as a punishment, for many inmates who are stressed by the pace of life in the wing, a week in the pound can be a tremendous relief. There have been inmates who deliberately caused themselves to be placed in the pound for a length of time, almost the same as the inmates once released, who reoffend to get back to prison to escape the rat-race of life in society. It is however seen by others as tortuous. The pound is solitary confinement. It's damn cold, incredibly uncomfortable and with only two blankets and pyjamas on nights when the temperature drops below zero, waiting for the hot shower the following morning, makes for the longest night of the inmates life. No matter how barbaric the punishment, inmates attitudes did not alter for the better. Most simply said "No Effect! " and laughed it off.

**REMAND :**

A man is supposed to be considered innocent until proven guilty. All inmates in any remand prison are therefore still considered innocent. One would wonder then, why remand prisons have the worst facilities and the inmates must live in disgusting conditions. Addington prison is the remand centre for Christchurch as well as many other South Island towns. The first ride to Addington remand prison in the police van is terrifying for most men. The rear of the van is separated into two sections. The mainstream remandees were in the larger rear section, and those wishing to be on protection rode in the front part. As with the ride to court, those in the back part shouted abuse at those in the front, frequently punching the Perspex partition between them. Any man sitting with his back against the partition would feel the blows against it and would sit forward so they could not be struck. Unfortunately, those on "protection" were all considered to be "kidfuckers" and all abuse reflected this. The men in the front part were constantly threatened with death, being told they were going to be killed in the yards. Many of the protection inmates were old men. They cringed at every word; every blow against the Perspex thankfully keeping them apart from those who might injure them. This continued throughout all court proceedings.

Addington prison was a very old building, previously used as a stable for army horses. The interior was abysmal to say the least. The main wing was dark and foreboding, with cells along both sides. There was a small area separated by yet another Perspex shield, offering protection to inmates who feared for their safety.

When an inmate arrived at Addington for the first time, he was taken from the court or police van and made to stand quietly in the main corridor. He may have been an accused sex offender, or an old man, terrified as he stood among other angry remandees. At least one guard watched on to ensure there was no trouble.

The new remandees were then placed into an open cell, with those on protection being placed in a separate cell. Individually, each remandee was taken to an open room. In full view of others, he was made to strip completely naked. While he stood there, ashamed and bare, his clothes were searched. Inmates in the main cell made crude comments as each remandee on protection was stripped. Unless the remandee had been in prison before, he felt more embarrassed, humiliated and violated than he had ever felt in his life. The search would last five minutes or so and then the inmate ordered to dress.

Next, the inmate was processed. His details were placed on a computer by a guard and any personal property bagged, labeled and recorded. An inmate must have one complete set of clothing in his property. The remandee was then taken back to the cell, where

passing inmates would look in, sometimes making crude comments or verbally abusing him. Here, the remandee would wait until called to the prison nurse for a medical check. If the doctor was there, he would conduct a thorough examination, including feeling the remandees testicles to determine if he had a hernia. When the medical check was complete, the remandee was escorted back to the holding cell where he waited to be escorted to the kitlocker and issued with his kit.

The kitlocker was a room off the main corridor. Two men worked there and supplied clothing and bedding to all inmates in the institution. A pillow, 2 sheets, 2 blankets, 1 pillow case, 1 towel and any clothing requirements were dispensed to the remandee as he was taken down the corridors and into the main wing for the first time.

Many were afraid as they skulked through the door into the wing. Men shaking with fear was a common sight. Another guard met them at the wing door and escorted them to allocated cells. They were told to get into the cell and having done so, the door was slammed shut and locked. Finally they were alone for the first time. Nothing prepared a new remandee for the tremendous impact of the sudden realization he was in prison. Something happened to him as the steel door slammed shut. Almost as if by instinct, he would try the door wondering if it was really locked. It was. At that instant many would panic. The loss of loved ones, their livelihood or homes, friends, belongings and ultimately the loss of their freedom would descend on them, crushing their life. Some cried, others resigned themselves to the situation and a few were angry. No matter how they reacted it would do no good because the one thing they would have to get used to from this point on was complete helplessness and total dependency on the very system which had taken their freedom away.

As he looked around his cramped cell, the inmate was to learn what prison was all about. There was no water or electricity. The bars on the high windows would be his constant companion. There were two bunks in an "U" shape with a small table between them and a 10 litre paint pail for a toilet. The rest of the cell was bare.

Meal times were at 7.00am, 1.00pm and 4.00pm. For most, the first encounter with prison food was shortly after arrival at Addington prison. Lunch would be brought to the new remandees. On arrival, my first meal was lunch. It consisted of two patties of some kind, soup, an apple, bread and butter and a cup of tea. It was a reheated lunch and not very tasty. Most new remandees had trouble eating the first meal, no matter what it was. Their stomach would be tied in knots.

Just before dinner, guards unlocked the cells and the order to "Slop out" was given. All remandees picked up their "piss pots" and took them to the toilet block. In this room there were several urinals,

toilets and hand basins. At the opposite end to the door was an open sewer. Remandees lined up with their urine filled buckets, then emptied them into the open sewer. They had to be careful not to be splashed with the urine from another mans bucket. While there a man could go to the toilet and wash up. Many waited for "slop out" to go to the toilet. It was considered better not to urinate or defecate in the buckets because it would stink the cell out. Those who had trouble using a toilet in front of others, had difficulty getting used to either the toilet block or the buckets. About 5 minutes was allowed to complete ablutions then all remanded prisoners had to return to their cells, where they were locked in once again until 11 O 'clock when dinner was ready.

The first dinner time was confusing for the new remandee. He had no idea what to do or where to go so he followed the others. Guards unlocked the cell doors and said loudly, "stand by your doors". All remandees were expected to present themselves for a "meal parade". When all were at their cell doors the command "lead on" would be given. Meals were picked up from the servery, a small window in the wing ([see MEALS:](#)) . Food was placed on a tray. There was a main meal, dessert and bread and butter. A cup of tea was obtained from an urn near the window. Occasionally insults were directed at some of the remandees. It was considered that all older men were child molesters and they were abused accordingly and very quietly so the guards couldn't hear them. Any remandee who had a high profile case with plenty of media coverage would be abused more than anyone. Having picked up their meal, the inmates went back to their cells to eat it. Inmates waiting upstairs often spat into the food of protection inmates as they walked beneath the landing that these men were waiting on.

Once in the cell, a guard locked the door again. Ten minutes later the guards called "plates out.. Get your water" and unlocked the doors. All plates were placed outside the cells on the floor of the wing, and those requiring water to drink for the night would get it from the toilet block. Again, the inmates were told to go into their cells and the doors locked for the long night ahead.

If a remandee had a battery powered radio, he could listen to it at night. If not, and there was nothing to read, the 15 hour night was extremely long. Some had court the next morning and were nervous about the van ride and what was going to happen to them in court. Others had no court appearance for anything from a few days to several weeks. Either way, there was often little sleep for any remandee.

During those long nights men would yell out anything from casual banter with a friend in another cell, to abusing a child molester. Every now and again someone yelled out for a guard to open his cell door because he wanted to use the toilet. Usually this wouldn 't be done since no one is permitted to be unlocked until morning,

unless in an extreme emergency.

To get through the night, many remandees talked to each other. That was often the only way to pass the time and could occur only if cell mates were comfortable with each other. The worst part of the day was when the sun was going down. Looking out through the bars on the window at a deep blue sky as daylight faded was often a deeply emotional experience. A man wondered when he would see a tree, a river, the mountains or walk free under the sky again. Some remandees became suicidal. To ensure they were delivered to court and justice be done to them, "Pegs" were put in place if they were considered a suicide risk. "Pegs" were off routine checks. They were made at regular intervals of 5, 10, 15, 20 or more minutes. At night, when an inmate was on "pegs", his light was turned on and he was observed. An entry was made in the guards log containing the time and a comment like "appears asleep". Even if the man had managed to get to sleep, the light continually woke him up. Some guards used a flashlight when checking suicide risks.

If an inmate was considered an extreme suicide risk, he would be placed in cell 15, otherwise known as the "suicide cell". He would be stripped of all clothing and placed in a canvas type jacket. Cell 15 contained nothing. The walls were padded to prevent self inflicted injury. The inmate would be observed constantly until the psychiatric nurse deemed him safe to come off observation. Despite this facility there were suicides in Addington prison. Occasionally men would be discovered hanging by the neck from a bed sheet attached to the window bars or lying in his bed soaked in blood, having slit his wrists with a blade from his prison issue razor. The morning at Addington began with guards unlocking the cell doors at 7.00am. The "slop out" order was given and the piss pots containing the nights deposits, emptied in the open sewer in the toilet block. The order to "Stand by your doors" was given, then breakfast was collected. The procedure was the same for every meal. The remandee must get used to this routine. There was a notice on the back of all cell doors containing the entire routine for those who found remembering it difficult.

At 8.00am, there was the option of showering. Anyone wanting a shower went to the shower block near the guard room in the main corridor. Some went, others elected not to shower some of the time since daily showers were not compulsory. All inmates were expected to have three showers per week. Shaving and ablutions were carried out at the same time in the shower block. There was a notice on the wall, warning about the dangers of sharing razors. Most men were very careful not to share. The threat of becoming infected with A.I.D.S or the H.I.V virus was ever present and many worried about it.

Showering was not private. For many this was the first time they had showered in front of others ([see SHOWERS:](#)).

A "canteen" was issued to all remandees. The first issue contained a Bic disposable razor, a bar of plain, white unscented soap, comb, a small pack of Colgate toothpaste, tooth brush, three small sachets of shampoo and a pen. All future issues did not contain the tooth brush, comb or pen. The "canteen" was free to all remandees and was handed out weekly.

The first morning in Addington prison, the new inmates began the ritual of cleaning out their cells. Although there was nothing much in the cells, they became dusty and dirty very quickly. After breakfast, guards unlocked all the cells. The men in them were required to get a broom, mop and bucket then sweep and wash the floors in their cells. Cleaning was done daily and was compulsory. There was an ever present smell. It was a mixture of unwashed bodies, sex and death. No matter how much a man washed out his cell, it still stank the same.

At 2pm, the remandee could receive visits from friends and loved ones. Non sentenced remandees were permitted to have daily visits. Sentenced inmates were only allowed one visit per week, on the weekend.

When the time came to go out to the visiting room, the inmate was escorted from his cell to the guard post at the door to the visiting room. There, he would be "patted down" to ensure he was not smuggling anything out of the prison. The door was opened and he went into the visiting room. On the first visit, the new remandee was usually terrified. He would feel as though everyone was watching him and in some cases, they were. If the remandee was the subject of media coverage trial, everyone knew who he was. Other remandees and their visitors would stare and talk about him. As he walked past them, comments and threats would be made about him, just loud enough for him to hear. The guards would not hear these comments or threats. If a remandee was a highly publicized child sex offender, he may be granted separate visits by the unit manager of the prison. These however would be only once or twice a week and were stopped when the man receiving them asked, or the threat was considered to be past.

Visiting time was hard for everyone. The room itself was very small and held only a small number of people. Visitors had to wait outside until there was room for them to go in. Plastic chairs were placed around the dull yellow painted walls. Two guards were in the visiting room at all times. One guard sat at the entry door. All visitors had to go past him and sign the visitors book. The other guard wandered around between the visitors and remandees.

The noise in prison visiting room was constant. It was hard to hear what the visitor was saying over the din. It was a relief to many remandees and their visitors alike, when it was time to leave.

Before going back to his cell the remandee is strip searched (see families). If he is found to have brought anything in from his visitor

he will be charged, as will his visitor. Anything required to be delivered to the remandee must be handed in at the guard house. After being checked and accepted as suitable, the goods were recorded as being in the remandee's property. Cash was accepted and placed into the inmates prison account. After all remand inmates had returned to their cells, the property was delivered to them by a guard. All television sets and electrical appliances had to be accompanied by an electrical safety certificate from "Tisco". If they did not have one, they were not accepted by the guards. Remandees who were not yet sentenced were able to buy goods (see Buy Up 's) daily. The prison welfare officer took the p119's, the buy up forms, and bought the goods, which were delivered to remandees every day. Sentenced inmates who were still at Addington had Buy Ups only once a week. Remandees had to rely on cash from friends or relatives since there was no allowance paid until they were sentenced.

Phone calls were placed after dinner. Remandees were taken to the phone at the end of the wing. Some would be abused as they walked past other cells. A guard asked for the number required, and dialed it. When someone answered, the phone was handed to the remandee. Three minutes were allowed for each call, after which time the guard told the remandee to end it. Initially, the calls were free of charge. Late in 1992, the free calls ended and all inmates, both remand and sentenced, had to supply their own phone cards. These were sold to the inmates by the prison and it was not permitted to have them brought in through visits. If they were, they would be placed into the inmate's property, to be handed back when he was released. Phone calls to lawyers were available almost on demand. They were free of charge as was required under the law. These calls were usually placed after 9am and would allow little or no time for a remandee to talk to his lawyer before court. Many men were disadvantaged by this. Sometimes for whatever reason, phone calls to a lawyer were not made available, even if they were urgent. There was no explanation for this. As a direct result many remandees were interviewed by police without their lawyers present. This would often mean the difference between jail and freedom, and men went to jail pleading innocence. A man's lawyer was his lifeline.

The remand experience, at a time when a man was in his worst mental state, was soul destroying and totally destructive. Win or lose he had lost everything, even if he was found innocent. For this reason, psychiatric nursing staff from the forensic unit at Sunnyside hospital regularly visited suicidal and highly stressed remandees. They spent each visit convincing the remandee he was guilty and that his depression stemmed from the fact he was in denial of his crimes. Although they told him he must do what was right for him the remandee was pressed to enter a guilty plea. Never was it

considered he may be innocent, and that was what was depressing him. By the time the remandee went back to court he was often convinced he had done things which he had not. The system was geared to obtaining a conviction.

Any prisoner at Addington could put his name on the list to see the doctor. He could be seen once a week if the need arose. The rest of the time, a nurse was in attendance during normal business hours. She dealt with all minor problems and dispensed medication to those who needed it or were on prescription medication before their arrest. To see the nurse, one asked a guard to unlock for his name to be put on the list. Later that day, a guard would come and collect him and escort him to medical. There were few options for recreation. A remandee could borrow a book from the prison library. All books were old and had been donated. Anyone getting a book from the library could not expect to finish it, either because it was incomplete, or he may be moved to another prison the moment he was sentenced.

Videos were played occasionally. Those not on protection would sit together upstairs and watch them. Those on protection had to sit behind the plastic shield separating them from everyone else. A television set was wheeled into the protection area and those wishing to watch could do so. Other remandees shouted abuse as they walked past. Most pressed their faces to the plastic shield and looked at the inmates within. It was as though they were window shopping. However they couldn't get to those on protection but it was still frightening for those behind the shield.

The yards were frightful. Although protection and non protection remandees were kept in separate yards, abuse and flying objects such as batteries or stones, were a constant hazard. For those who went out to the yards at 9am, there was little to do for the two hours until Dinner time at 11:00 am, but sit in the sun, read a book or walk up and down the tar sealed area within the high concrete walls. There was not enough room to play any games in these small cages. There was a toilet in all the yards. It was open and filthy, almost never had any toilet paper and everything was covered in bird shit. Most remandees who went into the yards interacted reasonably well. Every now and again there was a fight which sent the guards scurrying to put a stop to it., then remove the trouble makers. Protection remandees had to walk well away from other yards as they passed, in an attempt to avoid being spat on. Threats would be shouted as they made their way to a separate yard. Afternoon yards were from 1pm to 3-3.30pm. Most remandees went out to the yards at some stage.

There were "yip's"(youth in prison) at Addington. These youth's were often below 17 years old and were on the way to Corrective training. During 1992 there was such an overflow of prisoners, Yip's were placed in Paparua prisons ' Centre south wing until they could

be transferred to CT.

They were subject to the same rules, conditions and routines of general adult inmates and remandees, but with a few more additions. They were not allowed to associate with adult prisoners, although this was unavoidable at times as their cells were in the main wing. They were not permitted to smoke. This didn't stop them though. Other prisoners gave them cigarettes, and those who got none would pick up butts from the ground and rip pages from their bible with which to roll them into cigarettes. Bible pages made particularly good tissues because they were so thin. Some youths elected to serve a prison sentence with the hardened adult inmates, rather than go to Corrective training. The guards at Addington prison were different from those encountered in any other prison. The day guards appeared more intense, always watching for trouble. Heavy news media coverage on some cases made their job more difficult, often having to escort remandees around the prison to prevent them from being attacked. For this purpose, several guards escorted the remandee concerned. It was safety in numbers. Night time guards were a bit more laid back. From time to time, some of them went to various cells to talk with the remandees inside. These guards came across as being friendly and caring. Sometimes a remandee would look out the peep hole in his cell door and see guards playing tennis in the wing.

Things didn't always go well. There was industrial action in 1992. So that the guards could attend stop work meetings, all visiting privileges were suspended and all remandees locked up for the afternoon. This angered the men locked in their cells because their visitors were waiting outside the prison. Shouting could be heard for quite a long time, as visitors, some of whom had traveled hundreds of kilometres to be there, and remandees called to each other. Eventually, guards put a stop to it, instructing the visitors to leave prison property.

Life on Remand was difficult, frightening and hopeless. Some remandees felt it was made that way for a purpose. Because the terrible and often sub human conditions, and intensive, pervasive fear took a heavy toll on a man, many simply pleaded guilty to get out of remand. The uncertainty and fear destroyed many a remandees yearning for justice to be done, and many found themselves sentenced to long periods of imprisonment, still believing they were innocent and asking themselves how it happened. To make the best use of this situation, the police made visits to remandees. It would be much easier to get statements from first time remandees, since it was not possible to get a lawyer at such short notice. There was no compulsion for any remandee to speak to the police. The prison was required to present the remandee to the police. The remandee then had the right to refuse to talk to them. If he did so, he was taken back to his cell. Prison

guards did not care whether or not the remandee spoke to the police, and no pressure was put on the remandee by the guards, to do so.

Police usually appeared at the remand prison in pairs. One would adopt the "we don't want to nail you to the wall" attitude, the other would say, "but we will if you don't tell us what we want to hear". If the remandee didn't respond to this line (most first timers did), threats would be made against the inmate. The remandee would be told that the police would inform the judge that he was unco-operative. He would then be told that his would get him another year on his sentence. Never would the police consider the remandee may be innocent. A common statement from police during one of these interviews was, "You can plead guilty and get 4 years in jail or try and fight it, be found guilty anyway and get ten years. It's up to you". This tactic was used to elicit a confession. Men under extreme stress would say anything if they thought it would help them in some way. The remand situation was used to create this state of mind. It made obtaining a conviction easier for the police and the justice system because there was no outside interference, and the remandee could be kept in the dark about what was happening on the outside. The fact that there was little or no evidence could also be kept from the remandee since he was isolated.

Many men would speak to the police at the remand prison believing this would get them out, only to be chastised by their lawyers after putting their foot right in it and making an admission, frequently untrue. A man would do almost anything to get out of the hell hole called remand prison. Ultimately the only quick way out was to plead not guilty then apply for high court bail. The only other way was to plead guilty and go directly to jail. Since pleading not guilty would invariably result in a much longer prison sentence, there was no advantage, just futility and it was this futility which helped the justice system convict men, some of them innocent. It was also this futility which caused men to slit their wrists or hang themselves in the dead of night.

The night before a court appearance was frightening for many remandees. After breakfast and showers, all men who were to appear in court that morning were assembled in the holding area near the back gate. There would be a short wait, although it seemed an eternity, before all remandees were assembled at the back gate, their names read out and then told to board the police van. Only men who had not been sentenced, or who were not having their cases heard in the high court were taken to court in the police van.

As with all police vans, there was a Perspex divider between the rear and the front part of the van. Protection remandees were placed in the front, non protection in the rear. The men in the protection part of the van were threatened and the Perspex divider

bashed all the way to court. Those in the front part were terrified as each crash of a fist on the divider sent shock and fear through them. By the time the ride to court was over, the remandees in the protection part of the van were quite shaken. On arrival at court, the remandees were placed in cells beneath the court house. Protection remandees were kept apart in different cells. This often meant the protection remandee was alone in a bare cell for many hours. Mainstream remandees were kept together in a main cell near the door to the court room. The remandees name was called over a loudspeaker when it was his turn to appear. A policeman went to the cell and escorted the remandee to the court room, ushering him into the dock which was beside the door. The appearance was brief, then the remandee was taken back to his cell to wait for the return trip back to Addington prison in the police van. All the way back to the prison, there were more threats, abuse and crashing fists on the divider in the van. This trip would be repeated on numerous occasions as the remandee went to and from court on the way to sentence and ultimately, prison. Once back at the remand prison, all remandees were taken from the van, placed in holding cells and fed lunch There would be several new remandees each trip. They could be seen stripping, being searched and processed.

### **THE PRISON CELL:**

Prison cells tend to be very cramped especially when shared by two inmates. The cells at Addington Remand prison were about 8 feet wide and 10 feet long. The ceiling was quite high and rounded. Small lights were fitted to the ceiling and cast little light in the gloom of the cell. There was no light switch in the cells. In the outside wall end of the cell, a single window permitted little light to pass. Steel bars were mounted in the window frame itself with a steel-wire mesh bolted across the inside. Some of the window panes were fixed, some were louvres which could be opened and closed by the occupant of the cell. In some cells though, panes were missing and allowed the cold and damp weather to enter, creating a refrigerator effect. If a remandee climbed to the window and looked out, the view was either old prison buildings (from the ground floor) or their roofs (from the second floor). The two side walls in the cell were plain, but for graffiti etched into them by passing remandees. It was not permitted for inmates to place posters on them. Along one side wall was a heater bar (no heat was evident in the cold weather). A "Panic" button to call a guard for help of any kind was near the door. The door itself had a peep-hole near the top to allow guards to look in periodically when they were checking on remandees. All walls were painted, smoothly finished concrete. The floors were nothing more than bare floorboards. Along one wall there was a bed. At 90 degrees to it along the outside end wall was another. The beds were made from welded Steel frames. There was no bed wire, in its place were slats of 4 by 2 timber. On top of the timber was a 4 inch thick foam mattress. There was no hygiene protection on the mattresses. This caused Scabies to thrive among the inmates. Between the two beds was a Steel table of sorts. One end was fixed to the wall and the other was held up by a single Steel leg. There was only one other item in the cells, A 10 litre paint bucket. This was for toilet purposes. There was no electricity, no water and no toilet in the cells at Addington Remand prison. All cells smelled contaminated, though cleaned daily. There was no doubt the cells were uninhabitable at that time.

Cells at Papparua prison were better to a degree. They were about the same size as those at Addington Prison.

Windows were in the same place, as were the bars and grilles on them. Many of the window panes had been replaced with louvres because the panes had been broken. Some cells had panes missing altogether, making them very cold in winter as the rain blew in. Cell construction was concrete and was not painted to the same standard as Addington and bare boards made up the floor. Light green, blue, red, fawn and yellow were the colours most used in cells. Graffiti was evident on all walls and the cell door. Such things as 'F.T.W'(fuck the world), "3 Smith 9T2", "No effect", "Kill the

kidfuckers", "Screws eat shit", "J Smith is a kidfucker nark ", were among the most common statements. A single fluorescent light was mounted onto the ceiling and as at Addington; there was no switch in the cells. A single set of steel framed bunk beds stood against one wall. Some had bed wires and others only a sheet of Marine-ply wood. A four inch thick foam mattress was on each bunk. When an inmate lay on the bottom bunk and looked up, he would see graffiti written on the bottom of the top bunk. Beneath the window was a Stainless Steel sink with hot and cold water.

Beside the sink and against the same wall was a toilet mounted on a wooden box-type pedestal. The cistern was covered by a large wooden enclosure. Heater bars ran through all cells providing slightly more heat than those at Addington Prison. The door was the same type as those at Addington. Many cells at Paparua Prison were badly damaged. Graffiti was scrawled on all of their walls and fittings had been damaged. Some toilets didn't work and handles were missing from taps. Inmates were still placed in these cells. All cells were called either a "house", or a "slot" They had "Panic buttons" installed by the doors.

Views from the cells on the inside walls of the prison were of concrete walls, yards and other parts of the prison. Views from cells on the outer walls ranged from trees and building rooftops, to panoramas of mountains, countryside and farm buildings.

Cells in the huts units were a far cry from anything in a main wing. Closely resembling motel unit rooms, they were finished in wood (some varnished and others painted), insulated and modern. Along one wall there was a varnished wooden bed. It was constructed of 1 inch thick slats and a mattress the same type as those previously mentioned was provided, along with matching duvet and pillow case. Grey patterned linoleum covered the wooden floor and there was a mat in most cells. The window was large and made of unbreakable (theoretically) glass. It had no bars or grilles on it. The bottom three quarters of the window was solidly mounted, but the top could be opened and closed by the occupant of the cell. On the end of the bed was a seat. Above that was a varnished writing desk facing the window, on which inmates could write letters, place their television set or do hobbies. There was a power outlet beside the desk and an FM and television and aerial plug. Both fittings were duplicated above the corner cupboard. There was also a small, varnished 'L' shaped wall cupboard in the corner above the bed. Along the back wall ran two heater pipes. Little heat was given off these bars and the cells were generally cold in winter. Beneath the heater bars was a toilet. It was fastened to the floor in the same way as in any home, and doubled as a spare seat for inmates visiting the cell. A Stainless Steel sink with hot and cold water was fitted in the middle of the wall adjacent to the bed. Beside it stood a small, cabinet type screen which provided privacy for an inmate

using the toilet. Lighting was by means of a single fluorescent fitting in the centre of the ceiling. A light switch was provided in the cell, as well as on the outside (In case an inmate fell asleep with the light on, the guards could turn it off). Above the toilet and behind the heater pipes was an air vent which lead to the outside of the building. It was too small to climb through and covered by an Aluminium louvre. Wind rushed in through the vents when a cold southerly was blowing, forcing the occupant to unscrew the vent and stuff it full of paper, cardboard or anything else they had to stop the draught. The door was wooden and had a handle on the inside. There was no latch to stop it blowing open in an Easterly, so a phone card was forced into the jamb to hold the door closed. With the phone card there, the door could still be opened by guards doing a board check. While I was at the huts unit, "Panic buttons" were installed. Prior to this elderly or sick inmates had been unable to get help when they suffered a heart attack or stroke.

## **SHOWERS :**

Showers are compulsory. Each inmate is expected to have at least three showers per week. This is to keep the level of hygiene elevated to avoid the incidence of diseases such as Scabies which can plague certain wings, often becoming rampant. Inmates who contract this disease will usually keep the fact to themselves as it is a social stigma inside jail, just as it is in outside society. It is usually contracted by sleeping on dirty mattresses which have been used by god knows who. They have been urinated on by inmates who still wet their beds; masturbated and sometimes defecated or vomited on, and frequently stink. Shower time in the wings can alter. In the wings I was in, it was during recreation period, 5.30 -8.30 p.m. Periodically there would be someone who was so terrified of being stabbed or raped, he would refuse to shower. When this occurred and the officers got sick of his smell, he would be placed in the shower clothes and all. On the bright side, the inmate would have a shower and do his laundry at the same time. Although one hears stories of inmates being washed down with a fire hose (in particular, an intellectually handicapped man in Addington Remand Prison in sept 1992), I personally saw no such act.

The prison shower is probably the most maligned place of all. Because many people can 't get their minds past several naked men and boys (some only 15 or 16 years old) in the same room, many of whom are sexual deviates, the main train of thought seems to connect sexual acts and the shower in prison. Although the odd sex act occurs, it is not really common.

The shower area is a large concrete room divided into separate cubicles by tin dividers. The level of privacy is nil since one can be seen from out in the wing whilst showering because the partitions are small and cover nothing. In keeping with the rest of the prison, there are bars on all the windows in the shower block. The walls are concrete and painted in dull colours. There is little light in the shower block. A wooden bench runs the length of one wall. The floors are concrete. Recessed into the floor, an open drain runs the full length of the room carrying water shampoo packets, urine, semen, shit and anything else discarded by inmates. In one wing I was in, human faeces was found on several occasions. They had been placed on top of a shower unit and discovered by an unfortunate inmate, as he reached for his shampoo. The inmate who put it there was found and beaten by other inmates.

Quite naturally, men glance at each others penises, mostly for the purposes of comparison. This comparison occurs on the outside too. The only difference is, on the inside you know who the perverts are. One of the most commonly believed rumours is, if an inmate bends over in the shower to pick up the soap, he will be sodomised by a big hairy bloke called "Bob", who will then make the inmate his

"Bitch". This particular rumour comes up in such things as police shows on television. Threats by parents to their wayward children, comedy acts and in every walk of life. As mentioned in the chapter "SEX", these acts are not often seen, momentary and usually nipped in the bud by officers. Therefore the chance of running into "Bob" are slim, unless of course you want to.

Transsexuals shower at the same time as everyone else. They are not widely known as a source of sexual pleasure in the showers for any and all who want it. The showers in the wings I was in tended to empty quickly when the "Trannies" arrived. When "rec" time begins, it 's often a rush to get to the showers first. If inmates don't hurry, they may miss out as some of the inmates stay under the shower for ages. When one goes into the showers, he will strip (beneath a towel if he 's shy) and place his clothes on the bench. The shower will take only minutes as he keeps a constant vigil against attacks and rape by other inmates. The shampoo will be applied to the hair then quickly rinsed out. This is when the inmate will be at his most vulnerable. While his eyes are closed to avoid getting shampoo in them, he would not see an approaching attacker. Hence the reason for rinsing quickly. When the shower is finished, it 's back on with the towel and get dressed as fast as possible. He will feel the relief as he leaves the shower room. It is not uncommon for younger inmates and boys to keep their underwear on while showering. ( See "SEX ) They seem to have an exaggerated fear of the showers. Showering in front of many men will be a new and frightening experience for them and they may not relish the thought of being rooted up the arse.

In the hut units, showers are a much different proposition. An inmate may shower at any time when he is not at work. The showers in these units are separate and very private, though there is a peep slot in each door. There is not the fear attached to showering in these units, since any attacker would be seen from the guard room. These units are clean and don't have open drains. Most inmates will shower after work, although one may shower in the morning if he so desires.

## **THE JURY :**

The defendant's privacy is not considered by the justice system. I know what you're thinking "So what! Why should it be?" Simple; he is innocent until proven guilty. Therefore he/she must be treated with respect. Because he is accused of a crime, the system must treat him as though he is guilty. To assist the prosecution to convict a defendant, jury challenging is part of the process. The defence lawyer and his client may challenge up to 8 prospective members of the selected jury. The idea behind challenging is so the defendants' lawyer may replace any member of the jury he considers would convict his client out of hand. However the prosecutor, because they challenge last, is able to put whatever balance in the jury he desires. In effect he may challenge all selections made by the defence rendering the defendant's right to challenge, impotent. It would be fairer for the defence to challenge the jury last, making a fair trial more likely.

An accused is entitled to a "Jury of his peers ". The word 'Peers' implies only people of the accused's social standing, belief or sexuality, may be included on a jury. The fact is that this rarely, if ever happens. If a gay man or woman is standing trial, there is little chance of selecting a jury of gay men and women. Even if this was the case it could be considered illegal, based on sexual preference. All potential jury members who are excused because they are not gay could claim sexual bias against the Dept of Justice. On the other hand, the gay man or woman accused is unlikely to obtain a fair trial should he/she be tried by a jury of heterosexual jurors. It's doubtful any member would openly state his or her prejudice against homosexuals. Homophobic jurors would not be detected in the challenging process and the defendant would not get a fair trial. The same condition may apply to religions, race, creed or even capital status. A jury containing poor, struggling people from the bottom rung of the social ladder, would be more likely to convict a rich man of fraud rather than a poor one. A racist pakeha would be likely to convict a Maori out of hand and vice-versa. A man hating woman would have no trouble convicting a man, just because he was a man. An elderly jury may easily convict a young, heavily tattooed man because his appearance is frightening to them. Many jurors would feel fear of retaliation should they convict, or discharge an accused. Anyone who believes there is no prejudice in the justice system has not been tried by it. Decisions affecting the lives of men and women, guilty and innocent, are made constantly. There is no way at all to guarantee impartiality to any member of the New Zealand public.

Having weighed up the pros' and cons' of a defended hearing, and deciding to defend the charges, a defendant will inform his lawyer to enter a plea of not guilty. A guilty plea would result in conviction

and remand, either at large or in custody, until sentenced. When the not guilty plea is entered, bail will often be applied for. Since defended hearings are usually held in the High court, bail at this stage is called 'High court bail'. Sometimes it will be granted, sometimes the defendant will be denied bail, leaving him remanded for many months. There have been cases where a man was remanded in custody for more than a year and he was found not guilty. There is no accountability by any section of the justice system for this and compensation is not considered.

During a defended hearing a defendant is forced to listen to the most degrading evidence which in most cases contains a mixture of truth, half truth and lies. A lawyer once said "There is no such entity as the whole truth in a court of law. There is their truth, our truth and the real truth".

Any attempt by any defendant to deny his alleged offence will be treated by the court as "Lies" and "Denial". Indeed if the court believed everything said by the defendant, they would never convict. Ultimately though, the obligation of the court is to believe the complainant, especially in sex cases where no evidence but uncorroborated testimony is required to gain a conviction. The defendant has no right of recourse to any statement made against himself by police, complainant or any kind of professional. In fact, witnesses and complainants are regularly instructed by police and counsellors as to what to say in court, even when those officials know the statement is false or misleading. This is apparently done to protect the complainant although it does nothing to promote justice.

In sex cases, the complainant never has to come into contact with the alleged offender. All testimony can be given by closed circuit television. This denies the right of an accused to face his accuser in a court of law; a right guaranteed all New Zealanders. In recent years in courts in the United States, appeals have been gained by convicted persons on the grounds that they were denied their right to face their accuser; a right guaranteed them under the American constitution. Lying to the face of a person is hard. Lying out of sight of them is extremely easy. Although fear of the accused may be cited as the reason for this, there may well be a hidden agenda. Complainants will not face a man or woman after accusing them of unspeakable sex acts. A prosecutor will cross question defence witnesses viciously and relentlessly. His job is to completely destroy the credibility of the witness thereby proving the witness a liar. It doesn't matter who or how old the witness is or even their position in society. Many are left feeling violated and angry. All the sympathy of the jury will be pushed in the direction of the complainant through the manoeuvring of the crown prosecutor. This is his job and he will do whatever he has to, to achieve a conviction. This has nothing to do with the well-being of the complainant in

many cases it comes down to personal conquest.

If you were to watch a trial you would see the expression change on the face of the prosecutor when he/she realises the case is lost.

This was highly visible during televised coverage of "The poisoned Professor case" in Christchurch. The personal prestige of both the defence and prosecuting lawyers is at stake in every trial they attend. A case can become a personal conflict between defender and prosecutor, accuser and complainant, truth and lies and amongst all this, justice and injustice.

The defendant must sit silently in court and allow all this to flow over him. He can say or do nothing and is usually not put on the stand to testify on his own behalf. If he does end up on the stand, it is generally accepted that the defence case is coming undone.

Juries can easily be swayed as they watch the testimony given by the accused, truthful or otherwise, being ripped to shreds by the prosecutor. For this reason it is considered a mistake for an accused to testify.

Finally, the jury retires to consider its' verdict. Although society considers the juries decision will be un biased, it often is not. A foreman, previously chosen, will call the jurors to order so that all information and questions can be asked without interruption. There have been many cases when the foreman and a few other members of a jury have pressured weaker members to come to a pre - selected decision. This pressure includes demeaning comments about the ability of some jurors to have the skill to weigh up all the information. Comments of a sexually prejudicial nature may be made against women members of the jury. Brow beating by male jurors has been reported by many jurors, who have been pushed to come to a decision they were not comfortable with. Cases such as these may not be very common but they do raise the question of "reasonable doubt ". Guilt must be decided by the juries' ability to convict only if they consider the case against a defendant has been proved beyond reasonable doubt. In a national newspaper in 1994 this issue was raised. Former jurors, concerned injustice was occurring in New Zealand courts came forward to publicly express their concerns.

Finally, a decision will be reached by the jury. They will have decided to convict, discharge the defendant or they could not reach a decision either way. When a failed decision is reached, it is a 'Hung jury'. This will result in the defendant being re-tried at a later date. A discharge will result in the judge dismissing all charges against the defendant and telling him he is free to go. A hollow victory indeed for an innocent man who has already spent eighteen months in prison on remand. Although he has been discharged, there will always be people who do not believe he is innocent. This will arise many times during the rest of his life because justice is relative, relative to complainants belief, his/her family and friends

belief in the complainant and relative to individuals perception of the true meaning of justice.

The defendant who is found guilty by the jury will be shattered by their decision if he considers he is innocent. If he knows he is guilty, he will be angry but resigned. When the verdict is read in court there is always someone, or a group who is dissatisfied with the decision. Eruptions can occur outside court. Fights between complainants family and friends and the supporters and family of the now convicted man. Upon the conviction of the defendant, the judge will set aside a court date for sentencing. The convicted person will usually be remanded in custody for sentencing. The time until sentencing will seem an eternity for all concerned, especially the convict sitting alone in his cell.

Finally the sentencing day will arrive. The judge will address the defendant. He will then tell him he has been found guilty of whatever his crime was. Following this, the judge will make a series of comments decrying the actions of the convict. He will tell him how society finds his sort of crime abhorrent and it is the judges duty to protect society from the convict. The convict may be called a liar, inherently evil, perverted, predatory and whatever other adjectives the judge cares to apply to him. If the convict is guilty then these adjectives are appropriate. If for some reason he is innocent, the effect is a devastating character assassination. Little wonder so many convicted criminals have such low self esteem. Many never recover and continue to commit crime in retaliation. No matter what sentence the judge imposes on the convict, there will be dissatisfaction from all sides. Complainants will say "It's not enough ", and the convicts family will say "It's too much

## **PRISON GUARDS :**

Prison guards have a very difficult job. Their borders are often not crystal clear. As with almost any other job, there are the good parts and the bad, and like any other aspect of any society, there are the good and the bad men wearing the uniform of a New Zealand prison guard. Therefore it is important to establish balance in this section. All items are merely representative and may only relate to one or two incidents within a very long time frame.

Most prison guards were friendly, helpful, compassionate and humane. They executed duties ranging from walking cell to cell and looking in on the inmates through a peep hole in the door, to talking inmates out of committing suicide in the dead of night. In the dining room, a possible trouble spot, the guards stood ready to intervene in the event of an attack. Should one occur, they would rush to the scene within seconds, pulling the inmates apart while keeping a watch on the rest of them. The guards were aware that at any time they could be set upon by a mob and may suffer serious injury. The same scenario applied during recreation time in the main wings. The guards wandered among the 60 or more inmates who were participating in recreational activities, aware that every eye in the wing was upon them. For inmates to engage in any attack on other inmates, they would have to know where the guards were.

Every half hour or so during recreation time, guards took a board check. This was to ensure all inmates were accounted for. Guards carried a board marked in cell numbers with corresponding names of inmates. As each inmate was seen his name was ticked with a felt marker. Inmates not at recreation were usually in their cells. The guard would look in through the peep hole, see the inmate then mark his name off. By the time the board check was complete, it was time to begin again. Some officers spoke briefly to inmates as they wandered by, others did not. There wasn't really time. I was constantly impressed at the way officers remembered all the names of the inmates, even those inmates who had just arrived in the wing.

For the rest of the day, board checks were every hour. Every inmate knew this and many watched from their peep holes as the guard approached. Through this peephole, inmates and guards exchanged greetings and sometimes casual banter. If painkillers or help of other kinds was required, an inmate would ask the guard during one of the board checks. The only problem was that the guard may forget by the time he got back to the office after his round. An inmate could always wait until the next board check though many didn't. They would yell "Mister." which is the title inmates are supposed to use with respect when addressing prison guards. If the guards either didn't hear them, or were ignoring the inmate, the inmate would kick the cell door. This irritated the

guards and they would attend to him.

Because there were so many inmates in the wing, the guard would yell "Who is it?" He wanted the cell number which would be promptly supplied by the inmate. The guard would ask what the inmate wanted then help if he could. During these checks at night, it was the job of the guard to turn off the lights. This was done when the inmates in the cell were asleep. There was no "Lights out" as such.

The late night duty was not without incident. There might be a problem between two inmates sharing a cell that the guard would have to sort out. There was the odd occasion in which a guard would find an inmate dead, hanging from his window bars by a bed sheet or lying in a pool of blood, wrists or throat slashed and open. If the inmate was not dead, the guard would have to deal with the emergency, providing whatever help he could until the medical staff arrived. This type of occurrence was not very common.

One of the more common occurrences in the daily duty of a guard was to try and placate an inmate who was having matrimonial problems. Often wives, girlfriends or partners of inmates would leave the inmate once he was in jail. The inmate, not able to do anything about this would become irritated, aggressive, depressed or suicidal. On many occasions officers helped these inmates any way they could. This would entail talking to an agitated or aggressive inmate, trying to convince him that things would be alright. It could also mean talking to inmates in the dead of night who are seriously depressed, convincing them that their life is not worthless and suicide is not a viable option. This is done even if the guard thinks the inmates are the lowest form of life.

Officer attacks on inmates are very rare and not generally reported. Obviously there are the times when two men will fight, the status of either of them not a factor. Others however develop after an officer has lost control of a situation. In a Christchurch prison recently, an inmate was attacked by a prison guard in the prison's gymnasium. Although the reasons for the attack are not clear, the inmate, in his forties was held up by the throat, causing him permanent injuries and leaving him terrified of all prison guards. The incident resulted in a complaint to prison officials and the Ombudsman and although the complaint was found in favour of the inmate, the guard was only reprimanded. He remains on duty.

Guards duties include watching over visits to ensure there is no trouble, and that no contraband is passed to the inmate by his visitor. The guards occasionally have to ask a couple to move apart after their activities have become excessively amorous. No doubt this embarrasses the inmates and the guards alike. At the conclusion of a visit it is the job of the guard to strip search the inmates who have had a visit. Inmates include boys from as young as 17, to old men in their 80's. Standing, watching males strip

naked becomes matter of fact for guards after a while, just as it does for most inmates.

From time to time there were situations in the main wing where inmates had to be "taken out" of their cell. Late one night an inmate began shouting and kicking his cell door. When approached by a guard, he fell to the floor jerking and shuddering as if he was in the throes of a seizure. Other guards went to his cell and opened the door. Immediately, the inmate became aggressive, then violent. He threw a table at the guards, attempting to fight them off. They were doing nothing to indicate they meant him harm. A medical officer was called to administer a sedative injection to the inmate. The guards rushed the inmate and the medic attempted to sedate him. His reaction was so violent that all staff retreated. A call was made for reinforcements. Several minutes later they arrived. It was quite a sight as the riot-gear clad guards appeared in the wing. Inmates were yelling for the one who was shouting to "fuck up ". Finally, the inmate was subdued and removed without injury.

Guards in the huts unit I was in were quite different from those in the main wings. The very nature of the unit made life less tense for everyone. My unit was a work unit. All work parties were supervised by prison guards. This entailed listing the inmates on a particular work party at the work parade at 8am, then walking the inmates to the place of work. Once there, the guard's assigned work to the inmates then stood where they could watch, often for hours at a time. When it was time to return to the prison for meals, the guards rounded up the inmates and marched them back to the prison. This was done quite informally, although control was maintained at all times.

Guards in this unit carried out board checks exactly on the half hour. Whereas in the main wings, the guards looked in through a peep hole in the cell door, huts unit guards opened the doors and looked in to the cell. If the inmate was there his name was crossed off the muster list, if not, they continued until he was found. If, by the time the guards had reached the end of their round and an inmate had still not appeared, his name was called out over the public address system, and the words "board check" followed his name. The board check process was quite amicable. The guards were friendly and often asked how an inmate was, or stopped to talk for a few minutes. There were the inmates no guard wanted to talk to, but they always managed to brush aside any prejudice they may have held.

One officer said to me, "Criminals are criminals... The only difference between them and people on the outside is that the ones on the outside haven't been caught yet."

There were a few escapes from the huts unit. The guards on duty at the time of one of the escapes were quite worried by it. The escape had occurred during a tea break while the guards were playing

cards in their office. An inmate escaped unnoticed from the work party. He'd apparently been missing for up to 2 hours before the officers discovered his escape. The only inmates allowed on outside work parties are those who are trusted inmates. They were selected to come to the huts unit on that basis. This escape could not have been foreseen, however others were. The inmates concerned in later escape attempts were shipped back to the main wing, immediately. Escapes made life harder for other inmates who just wanted to get on with their sentence, and put the guards on edge. The guards in the hut unit treated the inmates very well. One of the guards told me that the Department of Justice had made a policy that guards should be on good terms with inmates as far as possible. They should listen to their problems and do all they could to help. The only major problem with that philosophy was that inmates and guards could get so close, objectivity could be lost. There should always be a firm line drawn between guards and inmates, but not too firm.

Many of the guards interacted with inmates socially i.e.: playing soccer games in the compound with the inmates or sitting on the picnic tables with inmates. Discussing families, sports or what pub they drink at. Some guards occasionally brought things in for inmates. These things might be foodstuffs or cigarettes which are paid for by the inmate or his family. This practice is not common. A publicized incident involving a guard who allegedly visited the home of the wife/girlfriend of an inmate caused considerable consternation. It was suggested that the guard had been sent there to obtain finance for an inmate who had run up a drug bill in jail and was unable to pay.

There are those who might argue that all prisoners should be treated like crap and that treating them as human beings is too good for them. There have been times when guards extending the hand of friendship to an inmate have turned that inmate around, making him a decent human being.

The guards in the huts unit were always on the ball. If there was a fight going to happen, someone had drugs or 'homebrew', an inmates family was falling apart or someone was being stood over, the guards knew. The level of trust in the guards made inmates unafraid to speak out, hence the guards were better able to keep an eye on things. When there was a problem in the unit, the guards left the dining room at meal time while senior inmates aired the problem.

This enabled the inmates to get anything off their chest, clearing the air. The guards were just outside the door, watching through the glass should anything go wrong. It never did.

There was the odd time when a family crisis left an inmate distraught. In one incident, an inmates wife had given birth. Her condition was unstable and she was depressed because her

husband was not there to comfort her. Although the husband had only a short time of his sentence to serve, he was unable to get a compassionate leave to visit his wife in hospital. The condition of the inmate's wife worsened and the husband became distressed. Concerned for the inmate, one of the guards escorted the inmate to visit his wife on several occasions. The guard was not required to do this, but did so out of compassion. The wife stabilized and both she and the child did well, thanks to the humane guard. This occurred in other instances, for example the serious illness or death of a family member.

There were times when guards in that unit showed they were only human. One guard arrived at work, a little "under the weather". While doing a board check, he felt so ill that he lay on an inmate's bed where he was allowed to sleep, uninterrupted for two hours. That officer had always treated the inmates well; they were returning the favour. A few days later the guard arrived at the prison for work again in the same state. He fell to the floor in the guard's kitchen, where a blanket was placed over him so he could sleep it off. The guard later took treatment, and continued his duties in an appropriate manner.

Periodically guards were required to intervene in an argument or disturbance. At any time the situation could have blown up into a physical attack. One morning after yelling out for several hours, an inmate became aggressive. At unlock (7am), guards who had earlier approached him became concerned he may attack someone if let out of his cell. They decided to "take him out" of his cell and move him to the pound before letting the other inmates out. One of the older guards unlocked the inmate's door and tried to calm him down. The inmate would have none of this and attacked the guard. Other guards assisted him and the inmate was subdued. He was then removed to the pound. The guard who had been struck was shaken but not badly injured. The inmate suffered no harm.

There were several woman guards. Their temperaments ranged from anti male and bad tempered, to neutral and compassionate. Generally, the women were not a "soft touch", and were definitely not stupid. As with the men, many had been in the prison service for years and were hardened to a sob story. The input of the women was most important. In many cases it was the only thing to break the all male monotony of prison life. There were those inmates who made sexual insinuations or fanaticized about what they would do if they got the woman guards in bed, but that was all just talk. It's the same as on the outside; men always fanaticize about what they will never have. In prison, both the inmates and the women guards knew where the line was drawn.

Women guards were not permitted to search the inmates. It could lead to sexual innuendo and may be considered indecent. If a female guard was on duty at a gate and inmates had to be searched

before going through, they waited for a male guard. Female guards differed between the main wing and the huts unit. In the wing they appeared ever watchful and moved around very quickly. There were a few who made the place happier to be in. With their happy smiles and cheery greetings, the day didn't seem so bad.

In the huts unit the female guards were quite a happy lot. Only one ever pissed everyone off. There had been rumours she had attempted to charge a male guard with sexual harassment, making her very unpopular. The others at the huts unit often talked to the inmates on a personal level. If there was a problem with someone's girlfriend, then a female guard gave advice on how best to handle the problem. They would come around on board checks and were happy to say "giddyay" to the inmates. These women made the stay at the huts unit bearable for everyone. They were not attacked or physically harassed, not because the inmates thought they were weak (they weren't), but because they didn't deserve to be treated poorly.

Visiting day duties at the huts unit were not quite the same as those in the main wings. Although there was still the taking of visitors names, money to be deposited in inmates accounts and property for inmates handed to the guards, and there was still the patrolling of the visiting area and the strip searches, inmates families felt quite comfortable talking to the guards. Because the huts unit was not so large, guards got to know whose visitors were who's. Guards were friendly to inmate's families and it was reciprocal. One mother whose 17 year old son was in the wing was so grateful he was being watched over by the guards, she took them cake which she'd made to show her appreciation. Others gave them newspapers to read. It was a good atmosphere for visitors who had been used to the extreme tension and noise of the main prison's visiting room. When the visits were over, inmates were strip searched before going back into the unit, to insure no contraband was imported (checked or charged).

By far the majority of prison guards were humane and behaved very professionally. There were times when guards put their neck on the line for inmates. Some inmates saw this as a sign of weakness to be taken advantage of. By the vast majority it was appreciated and not disclosed. Either way, out of desperation, many inmates sought and accepted the help of the guards.

## **DRUGS IN JAIL :**

Many men took drugs while doing their time in jail. Figures quoted by the justice department indicated this figure may be as high as 80% of inmates in certain wings, although the figure of 60% jail wide was recently quoted by the Christchurch Prison superintendent, Mr Spencer. There are many reasons for inmates taking drugs; Habit, stress, addiction and peer pressure to name a few. Drugs are readily available in all prisons. They are smuggled in, through a variety of methods.

Drugs are often smuggled into the prison through visits. A visitor would hold drugs in his /her mouth. During a passionate kiss from the visitor, the drugs would be passed to the inmates mouth. Alternatively, the visitor may bring the drugs into prison, wrapped in a tight plastic cling film wrap. This would be secretly passed to the inmate, who would then insert it into his anus. This method of smuggling is known as "charging" Prior to the visit, shampoo was often placed in the anus to ensure easy insertion of the parcel, and easy discharge once back in their cell. Some inmates preferred to "cheek" parcels when they were too large to insert anally. This was when the parcel was held between the cheeks of the anus. This mode of smuggling was avoided if possible. During strip searches after visits, the inmate must squat down with his underpants around his ankles. If a parcel had been ' 1 charged ' 1 it would remain undetected because the officers are not permitted to manually examine the inmate. If however the parcel had been cheeked, if the inmate was not careful it would fall out on the floor for all to see resulting in the inmate and his visitor being charged, and future visits from that visitor, being suspended.

If the exchange of the parcel between inmate and visitor was witnessed by an officer, there were grounds for action. Mere suspicion was not enough to order internal examinations on any inmate. This is a very dodgy area of the Justice Department regulations. I believe internal searches are avoided like the plague. There were none in any wing I was in, for the entire three years I was in prison.

Work parties were another means of bringing drugs into the prison. A contact of an inmate would drop a parcel off at a pre arranged spot on prison property. The following day, someone in a work party would pick up the parcel, without being seen, and smuggle it back into the prison after work. Although all workers are searched, "charging" ensures a successful delivery.

There are inmates who are permitted to wander the grounds of the prison almost at will. These are the ones who are most likely to be smuggling illegal items into the jail They are not searched each time they come and go. Trade workers, rubbish workers and certain other grounds men and farm workers are among the "trusty"

inmates. Many of them abuse the trust given to them.

There are many kinds of drugs smuggled into the prison. These include Cannabis, Heroin, LSD, pills and anything available at the time. Drugs in prison, to their dealer give power, not to mention money. From my point of view, drugs were in constant and ready supply. Hardly a day went by during my three years of incarceration without several inmates being stoned.

The most common type of drug used was cannabis. It came into the jail almost every weekend. Everyone in the camp knew when, and

by whom. You could always tell when an inmate had received a "drop" because as soon as he arrived back in his cell after visits, there would be a rush of inmates wanting to buy his drugs. Within minutes of that happening the camp became quiet as the inmates went to their cells, stoned. The camp however, was not quiet if the drugs brought in were other than cannabis. It would not take long

for those who took drugs like Rohypnol or Rivetrel, to become aggressive or violent. That's what usually gave them away. Valium was sometimes brought in. It quietened down those who used it so they were not their usual selves. It was good when the assholes in the wing were on Valium or Cannabis. A bloke could really relax.

Paying for these drugs could easily be accomplished in a variety of ways. Cash could be smuggled in through visits to pay for them, although this was not the preferred way. An inmate would have cash paid into the account of the inmate from whom he bought the drugs. The buyer may be expected to pay in product i:e phone cards, cigarettes etc. Sometimes the account would be settled in favours i:e have someone beaten up or stabbed, or have artwork or tatoos ' done.

If the bill could 'nt be paid, it was usually enforced by threats of, or actual violence to the debtor. Either way, pressure would be put on him to pay. The debtor used any one of several methods to find the money to pay his drug bill. He may go around the child molesters, pressuring them to buy things for him so that he could pay his bill.

The child molesters are usually older men often in their sixties or seventies, financial and quite helpless. They usually do not resist the demands made on them and do not inform the guards for fear of retaliation. If there are no child molesters in the wing, younger and /or weaker inmates would be approached. Rough friends of the dealer may visit friends or family of the debtor and demand they pay the drug bill of their loved ones in jail. Threats are often made. The prison guards are aware there are drugs in prison, likewise they know of the drug bills and associated problems. Their problem seems to be an inability to act because of legal constraints. There is no obvious procedure for the detection of drugs on the individual.

Random urine testing would do much towards drug control, but I was told by a prison officer, "There is no money for such things" The inmates know they can get away with, so they do.

The belief that guards allow drug use in jails, because it settles the inmates in my opinion is almost completely false. There are one or two guards who assist certain inmates to disguise the fact they are under the influence of drugs, but only one or two. The rest are uncomfortable with the drugs and the unpredictability of the inmates who use them. I have heard many an officer express his /her anger at the system that gives them no powers to deal with this problem. An inmate in a drug induced stupor is very unpredictable, and potentially very dangerous. This often leads to attacks on other inmates, as well as guards. In the dining room, I have seen inmates so stoned they couldn't walk without help. Some fell down, others walked into walls or fell off their chairs. Although all of this was obvious to the guards, there were few charges laid depending on which guards were on duty.

One of these incidents resulting in several inmates being charged happened with the full knowledge (not support) of at least one of the guards, who knew the three men involved, were under the influence of Rivetrel. The drug had been smuggled into the wing from another by an inmate on work assignment. It had been obtained from another inmate from a different wing who was also on work assignment. The guard was doing a board check when he noticed the intoxicated inmates. He didn't want to charge them so advised they remain in their cells and report sick. The inmates concerned were all very quiet ones who never gave any trouble to the officer concerned. Stupidly, the inmates refused to do as advised because it would mean they would stay locked up until the following day. The cells in that unit were not locked up until 9.30pm, some 5 hours later. The three inmates went to the dining room for tea. They fell all over the place, crashed into other inmates and made their drugged presence impossible to miss. The result was they were charged, convicted internally and sent back to the main wing.

As far as guards allowing drug use to occur freely in jails in the ones I was in, at least, I witnessed no hard proof of this, general or otherwise.

The drug addicts in prison are a pathetic sight. They hang around inmates with drugs like flies on a honey jar. Their feeble attempts to get drugs on 'tick ', even though everyone knows they have no money, are sickening. They will do anything to get drugs, no matter how low they must sink.

One night at around 10pm, I was roused by the sound of a motor vehicle in the compound. I looked out my window. as did all the other inmates, to see an ambulance outside a cell. I watched as a number of guards stood around the inmate in his cell. He was lying on the floor in a pool of blood and appeared to be unconscious. After an amount of joking and general hilarity by the guards, the inmate was placed into the ambulance and whisked off to hospital.

They knew the inmate was a severe drug addict and was probably only acting.

The following morning I overheard two guards talking between themselves. They were discussing the events of the previous night. Apparently, the guards who had found the inmate on the floor of his cell. said he had been having a seizure of some kind. They believed he was feigning it, in order to get drugs, hence the jocularities. The inmate had done such a good job of feigning a seizure; he completely fooled the ambulance officers. I later discovered the guards had been right in not taking the addict inmate seriously. On his own admission he had set out to get a 'fix ' of Morphine or something similar. It worked, and he was cocky about the whole thing for weeks.

## **SEX IN JAIL :**

We've all heard of the alleged sexual exploits and exploitation of inmates in prison. Be they men, women or alternative genders, humans need sexual release from time to time no matter who or where they are.

Most people have heard of the risks one takes bending over to pick up the soap while showering. The intimation is that an inmate, probably a sex offender, will sodomise you brutally. Believing this rumour, young men imprisoned for the first time will sometimes shower in their underwear to prevent such an attack. Many will attempt to avoid showering altogether; such is the power of this deep seated myth. This event did not occur in the showers of any of the wings I was in, for three years of my incarceration.

It can be quite disconcerting in the showers. They are in large blocks and not at all private. Wherever you stand you can be seen by someone else. Sex does occur in the showers albeit rarely; whether it is forced or not is debatable.

On one occasion I bent down to pick the soap up off the floor. I couldn't help but notice there were two pairs of legs in the shower next to mine. They were facing each other and one was kneeling. Within seconds, inmates were shouting lewd remarks about oral sex at the two men, who didn't stop their activity.

In prison, sex between inmates in the dead of night is often referred to as "Midnight Express". Although it is not obvious who is having sex with whom, some homosexual inmates seek each other out. They are not in the least bit secretive about this and will often ask for a cell change to be with someone they fancy sexually.

Some inmates indulge in sexual favours from time to time. Their first choice is usually one of the transsexuals who are present in certain wings. These favours (usually oral sex or masturbation) will cost anything from a few cigarettes or a MORO bar, to a permanent supply of anything the provider of the sexual favours requires. It is not only the "Trannies" who provide these favours, and not all of them do. Some cell mates will periodically indulge in sex to some degree with each other. It will never be discussed outside the cell. One must understand these men are not homosexual, in the same way that soldiers or sailors are not. They may simply find this a welcome alternative to masturbation, the prisoner's last recourse. Inmates lucky enough to have a girlfriend (on the outside) and receive regular visits from her will sometimes engage in sexual encounter in the visiting room or courtyard. This kind of prison sex is not usually that noticeable, or at the very least, performed in as decent a manner as sex in front of 50 other people can be. There are often small children running around while this is going on. Fortunately they are often too innocent to realize what is happening. Guards will put a stop to sex if they see it occurring. The

two will be told to sit apart and conduct themselves in a decent manner. It's all done in the best possible taste given the embarrassing circumstances. For most inmates, petting is about all the sex they will get in the visiting room although many babies are conceived as the result of visiting room sex.

Others get their sexual gratification in more deviant ways. Some, and I do mean only some, convicted child molesters get their thrills watching children in the visiting room. Talk amongst a few of them in the wing after visits indicates they will be coming back to jail. There is no shortage of "stick"(pornographic) books in prison. The inmate who has this material sent in to him will not run out of cigarettes for a while. The book will be rented for a price, usually a few cigarettes. There is no mistaking the purpose of renting such material. It will be used to generate fantasy while the inmate masturbates. If you can't get a woman and don't want a bloke then you use what you can.

There are some inmates in prison who are persistent sex offenders. One or two of them bring in special equipment (computers with games etc) with which to entice young inmates into their cell, preferably as cell mates. These young men will be paid well to provide sexual favours to the older inmate, many of whom are in prison for sexually violating young men and boys. Because the justice system is highly geared towards imprisoning as many people as possible. Youngsters, sometimes only sixteen or seventeen are being incarcerated. They are at the mercy of any inmate who wants their ass. Youngsters are in no position to ask for help and dare to tell no one for fear of being murdered. Even if the guards know something sexual is going on with one of the youngsters, they are powerless to act without a complaint from him.

Whilst at another unit of the prison I saw a situation unfolding. An inmate, who had been convicted of sexually violating many young men and boys while acting as a karate tutor, began enticing a new seventeen year old arrival to the wing, into his cell. He used his computer games for this purpose. There was talk among many inmates that the youth had been stroked on the thigh by this inmate. Several guards had heard the talk and asked a particular inmate if anything could be done. The youth was spoken to by a number of sex offenders who warned him to stay clear of the deviant inmate. The youth was ignorant of the danger posed to him by this inmate, but did agree to stay clear of him. Soon after, the inmate was transferred to another wing. That youth was not the only one who had been accosted.

During my sentence I did not see any sexual relations between guards and inmates, although this allegation had been levelled against guards in a North Island prison, by an inmate. That's not to say it never occurs, just that it was unheard of in the prison I was in.

Periodically there are prisoners who are intellectually handicapped, to some extent. In an incident recounted to me by a guard, an intellectually handicapped inmate had been accosted by a younger inmate in his cell. The inmate exposed his penis to the IHC inmate, insisting he perform oral sex. Although the oral sex was not executed, the IHC inmate went to the guards and complained. The inmate who sexually harassed him, although he denied the offence, was chastised and no further action was taken. This resulted in the intellectually handicapped inmate being continually harassed by other inmates, for "narking"(informing on another inmate, to the guards), for the rest of his sentence.

There were rapes and sexual attacks committed on inmates by other inmates. In one incident an inmate was dancing in his cell one night. His cell mate became sexually aroused, the result of which was the violent rape of the dancing inmate. In other rapes, instruments were used. An inmate was raped late at night with a broom handle. These incidents were reported and court action resulted. There are very few rapes in prison, and only the tiniest portion of them ever see a complaint made. If it is a cell mate who is raped, he will simply ask to change cells. Usually this is permitted with little or no fuss.

**Summary:**

There is not rampant sexual deviancy between inmates, rather periodic exchanges of frustrated men. It is spread across the board, with a minimal proportion of inmates involved. You will not necessarily be sodomised by sex crazed prisoners if you bend over to pick up the soap in a showers, but there is always the chance of being raped if you are not careful about behaviour.

### **PRISON ECONOMY AND BUY UPS ' :**

Obviously since prison inmates smoke cigarettes, do artwork, engage in hobbies, enjoy the odd biscuit or need a phone card to call their loved ones, there has to be a means of purchasing goods. Many people on the outside would love to think inmates just sit in their cells all day with nothing to do, no cigarettes and never tasting the glorious sweetness of a chocolate bar. This is not the case. Goods of almost every type are available to inmates; weekly if they are sentenced and daily if on remand. All goods are paid for at standard retail prices. There is no discounting, as once occurred, when tobacco was only a few cents for a 50 gram package. The inmate must find cash if he wishes to purchase items as prison wages (\$2.80 - \$6.44 per week) are insufficient to buy anything significant.

A price list is provided in each wing. Goods included on this list range from cotton buds to paint, chocolate bars, biscuits, pens and paper, computer requisites, art supplies and mirrors and glass for painting on. If it can be bought and is not perishable, it can be obtained in prison.

The procedure for "Buy ups" is as follows. On Sunday evening, p119 forms are called for by the guards. An inmate will fill in his name, wing, date and the goods required. He then signs his name and places the form in the wing letter box.

Monday morning, the forms are sorted and the inmates account checked to ensure availability of funds. These funds may have been placed into the inmates account by a friend or relative on visiting day, or may be his wages. If there are sufficient funds, the forms are passed on to the welfare officer who will have the task of purchasing, sorting then delivering all "Buy ups" to every wing, usually on Thursdays. He has an inmate as an assistant. The two will travel from wing to wing, the inmate pushing a trolley from cell to cell. Each cell in which the inmate is receiving a "buy up " is opened. He is handed his goods, asked to check them and sign a receipt. Usually there are few problems.

If however the "buy up" is incorrect, it will be taken away by the welfare officer and rectified. He will return it corrected later, either the same day, or the next.

In the open (huts) units, "Buy ups" are collected from a central point, usually a window. One invariably ends up in a queue as inmates, who have run out of cigarettes, rush to get them. The wait can be up to twenty minutes if there are a few disputes. In the open wing I was in, handing out the "buy ups" coincided with lunch time. It was always a rush.

Their arrival was evident by the young inmates running to the window. The basic unit of prison currency is the "Moro" bar. It is used for anything from buying a few cigarettes to betting on a horse

racing sweepstake, to oral sex and playing the wing organised game of "Lotto ". In some wings it is necessary to pay the inmate who does the haircuts. The price is usually a "choc ", generally a "Moro" bar. Larger purchases are made with packets of tobacco in varying sizes, drugs, cash or unused phone cards.

Most goods have a standard price. A small mirror scratching (picture engraved into the rear of a mirror, then painted) can range upwards of 15 grams of tobacco, a large one may cost 30 to 50 grams, as will a small carving. Large goods like a carving, large mirror scratching or glass painting will cost \$25 upwards, or tobacco, drugs or phone cards to their agreed value.

Cash is usually required for the purchase of drugs. It is illegal to possess cash in prison, so it is necessary to smuggle it in. This will be done using the anal "charging" method, used for drugs etc.

Guards sometimes pay the inmates to do artwork for them. They pay the same way as any inmate would, in prison currency or cash which is paid into the account of the inmate doing the work.

There are frequent "stand-over's" As the name implies, one inmate will literally stand over another and demand goods.

The use of threats and intimidation is employed to make the inmate being stood over agree to give the other what he wants. Because goods are so expensive and there is little or no money with which to purchase them, some inmates consider it necessary to forcibly take property from others. It's not unusual to see some inmates waiting for others at the "buy up" line to relieve them of goods. No one will stand over some big, hairy aggro looking bloke, so it's the very young, the older and really old who are stood over the most, usually by more than one inmate at a time.

Some inmates are stood over by others who have found themselves in serious trouble over an unpaid bill, usually drugs. They have no money or goods with which to buy their way out of a beating, so do the next best thing. Rob someone. These stand-over's are not acted on by the guards, who need a complaint before they can do anything. No one wants to make the complaint and be known as a "Nark", so the stand-over's continued.

Other inmates have no one to deposit cash into their account. They have nothing, just as if they were on the outside. They must go without everything while others who are better off and have family support eat sweets and biscuits and don't have to pick up cigarette butts from the ground to have a smoke.

Child molesters are the main target. They are usually middle aged or very old men who are very quiet and keep to themselves, therefore easy to rob; especially the frightened eighty year olds who have just been put in prison to die.

Not all stand-over's are for cash, sweets or bought items. Many are for food. One inmate will constantly say to another who is sitting at his table, "you don't want that, do you". This will be said in an

intimidating manner until the person being stood over will hand over the food. The reason so many food stand-over's occur, is unsatisfactory amounts of food supplied in some wings. Many men will go to bed hungry, unless they stand over someone to get their food. The food can be bought though, if an inmate has anything to offer. Food can also be used to buy goods. Puddings are a most common unit of currency, since almost no one will give up their meat, what there is of it. Property can also be used to buy goods. Sweat tops, running shoes, TV's etc can be exchanged for whatever you want. If you have the money or goods to buy something, it can be brought in to prison. A real free market economy.

## **MEALS :**

Ever heard that prisoners are fed 'bread and water '? Many may have been, but it's not the rule. The quantity and quality of food and the manner in which it is served, varies from wing to wing. Meal times and dining room procedures also differ.

In the Addington remand prison there was no dining room. Each meal time a guard would call "Stand by your doors" to the inmates, who were required to do so immediately. Refusal would result in the inmate being charged. When all the inmates were standing by their doors, the guard called "Lead on". The line of inmates walked across the wing to the servery, a small window through which food was dispensed on a tray. When the tray had been uplifted, the inmate could get a cup of tea from an urn beside the window. He then went back to his cell with the tray of food and a guard locked the cell door behind him.

In around ten minutes the cell door was opened and the inmates told by a guard to put their trays out into the wing. At this point, some inmates scavenged from the plates of others. Leftover food was deposited in a rubbish bin in the wing by the inmates and the trays placed neatly on the floor. For some the quantity of food was sufficient. Others remained hungry. There were 15 hours between tea time and breakfast the following morning.

In Paparua prison, the assessment wing followed a similar system to Addington, though the main wings differed. There was still the order to "stand at your doors", but there was a dining room for the inmates. During meal times, several guards stood watch, ever vigilant for impending trouble. The inmates were marched to the dining room at the end of the wing. There, up to 70 inmates received their meals.

When entering the dining room the inmates must pick up their plastic knife, fork and spoon, then their food which was passed out through a barred window by one of 6 servery workers. A cup of tea, coffee or Milo, depending on which one was being served, was uplifted from an urn. The inmate made his way to the table which he sat at regularly. This seat would become recognized as his "place". Ten minutes was allowed for dining, then a guard called "Plates up, lock up, yards" At this point those inmates who wanted to go to the yards were escorted there. Those who did not were locked in their cells until the next meal.

There were few assaults in the main wing dining room. Those that did occur were not serious, resulting in either minor or no injury. When a disturbance erupted, guards were very quick to quell it, sometimes removing the trouble maker. Food quantities in the protection wing came under scrutiny by the department of Justice in 1993, when an inmate complained the quantity was insufficient to sustain a man. Within days, a group of officials arrived in the dining

room one tea time. When the food was brought to the servery, it had assumed twice the proportions normally supplied to that wing. The officials were convinced there was enough food and decided the inmate making the complaint was lying. The following night, the quantity of food supplied was back to its previously low level. Sometimes food was thrown around the dining room by inmates. If it struck an inmate, he would be wise not to return fire since it would be he who was caught by the guards and punished. Most food was thrown at Sex offenders who sat on one side of the dining room. Other inmates occupied the other side. Dining room staff (inmates) had to clean up the mess. Some inmates set "booby traps" for them. Plates containing food would be flipped upside-down on the table. When the servery worker went to clear away, the food would pour out from under the plate making a mess. Although plates were supposed to be put in a bin, often they were left on the tables. Sex offenders were the most common servery workers because they were reliable and clean.

Guards were provided with their evening meal. They were expected to pay a nominal fee of approximately \$2 per meal as a matter of prison policy. The size of their meals was greater than that of the inmates because the food was what was left over after serving the inmates was complete.

Meals in the hut unit were similar. A loudspeaker would call "Meal Parade" at which time all inmates would gather their cup and stainless steel cutlery then make their way to the dining room. At the door a queue would form where inmates waited for the guards to arrive and let them in. A cup of tea, coffee or Milo, depending on what was being served at that meal, was obtained from the urn then the inmates walked to the servery window. There, the meal was laid out on the counter on plates. Each inmate selected a plate before moving on to pick up his dessert from another window. Once an inmate found a seat, it would be his unless he was invited to move to another table or thrown off his by the others on it. There were still the inmates who insisted on making a mess. The only difference was that the dining room staff wouldn't tolerate it. The inmates responsible for the mess were made to go back to the dining room to clean it up. Guards at the huts unit were provided food from that left over after serving the inmates. They, like the guards in the main wing, were expected to pay the \$2 fee each meal. Eventually though, a new cook arrived and quickly put a stop to the guards food. It was thrown out instead, creating much unnecessary waste.

In the huts unit, meal times were subject to change without notice. Whenever there was a big sporting event on TV which coincided with a meal time, that meal time was brought forward so that the dining room could be emptied and cleaned, in time to watch the event.

In general, prison food is well cooked and the dining conditions clean. The eggs are not rubbery and the food is not usually cold by the time it's served. There is also no way to know if someone has put snot, shit, and piss or anything else into it. Because most vegetables are grown on the prison farm, the quality is high at least until the season is almost over. Following is the menu for one week in prison.

#### MONDAY

Breakfast: - cornflakes, 3 toast, Marmalade, cup of tea, butter, 300m1 milk.

Lunch Mince on toast, bread, Kiwi fruit, cup of tea.

Dinner: - Weiner Schnitzel, baked potato, Broccoli-Cauliflower mix, bread, rice and jelly square, cup of tea.

#### TUESDAY

Breakfast: - Porridge, 3 toast, Honey, cup of tea, butter, milk.

Lunch Mashed potato, Scotch egg, bread, cup of tea.

Dinner: - Braised Mutton chop, whole potato, Silver beet, Pumpkin, bread, Ice cream, lime jelly, cup of tea.

#### WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: - Weetbix, 3 toast, Marmite, cup of tea, butter, 300m1 milk.

Lunch: - Pizza, bread, cup of tea.

Dinner: - Corned beef, Cauliflower, white sauce, boiled potato, Brussels sprouts, bread, chocolate cake, cup of tea.

#### THURSDAY

Breakfast: - Cornflakes. 3 toast, Strawberry jam, cup of tea, butter, 300m1 milk.

Lunch: - 2 American hot dogs with sauce, relish, onions. cup of tea.

Dinner: - Mince pie, peas, mashed potato, bread, custard, stewed Apples, cup of tea

#### FRIDAY

Breakfast: - Porridge, 3 toast, honey, cup of tea, butter, 300ml milk.

Lunch: - 1 mince toastie, 1 spaghetti toastie, Marshmallow crunch cake, cup of tea.

Dinner: - Fish and chips, sausage, fruit, cup of tea.

#### SATURDAY

Breakfast:- Weetbix, 3 toast, Golden syrup, cup of tea, butter, 300m1 milk.

Lunch: - Luncheon meat, salad with apple, corn, beetroot, bread, cup of tea.

Dinner :- 2 Sausages, carrots, silver beet, whole potato, bread, ginger biscuits, cup of tea, 300ml milk.

#### SUNDAY

Breakfast:- Cornflakes, 3 toast, peanut butter, cup of tea, butter, 300ml milk.

Lunch: - Roast; Pork, potatoes, pumpkin. parsnip; Cabbage and carrots, bread, cup of coffee.

Dinner: - Bacon, cheese and egg burger, chips, bread, Ginger steamed pudding, custard, cup of tea.

There were many other different meals served in prison. This menu was one week out of a 5 week rotating menu. There was also a range of menus catering for the needs of inmates who were vegetarians, on low fat diets or who had special medical dietary needs. Those inmates picked up their meals the same time as everyone else. Kitchen staff knew who they were and made sure they were served correctly.

The only deviation from normal meals was Christmas day. The following is the menu in the huts unit I was in for Christmas 1994.

Xmas Breakfast: Sausage, bacon, egg, Weetbix, coffee.

Xmas lunch: Roast Pork, apple sauce, minted new potatoes, minted carrots, roast pumpkin, peas, Xmas pudding, Brandy sauce, Milo/ coffee.

Xmas tea: 2 salads, potato salad, Ham, ice-cream, whipped cream, fruit salad, tea

## **RECREATION AND SPORT :**

In order to pass the time with as little boredom as possible, inmates indulged in various pastimes. Recreation period was from 5.30pm to 8.30pm each day. There wasn't much to do other than play cards, pool or darts, or make phone calls. Most inmates went out into the wing for recreation.

There was a large table near the guard station which was used to play cards on. At times there would be as many as eight inmates playing on the table, with many more playing cards on the floor nearby. The games of choice were 500, Euchre or Coon Can, 'sevens' as it was called. The same people played the same game in the same place for weeks, months or even years. Various card games, including Gin and Patience, were also played in the cells during lock up periods.

There was a pool table provided. It was very hard to get onto it because the same people tended to get there first. In my wing, the officers unlocked the inmates upstairs first, enabling those inmates to get to the pool table before the downstairs inmates were unlocked.

There was a blackboard on the wall by the pool table. Any inmate wishing to play wrote his name there with chalk. The games would be played in the order in which they were written. Any inmate suspected of being a "kidfucker" was discouraged from playing by all those waiting for a game. If the inmate insisted on playing anyway and their name had been rubbed off the board by one of the other inmates, the one wishing to play would be threatened with violence.

Two dart boards were provided. It was difficult to get a game since darts can take quite a while to play. Anyone was able to use the boards with no prejudice. The guards often played against inmates in light hearted matches. A group of inmates organized a tournament. There would be as many as twenty players in a round robin. It was winner take all. The prizes were soap, cigarettes, chocolate bars etc.

Inmates could watch television. There was a set in the centre of the wing surrounded by benches to sit on. Quite a few inmates used this facility. The news at 6pm was popular as one would often see a convicted man on his way into prison.

One video per night was shown on the wing television. It was obvious whether it was good or bad. If the benches were empty, no one watched. Since this was the centre of the wing, it was the place many gathered to talk or socialize.

Some inmates were too ill to venture out of their cells. They would stay in there almost permanently, lying on their bunks listening to all the activity going on outside. Periodically someone would look in through the peephole and ask if they were Ok. Others would yell

insults and abuse through the peephole and there was nothing the inmate in the cell could do about it.

Other inmates were afraid of being attacked if they went into the main population of the wing. They would stay in their cells. Usually these inmates were sex offenders. They would have to put up with frequent abuse and threats. Many were threatened with death if they came out of their cells. They believed the threats. The most important thing a new inmate could do was mingle immediately. If he hid away, he would be seen as weak and would be harassed. At any time, inmates could be seen talking through peepholes in cell doors. Although they could be abusing the inmate within, they could have been socializing. Some would go from door to door seeking a cigarette, milk, coffee, food or other goods. They could have been just talking to a friend. Every now and again a guard would go to a cell where an inmate was standing and ask its occupant if he was being stood over. The answer would always be "No", whether it was true or not.

Guards patrolled the wing constantly during recreation periods. There was little trouble. Any argument would be quelled quickly. Board checks were made to keep track of inmates. Two or more missing was a sure sign of trouble. Board checks were also done on those inmates who remained in their cells to make sure they were not hanging from the bars.

One of the main pastimes during recreation period was walking around trying to find food, since there was never enough to eat in the wings. Some succeeded in finding a snack, most failed. The other objective was searching for enough tobacco to get through the night. When an inmate was asked for a smoke he'd say "Sorry mate, I'm looking for one myself", or "I've only got enough for myself". Sometimes a bloke would get lucky and score. Sometimes he'd stand over a "Kidfucker" and get a smoke. Most times he'd get nothing. That's prison!

There were a few inmates who went around the wing picking cigarette butts up off the floor and smoking them. Most inmates wouldn't do that because of the serious risk of being infected by Hepatitis b or H.I.V. There was no way to know who had smoked the cigarette.

Showers were had at recreation period. Many showered every night, most did not. There was a toilet at the opposite end of the guard room for use during this time. It was there that any fights would be carried out, deals done and the toilets used for their intended purpose. Guards kept a watch on the toilets at all times.

Recreation through the day was carried out in the yards. These are enclosed concrete block walls with a grill on the front through which inmates enter and exit. Above the high walls, guards moved along walkways from tower to tower, ever watchful for trouble. It can be hard to spot though, especially when some games played by the

inmates are very vigorous almost to the point of violence. One such game is "Crash". It's a kind of touch Rugby comprising two teams, in which a ball, normally made from socks or towels, is picked up. The player with the ball must then do all he can to score a goal. The other players must do all they can to stop him. There are no other rules. This game went well beyond the point of violence. On many occasions there were numerous injuries as players settled old scores. The violence which could have erupted inside the wing seemed to have been saved up for release during a game of crash. One particular day the injuries were so numerous that the medical unit refused to treat any injuries resulting from playing this game. They were deemed to have been "self inflicted" and were therefore a chargeable offence. Soon after, the game was banned.

Not everyone played crash. There were those who elected to stretch out in the sun with a good book and read all day. Some chose to do weight training since there was a large selection of equipment. The remainder either slept in the sun or paced up and down like caged animals. There was one constant feature, loud music. It seemed to come from every yard. Inmates took radios to the yards and played them all day long. This was not at all unpleasant although some older men complained from time to time. The most commonly played music was by Pink Floyd. It could be heard at almost any time of the day or night. The yards were not to everyone's taste. Several inmates remained indoors, never going out into the yards. Some were afraid for their safety, others were too sick or had groups to go to and some just didn't want to mix socially with anyone. There were things an inmate could do in his cell all day. Writing letters, drawing, glass painting, carving and writing were all options if the inmate had the necessary skills or motivation. There was always the television or radio if the inmate was lucky enough to possess either one.

For those inmates who had attained a minimum security classification, there was the option of "Sports Privileges". This was when inmates were escorted to the rugby playing field, where they were able to play various games with others, walk around the field or sit somewhere and take in the sun. This form of privilege for an inmate who may have been imprisoned for several years is as good as freedom. The first time one goes out to the field can be overwhelming. The thing that affects inmates immediately, is the endless fields spread out before him meeting the blue mountains in the distance. It's like seeing them for the first time. He may be intimidated by the experience. He may be tempted to "do a runner" or he may feel that the switch to his life has been thrown on in an instant. Either way, no one stuffs it up because it would mean being stuck back in the main wing. The jaunt out to the fields usually lasted for two hours.

Sports privileges were twice a week in the wing, Wednesday and

Sunday mornings.

Some inmates from the main wings belonged to the prison sports teams. They practiced through the week on the prison sports grounds and played against various outside sports teams on the weekend.

Gambling was available to those who wanted to indulge. A racing chart was run by inmates. It ran for the duration of one race meeting which meant ten races per chart were bet on. An inmate would select ten horses, one in each race and list them on the chart with his name beside them. He would bet one Moro bar or something to the same value then sit back and listen to the races on the radio. Placing was denoted by numbers. First place was 3 points, second, 2 and third earned 1 point. The highest number of points won all of the prizes.

Inmates also ran a Lotto game. 40 numbers were written on a chart. Each number was purchased at the cost of one Moro bar and the name of the buyer placed beside it on the chart. When the numbers were drawn on television, any player whose number appeared on the screen received 5 Moro bars. If a player selected the bonus number, he received 10 Moro's. There had to be 40 players for the game to be played. The Melbourne Cup was run as a sweepstake. Each player paid one Moro bar into a pool. The horse numbers were written on small pieces of paper and placed into a container. Each inmate reached in and took one piece of paper containing his number. Inmates gathered around radios listening to the race. When it was over, the winning number received all of the Moro bars in the pool. Several pools were run to accommodate the numbers betting on the race.

The rest of the time, there was nothing much to do. If an inmate elected not to participate, he missed out. Despite the seemingly abundant recreational facilities, what little equipment was supplied had to be shared by as many as 70 inmates at once, causing most to miss out. More outside sports facilities would have been a most welcome addition to inmate's recreational pursuits.

More pool and card tables, a television set for watching normal programming and a selection of in wing board games were desperately needed. Although some of these things were offered once a fortnight in a games evening, for the rest of the time there was little to occupy the frustrated and bored inmates. Sitting on benches in a crowded, smelly and very noisy wing is hardly conducive to recreation.

## MEDICAL

The only medical provisions handed out by the guards are painkillers. Late at night there is little chance of getting medical help. Inmates have died because guards could not get medical help to them in time. Others have suffered terribly for the entire night before being able to see the medical officer in the morning.

If an inmate had a splitting headache and they are common in prison, and he missed the evening rounds of the medical officer, or the headache began after the rounds had ended, the inmate was shit out of Tuck until the morning. Most guards the inmate asked for a painkiller would tell him they'd bring one to him, but would forget by the time they'd completed their rounds. Others may decide the inmate was a particular type of scum and tell him he was "not worth it", and "you can wait until the morning".

Medical treatment is catered for in prison. If interned in the main wings, an inmate requiring medical or dental treatment was required to submit his name to the medical staff in the dining room, as breakfast was dispensed. Also at breakfast time, medication was handed out to those who had it prescribed by the prison doctors. All inmates taking medication did so in front of the medical staff. This was to avoid inmates imitating the action of swallowing it, then taking the un-swallowed drugs back to their cell. Medication taken to the inmate's cell under these circumstances would be saved up until a dose large enough to get stoned on accrued. Some sold the drugs to others but most take it as directed.

The medical unit in the main prison I was in stood as a separate unit connected only by the main corridor. To get to it, one went through an established procedure of being escorted through the inmates wing door, led along a passage to another grill where a guard let the inmate through. Once through that grill, the inmate would wait momentarily at yet another one. He was then let through that grill and taken to a holding. From there, another guard then escorted him to a waiting /holding cell, with other inmates wanting to see the doctor, in the corridor of the medical wing, and locked in once again.

The waiting room /cell was just a room. It had a viewing hole in the door where the guards could keep watch to ensure no trouble erupted between the inmates. The walls had graffiti on them in keeping with the rest of the prison. The wait to see the doctor could be anything from five minutes to half an hour or more. I guess some things are the same on the inside. When finally called to see the doctor, the inmate was led along a corridor and into the doctors office. Usually the doctor would be reading the inmates notes as the inmate arrived. After a few questions and a brief examination, the doctors ' decisions were quickly made. The most important of these decisions was if the inmate was "Pulling a rort" or was genuinely ill.

Many inmates feign sickness to get drugs. Sometimes it works, mostly it does not.

When it's all over, the inmate is escorted back to his wing through the grills and corridors he used to get to medical. There is provision in the medical unit for in-treatment. There is a ward containing beds for this purpose. This ward remains unlocked through the day allowing the inmates (patients) to wander freely if they are able. The unit is locked down for the guards to have their lunch. When this happens the inmates must stay where they are as there are no staff on duty there at all during this period (1 hour in the PM). There is a day room which is regarded by inmates as "neutral territory" Inmates do not hassle other inmates in there. If they do, it may lead to their being sent back to their wing. There is also a secure cell for inmates who lose control of themselves. There is nothing in this cell. Also, there is a fully enclosed yard for the inmates to soak up the fresh air and sunshine. Some of the inmates in the medical unit are very old men. Some are suffering terminal illness and will possibly die there.

Meal times are the same as in the wings. The food is prepared in the main kitchen and taken to the medical unit on a trolley. After the meal has been consumed, the dishes are returned to the kitchen. The prison dispensary is in the medical unit. Each morning, drug addicts are taken there to receive their dose of Methadone. Medical treatment in the huts unit is quite different. The nurse will attend the unit three times per day, each visit is heralded by the word "medical" bellowing from a loudspeaker in the middle of the compound. The first visit is at around 7.00 am, the same time as inmates are getting out of bed. Those requiring medication will be called to the guard room to receive it.

At unlock (7.00 am), if an inmate is ill and wishes to see medical, he will inform the guard who will pass his name on to the medical officer. Once the medications have been dispensed, the nurse will visit the inmate in his cell. If he is quite ill, his name will be placed on the list to see the doctor in the main jail. Later, if the inmates condition is poor, he will be taken to the doctor.

The second visit from a medical officer is at lunchtime. Again, medication is dispensed from the guard room window, and inmates can request to have their names placed on the list to see the doctor or dentist. Also at this time, the medical officer goes to the cell of inmates on "bed rest" or "cell sick" as the guards and inmates call it, to check on the condition of those inmates.

Inmates on "bed rest" are not permitted to leave their cells until cleared by the doctor, except for a shower after tea. If they do, they may be taken from the sick list and will be sent back to work. The third and final medical visit for the day is at around 8.30 PM. More medication is handed out and the "cell sick" are again visited. This is how the system works most of the time. However, there is

the odd occasion when it does not. One night when I was in the hut unit, an inmate began screaming in pain in the early hours of the morning. Despite the best efforts of the guards to get a medical officer to attend the inmate, he was left for in excess of five hours, screaming in agony and preventing other inmates from sleeping. This occurred to different inmates on a few occasions. Up to 20 people out of a wing of 60 inmates received medication for various ailments in the hut unit I was in.

The doctor visits the compound on Thursday at lunch time. Those whose names appear on the list to see him are called to his office in the administration unit of the wing. There the inmate joins the queue outside the doctors office, where he waits until called. At least one guard is in attendance during the doctors ' visit.

Unless urgent, any other visit to the doctor would mean a walk to his office in the main wing, escorted by a guard. There, the same waiting procedures as those in the main wings would apply. After visiting the doctor, the inmate is escorted back to the hut unit. If he is a trusted inmate, he will not be escorted either there or back.

The dentist is in the medical unit with the doctor. As with medical treatment, if an inmate requires a visit to the dentist he places his name on the list when the medical officer calls. The day on which dental treatment is administered depends on the wing as each wing has a different day. When the inmates name is called, he will be escorted to the dentist, in the same manner as previously described. Urgent treatment is not generally available except for the odd occasion. The reason given is the lack of dental facilities. The dentist visits other prisons in the area as well. He provides only basic and emergency treatment. There is no specialist treatment provided.

There are complaints from inmates receiving what they believe to be "sub - standard" dental treatment. Many complained of infection after having teeth removed, and the delay before being given antibiotics to stop this infection. This delay can be a week or more, or maybe sooner if the medical officer considers the inmates needs urgent treatment. Others complained of bone and bits of broken tooth coming from the wound after extraction. Many men simply preferred to wait weeks or even months, often with severe toothache, to see their own dentist on home their leaves or release.

### **COUNSELLING AND COURSES :**

There were several courses and types of counselling available to prison inmates. Drug and alcohol abuse, anger management and sex abuse were among the areas covered. All of these courses and counselling were considered necessary to rehabilitate various types of offender. They were all considered "Treatment" and were usually helpful at the time of application for parole.

Drug and alcohol abuse counselling was carried out in a group situation. Inmates gathered together in an interview room to discuss their addictions to either alcohol or drugs and the part it played in the commission of their particular offence. The groups were held several times per week and were of 2 hours in duration. From what was said by some inmates who attended these meetings, they were helpful to the inmates in that they had to come to terms with their offence and their addiction. Lying about any aspect would result in rebuttal by other members of the group. They all had similar problems and were familiar with the lies an addict tells to cover the reasons for his addiction, its ' effect on his life and the lives of those around him, and the true nature of it. A good report from the counsellor who ran the group was most helpful in obtaining parole. If the offence committed by the inmate involved alcohol or drugs in any way, attending treatment to address this connection would be a sign to the parole board that the inmate was rehabilitating himself. If an inmate, with an evident drug or alcohol problem, attended the parole board and had not attended any appropriate courses, his chances of being released were slim. Parole was an incentive for attending the Alcohol and drug courses. Many inmates did not attend and their declined parole applications showed the results.

Anger management courses were available at the prison. Many offences had been committed with the use of violence. About 1993-94 there was a public call for the Justice system to do something about the increase in violent crime. Once the offence had come to the notice of the police, it was too late. The offender was put in prison for whatever period of time the court decreed, being released on the completion of his sentence, more violent than ever. During his time in prison the inmate had only the anger management courses to help him rehabilitate himself. In many cases all these courses did was bring the problem to the surface in the inmate, without addressing it or putting something else in its ' place.

Carried out along the same lines as Alcohol and Drug groups, angry exchanges sometimes occurred between the participants and were quickly controlled by the facilitator. As with A&D counselling, Anger management courses were well received when it came time to be considered for parole. Because the public had demanded stiffer sentences and harsher conditions for violent offenders, it was

almost impossible to be released from prison before the two thirds of sentence date, without having completed at least an anger management course. Also, as with A&D courses, many elected not to participate and their application for parole was subsequently declined.

Sex abuse counselling was offered to inmates who claimed to have been sexually abused as children. Most cited this as the reason for their offending, which was not generally of a sexual nature. Each week the counsellor could be seen pulling up to the prison gates in her blue BMW automobile to see yet another "victim". There were quite a number of men who claimed they had been sexually abused, some coming into contact with their alleged abuser in prison. All had put their names down to receive a lump sum payment from the Accident Compensation Commission but could not be paid out whilst still in jail. Payment would be made upon their release from custody.

Although most believed their own claims of abuse as a child, some knew they had never been abused. On a number of occasions, inmates conspired to obtain compensation payoffs by laying false complaints against men, some of them now dead, accusing them of sexual abuse. It was a very well known fact by prison inmates that any accusation of sexual abuse could not be defended and the man accused would probably plead guilty to avoid the shame, even if he was innocent.

On occasions, plans for laying false complaints were openly discussed among groups of inmates. In one such group an inmate was asked what he would say the man did to him. He replied "I'll say anything.. Doesn't matter anyway. Counsellors believe everything you tell them. They have to", then he laughed. Another member of the group advised the inmate not to ask for money straight away stating it would make the counsellor suspicious. The group sat around while the inmate who was to make the false complaint of sexual abuse told them how he was going to spend the expected compensation payout of \$10,000. Following this discussion. charges were laid against a man and a counsellor appointed to the "victim". After a few counselling sessions, the inmate filled in an Accident Compensation form. Unfortunately, the regulations governing this form of compensation had changed. He received only smaller regular payments. once he was released from prison. There were a number of such complaints lodged between 1992 and 1996.

Although sex abuse counselling was misused a number of times in this way, it is important to note that the majority of those receiving this form of counselling were genuine in their belief, and grateful for the relief the counsellors provided from any abuse they may have genuinely suffered as a child .

There were those who received this form of counselling, who at the

time of their court hearing had alleged that sexual abuse as a child had contributed to, or caused their offending. Once it had been decided by justice officials that the inmate must undergo counselling to address the alleged sex abuse, since it was cited as the cause of the offence, the inmate could not back out. He would have to see a counsellor and describe all the terrible abuses he was made to suffer. In time, he even believed what he was saying. Come parole time, it would be seen by the board he had made an attempt to rehabilitate himself, and if he had attended counselling. This would be reflected in the boards decision. The various forms of counselling and courses can be a god send for some inmates. In the main they are avoided, unless participation would significantly reduce their time in prison. Because of public demand, the prison sentences were made so long, and the chance of early release after committing a violent offence almost nil, little point was seen by many prisoners in attending any treatment "just for the sake of it".

## **EDUCATION AND GROUPS :**

There were a variety of both educational and non educational groups in prison. A recent study concluded 60% of all prison inmates are illiterate to some degree. Although this percentage was highly publicised it was not obvious to the observer, however, there were some inmates who needed other inmates to read letters for them and answer them as required. Many of the letters were very private. It was awkward for the inmate reading a letter to another, when it was a "Dear John" letter. It was even harder when the letter was official and stated that the mans children had been placed into foster care. Sometimes, a member of the mans family had died and he would ask the reader to repeat the letter, over and over. The hardest task for the reader was assisting the man to answer any of these letters appropriately.

To assist inmates in performing this task themselves, literacy enhancing groups were in provided. These groups were run by tutors employed by the department of justice, on contract. There was one occasion when the contracts actually expired leaving many parts of the prison without tutoring of any kind. Inmates were recruited to participate in a tutoring course at the prison The intention was that they provide one to one literacy tutoring for those who desperately needed it, and backup for the literacy tutors, when they were not there.

Outside tutors were responsible for a number of courses. Literacy, numeracy, creative writing and art courses were available as well as all School Certificate subjects, for those inmates wishing to sit the School Certificate examination or higher. The latter inmates were required to pay their examination fees, although there were some dispensations when they would be paid by the department of justice.

The expectation in providing education for inmates was that perhaps, they would gain self-esteem and confidence. It was hoped that this would prevent them from reoffending in that it would be easier for them to obtain a job, and keep it. Education groups were run most days. In work wings the inmates would have to fore go their morning or afternoon work, to attend.

The outside tutors were usually women. It was not uncommon for men who had been incarcerated for long periods to go to a group, simply to perv (ogle) at the women tutors, fantasizing what they would do to them under different circumstances. Inmates would discuss this in the wing, after classes were over for the day. Some inmates attended educational groups purely for relief from the day to day drudgery of the wing. For some in the work wings, it was a way to get out of work. Some inmates went to courses on four days out of five.

For whatever reasons inmates went to the courses, they could not

help but get something out of it. Many expressed regret that they "messed about" at high school. Some believed that a lack of education contributed to their slide into a life of crime. Others simply believed they did it out of "stupidity". Most inmates enjoyed educational groups.

Other groups included 'personal growth ', religious or hobby groups. One could attend a church group where prayers would be said, forgiveness sought from "The Lord", and a morning tea with biscuits enjoyed. Those in attendance liked the social interaction and piety of the group. It was noticeable who the "bible bangers" were. Most were able to walk around the prison with their heads held high. Some thrust their beliefs down the throats of anyone who would listen.

Personal growth groups seemed to be in abundance. One would play games, sit around talking about his problems and have a cup of tea. These groups provided a valuable respite from the hum drum of the wing, allowing the participants to weigh up their lot, and maybe even come to grips with what they had or had not done. This was particularly necessary for inmates serving very long sentences.

Although most hobbies were executed in the cells, there was the occasional hobby group. One could use computers or do machine sewing. Courses were available in each instance although computers and sewing machines were in short supply.

Cultural groups were also held. Anyone wishing to learn Maori culture, Haka etc could attend a group for this purpose. Men could often be heard shouting the Haka in the distance.

The only recreation group was held one night every two weeks. People came in from a christian fellowship group to provide non judgmental company, and games for anyone wishing to participate. This group was referred to as "Games night" and was usually well attended. This group was held in the main visiting room of the prison. All other groups were held in resource, school, interview or meeting rooms within the prison.

## **JOBS AND WAGES :**

Inmates all received an income while serving their sentences. As with the outside, an unemployment wage is paid weekly into the account of each inmate not working within the prison. In 1995, the amount paid for this purpose was \$2.80 per week. This payment is worthless to any inmate, especially one who smokes. An inmate wishing to purchase cigarettes had to save his entire payment for at least two weeks to buy a packet of cigarettes or tobacco, a phone card or any hobby equipment. This payment does little toward stopping theft and standovers since an inmate can do little with it. Inmates lucky or motivated enough to have a prison job fare little better. Wages start from around \$3.80 per week with a top rate, called superintendents wages, of \$6.44 per week; 92 cents per day. Jobs whose workers receive \$3.80 per week are common while those yielding the top rate are scarce.

Probably the most common job for inmates in the main wings, is 'wing cleaning ' It entails mopping the floors, cleaning up spills or messes made by other inmates, polishing door knobs and machine polishing floors daily. They usually fill the wing 'Zip ' water heater so others can have hot water for a cup of tea or coffee, a function appreciated by many inmates. The job usually took from 7.30am (sometimes 6am or earlier when the upstairs water main flooded the downstairs wing) until 11am, when all inmates had to be back in the wing for lunch. Sometimes work continued after lunch as required. The weekly wage for this job was \$3.80.

The 'kit locker ' worker was responsible for all prison clothing and bedding. On the day designated "sheet change" day, the kit locker worker pushed a laundry cart through the wing, picking up bed sheets and towels which inmates had placed outside the cells when they were unlocked at 7.00am. Any other item an inmate required to be washed was placed with the sheets. All items had to be marked with the inmates name and cell number so they could be returned. Items of personal clothing often went missing. Few were ever found. Each new inmate was supplied with a complete 'kit ' comprised of 2 shirts, prison issue blue jeans, 2 white tee shirts, 2 pairs underwear, 1 prison issue jersey, 2 pairs of socks, a pair of white sand shoes and if the inmate is very lucky, 1 prison issue blue denim jacket. Also included were 2 woollen blankets, 2 bed sheets, 1 pillow and 1 pillow case. All of these items had been used by other inmates, including the tennis shoes. Those were washed and sanitized between wearers. It was the responsibility of the kitlocker worker to keep tally of who had what item, and to repair any damaged items. Standard pay rates (\$3.80-\$5.00) applied to this job. Servery workers were paid slightly higher. Their duties included putting side plates, plastic cutlery, bread and fruit on the tables in the dining room, making the tea, coffee or Milo, putting it in the

urn, taking the urn to the dining room and serving out the meal. when the meal was over, the servery workers picked up any plates or cutlery left on the tables. Any food was put into large plastic bins to be thrown out. Finally, the tables and dining room floor were washed down and the floor polished. Servery workers began their job at 6am and finished at around 5pm. They were often left unlocked between meal times and had the added bonus of taking food back to their cells at night. Cooks and kitchen workers had the same hours as servery workers. Their job included food preparation, washing dishes, keeping the floors and equipment clean and putting food into trays on the trolley to be wheeled to the various wings. Generally, wages ranged from \$4.10 to \$6.44 per week. Taking food back to their cells was also a perk of the job. Food is as good as currency.

Some main wings as well as huts unit workers had jobs which took them out of their wings. The prison had a farm, vegetable gardens, poultry farm, the rubbish run, forestry unit, community work unit, carpenters shop, motor garage, paint shop, electricians shop, joiners shop and engineers workshop. Guards who are tradesmen in the respective fields organized work to be done and executed it with the assistance of trusted inmates. Some inmates who were tradesmen refused to practice their trade while in prison. Their reason was, having been used to payment in excess of \$30 per hour on the outside; they were not willing to do the same work in prison for only a few cents an hour.

The poultry farm produced eggs for the prison, with the excess sold to hospitals and other institutions. The chickens were sent to Rolleston prison for slaughter and disposal once they were no longer viable. Chicken meat for consumption within the prison was purchased from retail outlets. Poultry workers were responsible for the feeding of the birds, mucking out the sheds, gathering and sorting eggs, making up the orders and rearing baby chicks to begin the process again. It was a seven day a week job, returning approx \$5 per week to the inmates.

Garden workers carried out all general gardening duties including planting, weeding, watering. Harvesting and packing orders to be delivered to the rest of the prison. The job was for 5 days a week and was paid \$3.80 per week. Prison farm workers carried out various duties ranging from feeding out to sheep, mustering and moving stock and ploughing fields. Most drove tractors around the prison property carrying out various tasks. Some worked in the prison pig farm.

The rubbish workers (party 2b) carted rubbish from the prison to a public rubbish dump in Parkhouse road in Christchurch, twice a week. They made various deliveries, including vegetables from the garden to the prison and did anything else required of them. Their duties were general and their pay was \$3.80 plus per week.

The forestry units' duties included planting and felling trees, splitting logs for firewood which was stockpiled and sold, community service and general duties. The work was hard but the one perk of the job was being away from the prison. The forestry workers needed a strong back and many couldn't hack it. Pay ranged upwards of \$3.80 per week. The garbage worker (Garbo) took all waste from the wing out to the rubbish skip, washed out the rubbish bins then went back into the wing. This job was done after each meal time and paid around \$3.80 for a five day week or \$5.04 for 7 days.

Carpenters made alterations and repairs wherever needed within the prison, and sometimes at the homes of staff members.

Joiners built furniture and fittings for the prison. This entailed anything from window frames and wall fittings to cupboards, doors and wall units.

The motor garage carried out maintenance on prison vehicles, changed tyres and washed all vehicles, including court vans, busses and staff vehicles.

The painter's duties included painting furniture, cells, entire buildings and interior decorating offices, prison wings, corridors and staff houses.

Electricians repaired electrical faults as they developed anywhere in the prison. At night if a fault occurred, an outside electrician was often called. The electricians also replaced bulbs and fittings, rewired units and offices and checked all electrical appliances, tv's, radios etc, coming into the prison to be placed in an inmates property. This was to ensure no one was electrocuted, and there was no contraband concealed within the appliance.

The engineers made and repaired any equipment used within the prison. This could be anything from welding a broken bed frame, fitting bars to cell windows or repairing agricultural equipment on the prison farm.

The boiler house workers keep things hot. They produced a hot water supply so inmates could enjoy hot showers and heating. They also repaired heating problems in the wings, made adjustments to thermostats and made sure there was adequate fuel for all the boilers in various wings.

The trade jobs paid the best money and although no one could get above \$6.44 per week, most were paid around that figure. The advantage of these jobs was getting out of the wing.

All wages were paid starting at the base rate of 72 cents per day for basic jobs, climbing to a maximum of 92 cents for trades and specialist jobs.

## **OLD MEN**

A fact kept from the public at large, is the number of older, old and very old men in prison. It is not at all uncommon for men in their eighties, the autumn years, to be placed into prison to die.

Furthermore, the number of these old men in prison for the same type of conviction, child sex abuse which supposedly happened 40 or more years before seems unrealistic.

The wing I was in initially (very briefly), comprised approximately 50% sex offenders. Of that 50%, nearly half were in excess of 50 years of age with several of them over 70. This trend accompanied me throughout the wings I was in. Life in prison is very hard for most inmates, but for those convicted of child sex crimes it can be unbearable. In the first few months of my incarceration, a 71 year old man was badly beaten by a group of young inmates. His injuries which included broken bones, were severe requiring hospital treatment. The incident reached the ever watchful eye of the news media, but caused no scandal. It was as though no one cared what happened to the old man.

One of my first cell mates was a 72 year old man. There were bunks in each cell, and it was obvious this old man couldn't climb so I took the top bunk. He was an unwell man as is so often the case with the old timers in prison. He had bladder and heart problems and got up many times through the night to use the toilet. Lucky for him the toilet was only 3 feet from his bunk. The old man had a poor memory and could not remember events from the last two years. Unbelievably, he was convicted on child sex charges allegedly occurring some 32 years previously. He was often harassed by younger inmates and eventually had a heart attack. He was merely sent to the prisons ' medical unit, where he partly recovered in time to be released.

In the medical unit (ward), there were usually old men as in-patients, scattered among those who were injured and drug addicts. One was 84 years old and had throat cancer. His voice box had been removed and he was unable to talk. At that time, he was not expected to survive. I do not know what happened to him. I do however know what happened to another old man in his seventies. After collapsing several times, one of which was at the breakfast table (no one helped), he died alone in his cell at night.

There is one thing which puzzles the writer. If one is required to be of sound mind whilst defending any type of criminal charge, then why do old men who have literally "lost their marbles", get forced through the justice system when they have no chance of defending themselves?

One such old man was so demented, he didn 't know his own name, frequently asking other inmates "where am I", "why am I here?" He wet his bed, requiring his cell mate to clean up the mess and

change his clothes for him. This man had been convicted of alleged child sex offences, supposedly occurring 29 years previously. These old men, as with all inmates come from various walks of life. Many either were or had been doctors, teachers, and professionals of all kinds or pensioners. One was an ex local body councillor. The only common factor was that the allegations which put them in prison stemmed from alleged occurrences many decades before, usually after family members, women or men suffering depression, had undertaken counselling for it.

All of these old men had to come to terms with the most savage blow of all. During their earlier lives they had been someone to look up to. In prison, many attempted to continue their normal attitudes and procedures. This usually resulted in them being abused and /or beaten.

One man, a 71 year old doctor, had been placed on a fat free diet by the prison doctor. Upon his arrival in the dining room he discovered the sugar had been withheld from his plate. He disputed this with the kitchen staff, arguing sugar was "not fat". He then aggressively stated "I should know, I'm a doctor!" An inmate who was working in the kitchen responded with "In here, you're fucking nothing!" This upset the doctor but he realized the inmate was right. No matter who you might have been, in prison you are nothing. Most old men kept to themselves and away from the younger inmates. They huddled together in groups during recreation period in the main wing while playing cards or something similar and keeping an eye open at all times for attacks by other inmates.

Stand-over's were a big problem for older, weaker men who were no match for young, strong inmates. Older men were approached and tobacco, property and /or food were demanded. Most of the time the old men were too terrified not to give in to their demands. Property etc was handed over without argument, labelling that old man as an "easy target" He would be stood over repeatedly from then on. Some of the old men were made to pay "protection "to other inmates to ensure their safety, perhaps this is what is meant by "Protection wing". It was not unusual to see older men skulking along in the shadows trying not to be seen as they made their way to the showers. Many feared for their lives, whether it was justified or not.

Having enjoyed privacy for most of their lives, it came as a shock to old men when they had to stand naked amongst murderers, rapists, child molesters and Homo /transsexuals, believing they were being looked up and down seductively. The old men had heard the rumours about bending over to pick up the soap, and believed them. One old man told me one shower time, he felt "like a piece of meat in a display cabinet". He waited until he was the last one in the room before taking his shower. A few minutes later I went back

to the shower room to retrieve my towel; my heart sank as I saw the old man sitting on the bench in the corner wearing nothing but his underwear, crying his heart out. I asked him what the matter was. He replied, "I miss my wife.. Please leave me. I'll be alright". From 1993 there was a huge surge in the number of older men going to prison. Their convictions were almost exclusively child sex allegations going back more than 20 years. Most, despite constant claims of innocence, had been convicted on nothing but verbal testimony from the complainants. They were ordered to pay huge sums of money to their accusers despite the fact the complainants had already received large Accident Compensation payoffs. Many of the old men had been forced to sell their homes to pay this money, as well as the enormous cost of defence which began at \$40,000. The wives of these old men had been thrown out of their homes so they could be sold and the money paid to the complainants and defending lawyers.

One old man, aged 74, who was sent to jail in 1995, had been looking after his dying wife for the previous 18 months. Prior to her death in 1994, her husband of more than 40 years had been accused of sexual assaults on several women only five years earlier. Within two weeks of his wife's death, the man was arrested. After a fast and expensive trial, with the man still pleading his innocence, he was sentenced to 6 years jail. With his sentencing came the now familiar judge's statement.

"Society demands you be imprisoned for a lengthy period of time as a warning to others. Therefore I sentence you to 6 years imprisonment so that when you are released you will be a very old man and therefore unable to reoffend ". For whatever reason, during the three years I was incarcerated, old men were imprisoned in droves. Those who continued to plead their innocence were disadvantaged the most. Their life savings were eaten up in defending their innocence and paying the complainants. In the end though, some of these old men found themselves resigned to a situation which was strangely preferable to their previous existence. As one 74 year old said to me, "Where else could I live in relative comfort, have three good meals a day and have my medical care paid for.? " At the time I thought he was being facetious then he went on to say, "MY wife is dead, my family are all gone and wish not to see me. I get more visits from other inmates than I ever got on the outside from friends and the like. what is there for me on the outside? Nothing. I know where I 'm better off. If I die in here, I die in here. At least I 'm more than just "the old man down the road" I can live with that

## **CHILD MOLESTERS :**

It is a commonly held belief that child molesters are constantly beaten in prison. Although this may occur from time to time, it is not a particularly common occurrence. Almost as soon as a man is either remanded or convicted though, he suffers repeated and constant verbal abuse. This includes other inmates. usually younger ones yelling such things as "Dirty Kidfucker" "Hang yourself" "Freak", "Die cunt", "Watch your back arsehole" "Don't go into the showers", "You're going to be 'peeled' (attacked and seriously injured) in the yards." Such verbal abuse is common and unchecked by guards. It is referred to by many prison officials as "The war of words", and although these officials try to convince child sex offenders they will not be harmed, sometimes they are.

Right from the beginning of the legal proceedings, a child sex accused is threatened and intimidated, spat at, pushed or attacked whenever the opportunity arises, often under the gaze of officials. This poor treatment is handed out by many separate factions, the accusers, their families and friends inmates both sentenced and remand, and indirectly, some police and justice officials. The family and friends of the accused are often abused and assaulted outside the court, seldom attracting assistance from the police.

Harassment of the accused also frequently occurs in the courtroom itself, often unchecked by the judge. Death threats are made to the accused as he stands in the dock and although police are present in the court, those making the threats are not usually charged and the accused has no right of redress. There appears to be one law for the accused child molester, whether he is innocent or guilty, and another for the accusers.

In the not so common event of an accused child molester being granted bail, he will sometimes be attacked by persons usually unknown to him, who are friends of the accuser or the accuser's family. In past incidences such attacks have left men seriously injured and resulted in less than adequate sentences handed down to the attackers by well-meaning judges.

In a well publicized case in Christchurch, the accused was sent bullets through the mail. One had his name written on it and the other, the name of his companion. Soon after, the man was savagely beaten when his home was entered forcibly by several men wielding weapons. The attackers were caught and given short prison sentences. Once in prison, the attackers bragged constantly to other inmates, they had "bashed a dirty kidfucker". It gave them prestige. When walking in public, the accused is often recognized by someone who will abuse him, making sure that all around hear them. The unconvicted accused, already on bail, dare not retaliate. Should he do so it is probable his bail will be revoked, forcing him, still innocent, into prison. From this point, the accused tends to

remain indoors and away from the public eye. This situation continues right through his court case and often has a huge impact on the way he pleads to the charges. Never at any point does anyone believe he may be innocent, even though the law decrees a man is "considered innocent until proven guilty" This philosophy does not apply to child sex allegations at any point. The man is simply driven or railroaded into prison, his only defence "I didn't do it".

Many child sex accused's end up remanded in custody. This is to insure the elicitation of the complainant's testimony, unhindered. This is particularly important since the complainants testimony is Almost always the only "evidence". It is during this time the most fear is experienced as men who have never been on the wrong side of prison bars, suddenly find themselves there. On many occasions, some prison guards make lewd and dehumanizing comments at, or within earshot of these men. These comments are anything from "Don't sit near me, fuck off to the back. I might catch something off you", said in the back of a prison van on the way to court. to "Dirty fuckers like you should be shot"[\(see section POLICE "\)](#)

If a guard was told of a threat by an inmate, made against another inmate who was in prison for child sex crimes, he was told nothing could be done unless something happened. It was for this reason. many men skulked around in the shadows, trying to keep a low profile. They believed this would keep them out of harms way. Most of the time it worked. However, occasionally an inmate would decide to gain 'form' by beating a sex offender. They believed this gave them prestige in the wing, even though the sex offender they beat up was 60 or 70 years old and had been attacked from behind. Many of the child sex accused are elderly or old men. This trend appeared once the Accident Compensation Commission ceased lump sum compensation payments to complainants (even before the accused was found either guilty or innocent) other than historical claims. From that point onwards (1992 - 1995) the amount of old men sentenced to prison for child sex convictions skyrocketed. There were far fewer complaints of sex abuse allegedly occurring after 1992.

In general. child sex offenders (called "sect's ' by other inmates and some staff) stayed in little groups. This was to discourage any potential attack. It worked quite well since in the three years I was there, attacks on sex offenders were relatively few. They were not welcome to engage in any activities in the wing which involved non sex offending inmates, unless the sex offender was very large and /or aggressive (Bob... [See showers](#)). Sex offenders are not usually placed into any wings which are not designated "protection". If they went into the mainstream (non protection) prison population, sex offenders would be frequently attacked by other inmates.

In 1993, the population of a mainstream huts unit was to be

emptied of inmates who were to be placed elsewhere. That unit was to be replaced with 60 inmates from a protection wing, after the mainstream inmates had been moved.

However, this did not happen according to plan. Only 15 or so inmates were initially moved out of the huts unit and were replaced by the same number of inmates from the "protection wing. most of whom were sex offenders and had been made to sign off "protection " before they could go there. Those "protection" inmates believed the wing to be free of mainstream inmates and were horrified to find most of them still in residence. Almost immediately, the insults and abuse flew.

After tea on the first night, one of the new inmates, a convicted child molester, was attacked with a large glass bottle. It was thrown at him twice as he walked around the compound, striking him first in the legs then narrowly missing his head as it struck the ground, smashing. Two days later, while cleaning out a cell, this inmate also had a bucket of water thrown over him by an inmate. These incidents were witnessed, and ignored by the guards on duty.

On that first night, a group of four child molesters huddled in a cell, after being threatened and attacked. Just as it was getting dark, a group of inmates gathered outside that cell, shouting threats and abuse. A billiard ball was produced and thrown through the cell window. The window smashed as the ball passed through it and struck the toilet. Porcelain from the smashed toilet bowl struck the inmates causing injury. The floor was awash with toilet water. The inmates who threw the ball remained outside the cell. The new inmates, fearing for their lives, remained in the cell. Several minutes later the guards finally dispersed the crowd who were shouting such things as "Get the fuck back to your own wing Kidfuckers ". The inmate whose cell it was, was moved to another cell. All four of the men attacked were taken back to their own cells and locked up for the night. The attackers were left unpunished. The following morning at breakfast, one of the men who had been sheltering in the cell the night before, was attacked. Several inmates passed his table as he sat, too afraid to eat. Those inmates tipped plates of cornflakes and milk over him before hitting him over the head with the empty plate then throwing it at him, striking him in the face. Ten minutes later, as the same inmate who had been struck with the plate walked back to his cell, an apple was moved. One night after dark. the power went out. It was completely dark. Inmates ran around the unit shouting "kill the Kidfuckers" The child sex offenders ran back to their cells and barricaded the doors. Guards came into the unit with flashlights and attempted to restore order. Eventually, all inmates were locked in their cells before anyone could be attacked.

There are few attacks on sex offenders since many of them are dangerous men. The ones previously mentioned being mostly

related to the fact that mainstream inmates felt they were being pushed out of their wing by them, therefore making it an exceptional circumstance.

It's often obvious which inmates are the sex offenders. They are nearly always the most obedient, friendliest, best educated and peaceful. For this reason they tend to be put upon often. Usually they don't complain, not wanting to cause any trouble. Many of them hold onto the bible as a crutch because they are unable to cope with the guilt of what they have done. Some are genuine Christians. Many are in "denial" and will not acknowledge the crimes they have been convicted of either because they are unable to deal with the guilt and shame, **or they are genuinely**

**innocent.** Innocent men have been sent to jail convicted of child sex abuse, only to be released some time later, after a successful appeal and subsequent re trial. Men's lives are destroyed for ever, even when subsequently, they are found innocent. Because no one is accountable for their wrongful imprisonment, it's doubtful compensation would ever be received.

Most child sex offenders had the option of attending one of two sex offender programs to address their offending. One of these was a special program run by prison psychologists within the prison. Inmates convicted of child sex offences undertook this program on a voluntary basis. It comprised inmates and a psychologist sitting in a room talking about their offences. They discussed how their offending made them feel, what effects it had on their victim and the best ways to deal with potential future offending. There was a need for complete honesty among those attending the group, since those who were deemed to be lying, were harassed and chastised by the rest of the group. Sometimes, angry exchanges and threats were passed between these inmates, controlled by the psychologist in attendance. At the end of each session (2 hours), what had been done and said remained in the room.

When the course was conceived it had some weird requirements. The first was that the inmate use a tape recorder in his cell, to record himself while he masturbated. As he did so, he was required to fanaticize about a sexual experience. This fantasy would be orated onto the tape recorder as the inmate masturbated. It would be taken to the group at the next session. The second requirement was that the inmate be taken to a room where a plethysmograph (a device comprising an expandable ring, connected to apparatus which measures expansion and contraction of the penis) would be attached to the mans penis by a medical officer. A series of slides of naked girls and boys was shown to him, accompanied by an audio tape of a man describing a sexual fantasy with a child. The Plethysmagraph would measure the inmate's sexual reaction. This was intended to evaluate the mans sexual inclinations towards children. In the end, neither requirement was implemented due to

logistical reasons. None of the men would masturbate in their cells, in front of a cell mate.

This course ran for a period of 16 weeks with several sessions per week. Testimony of many inmates involved in the course seems to show it was effective in either lowering or preventing any chance of repeat offending.

These men became known in the wing as "sexos' " There could be no mistake as to where they were going, when the loudspeaker called out "sex group ", "Sexos ' to the front " or the name of the psychologist who ran the group: i.e. "John Smithy group to the front ". When the call came, one would see a procession of men making for the school room; heads down and walking quickly. Almost inevitably, they were the camp Christians. Some didn't care at all about the name given to their group or the fact that all other inmates knew they were sex offenders on the way to it.

The second form of "Treatment?" was a program run in a purpose built prison near Christchurch. Called "Kia Marama" it was run along the lines of the main prison course, but for a few changes. The "weird requirements " were mandatory. The fantasy and masturbation stage was done in special room) supervised by a psychologist and followed up by the Penile Plethysmagraph test, also supervised.

Every inmate in that wing, Kia Marama, had to be a self admitted sex offender. All inmates went through a vigorous, some say brutal group counselling program. This program required all sex offenders to bare their souls, admitting their crimes and recognizing the victims. No denial of any crime was tolerated by either counsellor, or the other inmates in the group. The group of men who had committed sexual crimes against children sat in a circle, listening intently as the other members of the group recounted their offences in graphic detail. If any inmate denied the allegations made against him, the other members of the group would insult and degrade him, and he would be thrown off the sex offenders program and returned to a main prison wing. The process was designed to destroy a mans pattern of sexual behaviour, and then replace it with a modified behaviour. Often, the inmate was left emotionally void and confused. Men could be seen wandering Kia Marama in a vacant mental state. Through individual psychotherapy and other induced trauma, Some Kia Marama inmates were successfully relieved, temporarily, of their past behaviours, but there appeared insufficient time to make the change permanent. Kia Maramas' success rate is debated, its' failure rate is kept secreted in the files of that unit. If the "victim" had been over 16 years, the inmate was not necessarily eligible for "treatment ".

Inmates who had been to that unit told me, "You can tell who's going to reoffend.. They already know who they are going to molest when they get out, or go on home leave. "This trend seemed to go

on after release, with some of the men in a city "sex offenders" program offending once out of prison, then telling the group about it. Some men were arrested from that group after complaints of sexual assault were laid against them. One man who attended that group told me "some of the guys there told us how they had sex with children while on home leaves from Kia Marama. Interestingly, the same staff from the inside prison unit ran those sexo courses on the outside! Obvious failure one would think since inside treatment was clearly not enough. You have to wonder how many millions were wasted on this setup. Regarding the Plethysmagraph, it seems homo and sick having someone plying with your dick and watching you get a stiffy! Weird and pervy I think.

## **VIOLENCE :**

All prison wings experience violence from time to time. It can be anything from a punch in the face to an inmate being slashed, beaten, kicked and stabbed to within an inch of his life. The frequency of such incidents of violence also varies greatly from wing to wing.

Violent attacks occur for a variety of reasons. Hatred for a particular inmate because of pre prison transgressions against another inmate or his family or friends. Attempting to obtain "form" by beating up another inmate to show how tough an inmate was, when robbing another inmate. Revenge against an inmate who has "narked " on another. Forcing inmates who owe money for drugs etc, to pay up. Attacking a child molester for whatever reason or simply attacking an inmate who has annoyed another are all reasons for using violence in prison.

On one occasion an inmate was attacked with a hobby knife. He'd drummed his fingers on a table, annoying another inmate and refused to stop after being threatened by that inmate that if he didn't, he would be attacked.

Almost anything in prison can be used as a weapon, to great effect. A dumbbell from the weight training area could be held in the hand whilst striking someone. It added weight to a punch, enhancing its effects. Cutlery from the dining room could be smuggled out and made into weapons. A knife could be broken in half and sharpened on a concrete wall or floor. Held in the hand protruding between the two middle fingers, the weapon would be thrust forward piercing the victim.

Batteries from an appliance. snooker balls, rocks smuggled in by someone on a work party or dirt from a pot plant could be placed into a sock and the sock swung, striking an inmate. The result of the impact would be severe injury. Hobby knives were permitted in the prison. along with screwdrivers, chisels and other hobby tools. Any of these could be used as a weapon but generally were not. In cases of spontaneous attack whatever was in the hands of the attacker at the time was used. Planned attacks usually involved weapons.

Most attacks tended to come from behind the inmate being attacked. Clearly this was done to obtain the advantage and prevent any instant retaliation. In the huts unit I was in. several such attacks occurred. An inmate was weight training at the rear of the unit when another inmate approached him from behinds striking him on the head with a dumbbell. The inmate who was attacked fell to the ground unconscious. He was later taken to the medical wing on a stretcher still unconscious. His attacker was not found. An older inmate who was placed in a cell with others was attacked and stabbed in the face by a much younger inmate looking to

impress his peers. The attacked inmate was a convicted sex offender. He retaliated, injuring his attacker. One particular sex offender was repeatedly targeted by many inmates, who struck him with anything they could find (See child molesters). Eventually, he retaliated with violence.

One night after tea, three men attacked an older inmate. They waited until it was dark and he was sitting alone in his cell with his back to the door. One kept watch and the others flicked off his light as they rushed in. He was surprised and as he turned, the men began punching and kicking him. There was no chance for retaliation. When the attack was over, the inmate went to the office and informed the guards who had struck him. Although he was called a nark" for a while, he was never attacked again. There were several ways of surprising inmates. Since the attacks were usually at night, the light was turned off immediately prior to the attack. A smoke bomb made from a Ping-Pong ball and toilet deodorizing pellets was sometimes ignited and thrown into the cell. This would cause confusion and the inmate would be attacked, not knowing who or where his attackers were. All attacks were instant and there was no prior warning. Most attacks outside the cells occurred during working hours, behind the buildings or in the showers, with the odd one in the dining room. Sometimes an inmate would get annoyed by something his cell mate had said or done and attack him. This could usually be heard throughout the wing. Guards would quickly move to the cell by which time the fight was over. Often when questioned, the inmates would deny there had been a fight. Violence occurred more in some wings than in others. There tended to be less in an open wing or huts unit, probably because each inmate has his own 'house ' and is able to distance himself from others much easier.

There appeared to be a strong link between violence and drugs, whether it was an inmate who was stoned on an aggression enhancing substance such as Helcium, or one who owed money to another for drugs and couldn 't pay, causing him to be beaten. Drugs were a constant factor. Although most inmates seemed relaxed and caused little or no trouble when drugs were used, there was always one or two who lost control and struck out at someone. Generally, in the wings I was in, violence did not occur often. One or two fights or attacks per week was normal. Inmates from other wings said one or more fights or attacks per day was usual. This made them uncomfortable causing the odd one to have himself transferred to the protection wing.

It's difficult to make any comparison between violence in prison and that which occurs in society. On the outside, citizens are bombarded with media reports of murders, attacks, rapes and other types of violence. In prison, when a fight or attack occurred, it was watched as though entertainment then quickly forgotten. No one made a

fuss about it because violence was a fact of life in prison. The percentage of prison violence seems higher than that on the outside because inmates live in close proximity to each other and are all aware of any violence.

There was a notable effect on inmates of the constant fear of violence. It was clearly visible to the observer that almost all inmates were perpetually watchful for any sign of an impending attack. Many glanced nervously around, as they went about their business. Others stayed out of view, choosing the relative safety of their cells over the tense and intimidating feeling associated with mingling in the prison population. This effect was carried into the visiting room. The inmates could be seen looking cautiously around the room. Visitors have been heard commenting with regard to this habit.

There was a feeling of tension in all wings. An inmate could sense when trouble was about to erupt. The tension would be terrible and a feeling of impending doom was experienced. No one would speak in the dining room and inmates wondered who was 'going over'. There was usually some idea when an inmate was going to be given a "hiding" because many would know who it was, except the inmate who was going to be attacked. No one would tell him for fear of being attacked himself. Since many didn't know who it was, they wondered if it was going to be them... hence the tension.

In the huts unit, an impending night time attack became imminent when many inmates began standing at the door of their cells. They wanted to see the action. Guards were alerted to the possibility of trouble by this and took steps to keep the peace. In this unit, most attacks occurred at night, or about 9.25 PM, just before lock up. This was the time of the most confusion as some inmates made their way to the Zip to get hot water for coffee, while others ran back to their cells.

Intimidation is its own form of violence. Some inmates were threatened with attack or death if they did or said anything against another inmate, or did not give someone what he wanted. The trauma from that experience weighed heavily on some inmates, causing them to withdraw completely from the prison population. Few threats were ever carried out but their existence added to the tension of the prison. That tension is ever present and some inmates endure it for many years. It's hard to believe anyone can get out of prison after years of that tension and live a normal life. Sooner or later, something snaps.

## **ESCAPES :**

In any prison there are escapes. Some require tenuous planning while others occur as the opportunity arises. In 1994 the Department of Justice revealed in a national newspaper, that more than 130 inmates had either escaped or had attempted to escape in the preceding year. It was also stated if an inmate wanted to escape, he would. In the hut unit I was in, there were at least 5 escapes and several attempts in the period from March 1993 to October 1995. One inmate, concerned at threats made to him after he was unable to repay money owed for drugs, hid at the rear of the prison. Although a search was mounted and the inmate was at all times within the confines of the prison unit, he was not discovered. Police were called and a search was mounted in the community.

At approximately midnight the same evening the inmate appeared at the guard room cold and hungry. He was escorted to the Pound where he was kept until being shipped back to the main prison wing. The inmate was charged in an outside court with escaping from lawful custody. Conviction for this offence usually added three or more months to his sentence. Other escapes included two men who were found near Ruapuna raceway. These men had not actually intended to escape and were not in the act of doing so but were charged anyway. Another inmate escaped so cleanly he left no trail and the guards didn't realise he was gone for several hours. The inmate was well known for his attire. He told guards his need to wear all white clothing was part of his religion. When the police searched for the inmate at airports, they were said to have arrested a man who was wearing only white attire. This man was not the escaped inmate. No one ever heard from the escapee again although rumours of his escape to another country abounded. Inmates escaped from other wings. One man was taken out through the back gate of the main prison in a large rubbish bin by the inmate who took the rubbish out to the skip. Due to the vigilance of a prison guard, the escaping inmate was quickly recaptured. In another escape, several inmates made their escape through a hole in the ceiling of the prison wing. They were all apprehended. There is no way to keep a man imprisoned if he is not resigned to imprisonment.

There have been successful escapes from maximum security prisons in this country, but most inmates simply resign themselves to the fact they must remain in prison.

One inmate who escaped from a huts unit was able to shed some light on the reasons for escape. The inmate had an old man on the outside who had always treated him well for the many years he had known him. The inmate had come to regard the old man as his grandfather and they had become very close. When the old man

died.

the inmate was shattered. Although he was nearing the end of his sentence and had been allowed to attend the old mans ' funeral. Over the following two or three weeks the inmate became increasingly agitated. He did not express any intention to escape from the prison and when it happened, the guards were taken completely by surprise. The inmate, they thought, was one of the most unlikely to consider that form of action.

He worked in the prison's poultry farm. One of his duties was to go down to the farm in the evening and complete certain work related duties. Because the inmate was not considered an escape risk he was permitted to go to work unescorted. At around 7.00pm on the evening of his escape he went off to work as usual. Beneath his prison issue clothing he had secreted a set of civilian clothing. He performed all work duties then removed his prison attire leaving him clad in jeans and a tee shirt. When all was clear, he made the break for freedom. No one saw him go and it was a surprise for all in the wing to hear he had escaped. It took the inmate nearly two hours to walk into town where he found a place to hide out. For days, rumours spread through the wing that the inmate had gone to Ashburton. These were only rumours. The inmate later said he was surprised to hear reports of his sighting there when he was elsewhere all the time. Police searched the homes of people he knew. Even if he'd been there the police weren't told. Some of the time he'd felt excited at the thought of being hunted. The rest of the time he didn't think about it at all. He'd said it seemed unimportant.

While the inmate was on the run, other inmates talked about him. They hoped he would remain at large long enough to appear on "Crime watch", a television program. However that didn't happen. The inmate was recaptured only days before the show went to air. Escapers have many reasons for doing so. Some have serious family problems. An inmates wife or partner may have left him or be in the process of doing so and he may feel that he can do nothing while locked up. Although there is a telephone available, he may prefer to be face to face with his partner.

Fear of violence from other inmates when a bill is not paid or he runs into someone on the inside who he dumped on, on the outside, the fear of confined spaces or even prison itself could trigger the need to escape. As earlier related in this section, the death of a loved family member and the desperate need to be with family at a devastating time could persuade an inmate to escape.

In an incident at a Christchurch Prison, an 18 year old inmate was so terrified of prison and being attacked by other inmates he hid himself in the exercise yards. When he was finally found and returned to the wing, several guards entered his cell. For some time the guards chastised the young man, leaving him extremely

disturbed. That night, the young man took his own life to escape what he probably saw as a living hell. Suicide seemed a sure way to escape prison after all else had failed. However, if an inmate attempted to commit suicide and failed, he could be charged with "attempting to escape from lawful custody". This occurred in 1992, when a man was charged with this offence.

Escapes from custody are often not suspected although sometimes the inmate planning his escape will make it obvious. An inmate who was planning such an act went to the extremes of giving away some of his property and prison issue clothing and telling other inmates he was intending to "do a runner". Guards quickly became aware of the situation when inmates were seen leaving the mans ' cell with his property. Since the last escape had been only weeks before, the guards were very vigilant. The inmate was sent back to the main wing.

Inmates who appeared nervous were watched quite closely as were those with intense relationship or family problems at home. If it was suspected by the guards that a particular inmate was going to make an escape bid, the inmate was returned to the main wing. Although escape was possible from there, it was considered far less likely than from an open wing.

## **LEAVES AND PAROLES :**

Special leaves, or paroles as they are called, may be requested by an inmate to visit a sick family member, attend the birth of a child or attend the funeral of parents or siblings at any time during a sentence. That is not to say leaves will be granted. They are after all, a privilege, not a right. Generally speaking, special leaves are not permitted unless the inmate is either in the last twelve months of the two thirds of his sentence, or has completed one third of it; whichever is appropriate for the particular inmate, or there is a family emergency i.e. a death.

There are several kinds of leave available to the inmate. These include compassionate leaves, home leaves, work parole or day parole for such things as applying for a job. Special leaves may be granted to attend a meeting at a proposed treatment centre for drug and alcohol rehabilitation or some other meeting which is held outside the prison.

Eligibility for any of the leaves is not clear cut. There were situations in which some inmates were granted special leaves, although they did not fit any of the criteria, and there were situations in which inmates clearly met the criteria, only to have their application for leave declined. In 1995, because of the public interest in sex offences, it was almost impossible for inmates sentenced for crimes of that nature to have any kind of leaves. Although the public may have welcomed this, they were probably unaware there were murderers on home leaves out in the community. It appeared that murder was considered less of a crime than any form of sex offence, no matter how minor. What crime you'd committed seemed to be the deciding factor on whether or not a leave was granted.

In general, all inmates were eligible to apply for a home leave in the last twelve months of their two thirds (of sentence) date. If the inmate was serving less than one year, he may not qualify for a home leave. If he was serving longer than a year but less than two, and was not convicted of a sexual offence or one which was considered to be seriously violent, he could apply for home leaves at one third of his sentence. He could also apply for parole at that time. Again, there was no guarantee it would be granted but it often was. Inmates serving longer than two years for offences within the above criteria could only apply for home leave in the last 12 months of their two thirds of sentence date. If for any reason they wished to apply earlier, it could be done at their parole hearing at one third of their sentence. All inmates had to be a 1 'Minimum "security classification to be eligible to apply for a home leave.

Home leaves were granted for a period of 72 hours. During this time, an inmate would be required to observe a number of

conditions relating to his temporary release.

These conditions were:

- 1 Do only what your temporary release allows you to.
- 2 Behave well and commit no offence against the law.
- 3 Drink no alcohol, nor enter licensed premises.
- 4 Do not enter a T.A.B or racecourse
- 5 Do not drive any motor vehicle.
- 6 Do not associate with drug users or take any drugs.
- 7 Remain in the company of your sponsor at all times
- 8 Reside at the address to which you have been paroled.
- 9 Remain in the city or town to which you are paroled.
- 10. Return to the prison by a specified time and date.
- 11. Produce your 'license' for parole if a police officer, probation officer or prison officer asks you to.

These conditions were printed on a form, or 'license', called "Authority for temporary release from custody " An inmate on any kind of temporary release, was required to keep the license on his person at all times.

The procedure for application for a home leave was complicated. First, a form had to be completed by the inmate wanting a leave, requesting an interview with the manager of his unit or wing and stating the reasons for the interview as being "request for home leave ". Before the interview, the unit manager would discuss the application at the weekly unit meeting. If the guards agreed, the unit manager would allow an interview with the inmate. He would have the file of the inmate on his desk when he arrived. At that time, the inmate was informed as to whether or not he was eligible to apply for a home leave. If he was not, he would be told why then told to re-apply once he had reached the required criteria. If he did qualify for his home leave, the inmate was given an "Application for temporary release from custody " form and told to fill it in then return it to the guard room.

Before the form could be filled in, the inmate had to find someone to act as a sponsor. The job of a sponsor was to pick the inmate up from the prison at a specified time, have the inmate live at his/her home for the entire parole period, 72 hours, and remain in the company of the inmate at all times. He/she would then deliver the inmate back to the prison by a specified time. It was not the responsibility of the sponsor to keep the inmate from offending against the law. All conditions related to the inmate and all responsibility for abiding by the rules and conditions set was that of the inmate.

When the inmate had secured a sponsor, the application for temporary release form was filled out. It contained the name,

address and telephone number of the prospective sponsor, and their relation to the inmate. When the form was handed in, the Probation Service was notified of the request, and the details of the sponsor. A probation officer visited the home of the sponsor for an interview, to ensure their suitability. Once suitability had been determined, details were sent back to the prison.

The application was processed in the main prison office. It went through various channels including the offices of the General and Custody managers. All parties had to agree before the final permission was given by the unit manager. Once the papers were returned from the office to the inmate's wing, he was called to the unit manager's office to sign them. The whole process took anything from one week to several months, depending on the inmate concerned and the amount of paroles being processed at the same time.

The home leave itself was often a difficult experience for many inmates, some of whom had been locked up for many years. Many inmates felt very insecure as they walked out the back gate of the prison, for the first time in ages. For others there was a feeling of excitement and exhilaration as they rode away from the prison in their sponsors vehicle. However, the most reported state was paranoia. Many were afraid of being recognized by someone who had put them in prison, especially those who's trial had been covered by various news media. For this reason, many inmates on home leave remained at home and out of sight for the duration of their first home leave. Subsequent home leaves would be less disturbing.

Whilst on leave, an inmate was permitted to do anything other than those things listed on his parole license. He could go to town, a movie, public swimming pool, visit, go to motor racing events, the museum, on public transport in fact almost anywhere as long as he remained with his sponsor. It would be a good time for family if the inmate had one. A time to catch up on all that had happened in the time he was away from them and a time to try and rectify any problems which had developed.

The 72 hours of a home leave passed quickly. It became harder for inmates to return to prison as the time to go back loomed nearer and nearer. The return ride was nerve wracking for the inmate, but the sight of the prison let him know he was back. As the inmate walked into the prison, he knew it would be two months until he could apply for another home leave. Many who returned from home leaves were irritable for several days or weeks after their return. Special leaves were applied for in the same manner as home leaves. Criteria was the same but there was one difference. An inmate could apply under very special circumstances when he did not fulfill the criteria, for an escorted special leave. This would be considered in the instance of an inmate needing to attend the

funeral of his parents or siblings or visit a seriously injured or dying family member in hospital. If the inmate was not considered a risk, did not qualify for home leaves because of the time constraints but was a minimum classification inmate, he could be granted permission to attend. He would be escorted by at least one guard and would have to meet the cost of this himself. If the funeral or hospital was in another town, the inmate had to pay travel costs for both himself and the guards. If the temporary release required his staying away from the prison overnight, he would be required to meet the accommodation costs of the guards as well. Generally, the inmate would be accommodated in the nearest prison overnight then uplifted by the guards the following morning. The cost of each guard was \$80 per day, per guard. Many couldn't afford this, so women gave birth without their husbands at their side, funerals went unattended and old mothers died without seeing their sons again.

In an emergency, leaves could be granted in a matter of hours. If a guard volunteered to take an inmate out of the prison to visit his wife who was in hospital giving birth, it was organized quickly and at no cost to the inmate. The cost was incurred only when the wages of the guard had to be paid, if his attendance of the inmate was not voluntary and in his own time. There were incidences when guards gave their time in this way out of compassion for an inmate. It was above and beyond their responsibilities as a prison guard, and was well appreciated by both inmate and family.

Parole from prison carries a different procedure. It can be very complicated and requires much preparation by the inmate seeking release. The criteria is similar in several ways to that which is required for home leaves and the setting of a parole eligibility date depends on that criteria.

For inmates whose offences included the use of 'serious violence' or were of sexual violation, and the prison term was more than two years, parole was considered on completion of two thirds of the sentence. For those not sentenced for sexual or serious violent offences<sup>1</sup> whose sentence exceeded two years, parole eligibility was on completion of one third of the sentence. Parole on life sentences was considered after ten years and those on "Preventive Detention" would have to wait a minimum of twelve years to be considered for parole at the discretion of the National parole board. All sentences of more than 7 years required the inmate to appear before the National parole board in Auckland. All expenses were paid by the Department of Corrections. All lesser sentences required appearance before the District Prisons' Board, held at the inmates prison.

Sentences of twelve months or less carried "automatic half". That is, the inmate would be released on completion of only one half of

his sentence. There was no parole. Before a parole hearing the following things are needed by the inmate.

- 1 An acceptable place to live.
- 2 Details of courses or programs to attend once released.
- 3 Prospective employment details.
- 4 .A good wing report.
- 5 Positive probation report
- 6 Be prepared to admit the offence and show remorse.
- 7 Positive reports from any counsellor, course or treatment for the offence
- 8 Must meet all criteria for parole.
- 9 .Any submission by the inmate. This had to be handed to the unit manager at least two weeks prior to the parole board sitting. It was often helpful to have a friend, family member or prospective employer to speak on the inmates behalf.

Inmates attending the District Prisons' Board were expected to shower and dress in their best prison attire. They were escorted to the room in which the sitting was held, until their name was called, then they were led into the room by a guard. The parole board consisted of a judge, a member of the community, probation staff and employees of the prison. i.e. Program manager, unit manager. The inmate was invited to be seated, facing the board. He would then be asked if he wished to comment. If so, he was listened to by the members of the board, and then questioned by them. If not, the board would immediately question him. Questions related to the offenders remorse for what he had done, his employment prospects, family, accommodation, courses attended in prison by the inmate to address his offending, what he intended to do once he was released, revenge against complainants, reoffending and most important of all, why they should release him. If the inmate had an attitude problem with the board, they simply denied his application for parole, until he was next eligible to apply For those inmates who were successful in their application for release, it was not as easy as simply getting out of prison and going home. There were conditions attached to release on parole. All parolees are required to visit a probation officer once a week for a time determined by the board, unless released on 'automatic half'. The board may also attach as a condition, any of the following.

- 1 The inmate attend drug and alcohol rehabilitation.
- 2 Attend STOP program if the offence was of a sexual nature involving children.
- 3 Attend any counselling as directed by the probation officer.
- 4 Live where directed by probation
- 5 Work where directed by probation.

- 6 Ordered to have no contact with individuals.
- 7 Attend psychiatric or psychological professionals as ordered.
- 8 Attend a live-in rehabilitation program of any kind for a specified time.

## **PRISON OVERVIEW :**

For whatever reason the inmate is in prison, the effects of imprisonment are the same everyone. Long periods of separation from their families and unbelievable boredom take a heavy toll. There have been many times when an inmate has done nothing but sit in a small cell for hours at a time, just staring at the walls. Some make it look like they don 't care at all, but anyone who has been imprisoned knows what it 's like. There are times in the dead of night when an inmate lies on his bunk and his mind wanders back to times when things weren 't so grim. Suddenly, a flush of desperation creeps through him. Again and again he fights the desire to cry. Again and again he fights away the panic telling himself, "There's nothing I can do". He feels trapped and suffocated in his small musty cell and although often he has a cellmate, he feels terribly alone. His cellmate probably feels the same way and long periods of silence prevail. Both inmates miss not being able to get to the family they so desperately yearn for, solitude. silence and desperation are all regular parts of an inmates life behind bars.

To try and escape their feelings of loss, many inmates turn to drugs. They may never have taken them before but find solace in not having to face loneliness and depression, at least for a while. when things are going badly at home, inmates can do nothing to help. They feel powerless and can lose what self esteem they did have as the direct result of their uselessness. Many inmates can be heard on the telephone, trying to rectify a problem with their family. Sooner or later they realize there is nothing they can do and can suffer badly from anxiety.

Inmates who constantly appear un-bothered by events surrounding them are often hiding their true state of mind. It helps to cope with all the crap going on around them. An inmate must always appear to be in control, he can 't afford to look weak or vulnerable. Over a period of years this 'false front ' can become permanent. Many family members of an inmate describe their ex inmate loved one as a complete stranger '. It 's not that the inmate has changed, but that he has developed self protective mechanisms whilst in prison. He may love or hate someone immensely or feel angry, happy or sad and will not show it. Inside he still feels the same way about things. He has the same beliefs, likes, dislikes and abilities, it 's Just that he now keeps them to himself. It 's nothing more than behavior learned for survival in the prison system.

There are several other things which can affect an inmates self esteem. On the outside he will be able to have free access to almost anything he needs, on the inside though all things are limited. Some inmates can be seen wandering around a prison wing picking up cigarette butts which would later be split open and the tobacco re-rolled into cigarettes. Others who pick up the butts do not allow

themselves to be seen doing so. They will look around to make sure no-one is watching before swooping on a butt. Usually they are seen but no-one really cares. Cigarette butts are also kept by inmates so that when they run out of tobacco they can re-roll their butts. It 's not unusual to see jars of cigarette butts in some cells. Near the end of the week when most inmates have run out of tobacco, they go on the hunt ' for butts. Inmates who are known to keep butts in their cells are visited by those seeking them. Many will ask "Got any butts?"and most will be told "Sorry mate, I've run out myself". Running out of cigarettes is a big deal in prison. An inmate can 't just run down to the corner store and buy a packet. It 's not unusual for half the wing to be looking for tobacco or butts.

For a man who has never had to smoke or re-roll cigarette butts off the ground containing God knows what bacteria or diseases, or borrow, bludge or steal them from other inmates, it can be a degrading experience. It can also turn into a life long habit when the sense of shame is lost. Some inmates who don 't smoke will buy in tobacco. This may be used to buy the friendship of other inmates or pay others not to beat them up.

Most people were brought up not to eat from other peoples plates. Since food is in short supply in many wings some inmates will take food from the plates of others. It can be very hard for some to do this because they have never had to do so before. Pride will prevent many eating off another inmates plate, until they get hungry enough. Right from remand prison this is common practice. If an inmate has pride, he will probably go hungry. It is common to see inmates being handed food by others at their table. Asking for it is probably the hardest thing a man could do. After a while though, when an inmate becomes hungry enough, asking becomes easy. An inmate would wait until others have finished eating and ask, "Are you going to eat that?" "No, go for it" is usually the answer. Some inmates take food from their meal back to their cells to eat later, even though this is not usually permitted.

Some inmates suffer badly from paranoia. They will not leave their cells because of some perceived threat by other inmates. This is most common among sex offenders who are often older men. Most of them have suffered indignities and abuse at the hands of their accusers and families and the fear generated from this stays with them right through their time in prison. Other inmates suffer from paranoia for different reasons. Some may owe money for a debt they could never repay. Others feel out of place in prison if they have no friends and nothing to offer to solicit them.

Whatever the reasons for their paranoia, most inmates prefer their own company. They feel less at risk of beatings or abuse if they stay out of the way. Unfortunately there are times when they must leave the comfort and relative safety of their cell. The walk to the dining room, eating in the dining room where there is terrible

tension and the inmate thinks everyone is looking at, or talking about him. Showering, standing at work parade or walking across the wing to get medication are also some of those times. Some inmates have been left breathless by their anxiety during such exposure. Sometimes this anxiety and paranoia was in existence before the inmate was even accused of a crime; for others it was caused by their frightening experiences within the justice system. Some inmates however, simply hate other people being near them and elect to remain on their own.

Work ethics come to the fore in prison when inmates get the chance to work. Although some want to get out into the open air, or at least out of their cells, many decide that working for three or four dollars per week is an insult. Those who do not work are penalized by not being transferred to open units from main prison wings. Those who do work, simply get used to the idea of being able to get out for a little while. Inmates who have led productive working lives will find themselves questioning their work ethic. The longer the sentence, the less chance there exists of them ever wanting to work on the outside. This could be either that they become used to doing nothing and stagnate, or they lose their desire to do anything constructive for the society which imprisoned them. Others are simply anti-social and would like nothing more than to sit around on the dole.

All of these facets of prison life are prevalent in all wings. After prolonged exposure to them it would become the norm for inmates. Because they are all negative facets of everyday life it stands to reason that the mechanisms adopted by individual inmates will follow them out of prison, accompanied by the learned negative behaviour which caused them. It 's often said that criminals reoffend because they get such an easy time in prison. Perhaps it should be said that criminals learn more of that type of behaviour on the inside and cannot help but reoffend, once released.

The inmates level of self esteem crashes almost immediately after he is arrested. Each time he is made to stand naked in front of other inmates or guards while being searched, made to eat at a certain time, or talk on the phone with no privacy, when he takes food from the plate of another inmate to satisfy his hunger, loses his family, has his property stolen, or realizes he has lost his freedom. When he suffers depression alone at night in his cell, cannot see his loved ones when he needs them most or suffers humiliation and abuse, he loses more of himself as a man.

Society would say "Serves him right, he shouldn't have committed the crime" and indeed he shouldn 't have. But he did. Most inmates admit their crimes and know they are being punished for them but this doesn 't stop the anger they feel. There is really nowhere in prison to vent this anger except elderly child molesters and weaker inmates. It grows and festers until he is finally released into the

community and finds he no longer belongs there. The only way to escape this feeling of isolation is to get back to prison. It may be hard to live in prison but it 's seen by many as preferable to trying to live in a society they don 't feel part of. Probably for this reason, ex inmates tend to stick together on the outside. Because they have lived in close proximity to each other while in prison, ex inmates feel a certain kinship with each other. Each knows what the others suffered in prison. They know who lost their family, their possessions, who was beat up by inmates attempting to gain form and they all know the anger, hatred and depression which goes along with being imprisoned. Unfortunately, because they continue their lives as prisoners who have been placed into a world they no longer belong in, they often remain in prison , at least in their own mind. Many will suffer anxiety caused by their perceived threat of recognition and retribution by members of the public. This threat is perceived in the same way as a man wearing a pink tutu and walking among a group of angry he-men would perceive it. Other ex prisoners tend to return to the same groups they were part of when they committed their crimes. Sooner or later, they will probably find themselves in the same situation which caused their first offence. Reoffending is likely to occur.

The part of an inmates sentence which does the most damage is the initial incarceration. The feeling of rejection by society is enormous and it is in this period of adjustment that most suicides occur. The length of an inmates sentence does not have much bearing on the level of personal loss he perceives because the loss and rejection is instant and complete. A young man who receives six months in prison for driving offences will have a similar perception of loss to an inmate who receives five years. Both will lose their families, jobs, property and any sense of normality. The intensity of these feelings will be much greater though for an inmate who is in prison for the first time. For him it will seem as though the arse has dropped out of his world. He will simply have to get used to a new one, whether or not he wants to. If that makes him angry, too bad. If it makes him commit suicide, that 's too bad as well. As a prisoner he must come to terms with the fact he feels he is nothing and has no value to society from that point on.

Prison seems to destroy the very fabric of a man. He has made a mistake and violated another human being in some way. Whether or not he deserves total destruction to be wrought on his life and the lives of his family, is relative only to the perception of justice of those he offended against. To send a man to prison destroys him forever, no matter how minor his crime. It removes the one factor which may alter his offending ways;the deterrent of prison. Once he has 'done time ' and realizes a man can get used to any hardship, the probability of being sent to prison is then meaningless. Any transformation which occurs in any inmate is almost invariably

negative, since the only widespread emotions felt by inmates are anger and fear. Living constantly with these emotions must have an effect on a man, especially after long and constant exposure to them. If rehabilitation of the offender is the assumed reason for sending him to prison in the first place, it must be wondered what is actually achieved by subjecting him to constant fear and humiliation. This may well be considered by some members of the public as fitting punishment for someone who has violated the law, but it provokes anger and bitterness among inmates and many resist any form of rehabilitation, once imprisoned. The thoughts in the mind of an embittered inmate are not remorse for his offence, the well-being of his victim or making any attempt to rehabilitate himself. Instead it 's that the next time he screws up he will be returned to prison. He knows this is a very real consequence, since prison appears to be favoured by most judges as a suitable way to keep offenders off the street. This is borne out in the 1995 figures which show that 134 people in 100,000 are in prison at any one time in New Zealand giving it the highest prison population percentile in the Western world. Little wonder that prison overcrowding was at a critical level by 1992. Although most inmates will say "I'm never coming back", 60% do return to prison. A new school of thought in the United States of America, according to a television documentary in 1996, is that the justice system must "toughen up" on all offenders. Chain gangs have been re-introduced into some states, with uncertain results. Although the Wardens of most prisons in the U.S.A believe these work, uncertainty over the results stems from the fact that crime is reducing across their country, with or without chain gangs. Many men on these gangs have stated they are treated like animals, often made to work in the most dreadful of conditions. When the day is over, the inmates return to be locked up in dormitories containing several hundred inmates. There is no privacy so the inmates are forced to live with the situation. The one thing they all agreed with was their rising anger. Also in the U.S.A the "3 strikes and you're out law has been introduced. This effectively means that a third time offender who has stolen something as small as a loaf of bread, will receive 25 years to life in prison. This sentence is what a criminal would expect if he had murdered someone. Again, when inmates at various prisons were spoken to about the effect the law would have on them reoffending most said they would kill to avoid life in prison. They believed it wouldn't matter because they would receive a life sentence if they were on their third time anyway. Anger was everywhere in the prisons shown in the documentary. The things which could prevent offenders from returning to prison were the gaining of self respect.. empathy for their victims and a genuine desire to rehabilitate themselves. Sadly, these things do not exist in

any prison. New Zealand prisons are considered to be too lenient. Many people refer to them as a "Holiday camp"

## **ANECDOTES :**

Life in prison often runs from one extreme to the other. There are many small incidents which run together to make up the full picture. A series of anecdotes is the best way of achieving this. The following anecdotes are in no particular order, not necessarily from the lighter side of prison and are all true accounts of events.

Every now and again official meetings were held at the prison. Lunch was catered by the prison kitchen and an inmate was responsible for its being served to those attending the meeting. Upon completion of the meal, it was customary for the inmate to help himself to the leftover food. The guards got the rest. One particular day, one of the guards was hungrier than usual. He knew there was going to be food left over and wanted to be in on a free meal. The officer in charge was keen to eat and poked his head out of his office each time the inmate who was serving passed, grinning as he asked him, "Are they gone yet?" Periodically other guards poked their heads around the corner, also to check if the diners had gone. Finally the diners left. In an instant guards descended on the kitchen like a plague of flies, all making their way to the food. Within seconds, the leftover food had been rushed to the guards dining room and was being hastily consumed. Luckily the serving inmate had taken his the moment dining was over.

An inmate was showering. He reached up onto the top of the cabinet to get a pack of shampoo. As he fumbled, with his eyes closed, his hand fell on a substance which was not what he was looking for. It took only moments to realize that someone had passed a bowel motion in the shower and had attempted to secret it on top of the shower unit. The inmate who made the discovery was less than impressed.

A guard asked one of the arty inmates to draw up and colour the emblem of his favourite English football club. The job was completed to a high standard after several hours. To show his appreciation, that guard and another was on duty at lockup went into the arty inmates cell. guard for whom the inmate had completed the work complimented the inmate on his work then ordered him to strip for a search. The other guard was less than impressed and said "He's got a funny way of showing his appreciation hasn't he" The inmate said "Yeah. .1 wonder what you'd get if you did a really big favour for him".

It was a hot summer evening. Everyone in the wing was sweating and uncomfortable. Some bright spark decided it was time for a water fight so the cleaning buckets were brought out, filled with

cold water then the chilly contents thrown at fleeing inmates. Systematically all inmates were dragged from their huts, some kicking and screaming, and doused. Many took it in the fun in which it was intended. Finally after two hours or so there was only one inmate left dry. No one wanted to enter his cell and try and remove him for dousing so the inmates waited. Finally Medical parade was called and the inmate emerged from his hut. A man was selected to throw water over him while all the other inmates had either gathered in one corner of the compound or stood at their doors waiting to see what would happen. The man with the bucket of water then approached the inmate, searching nervously for a reaction in his face. There was none. The inmate on the way to Medical Parade simply looked him in the eye and said, "Go for it, if it turns you on." He was doused, then continued casually on his way. Calls of "What a let down" could be heard from the other inmates.

One of the inmates who thought of himself as 'tough ' decided to harass a man, whom he thought was a child molester, so he could gain 'form ' among his peers. Late one evening he rushed into the hut of the inmate he had selected to harass and began punching him about the head and face. The assaultee was taken completely by surprise and was stunned . He was pinned in the corner of his hut unable to return any self defensive blows. A large tuft of his hair was torn out. Suddenly he saw an opening. With all his might he lunged forward and grabbed the attacker by the testicles. Squeezing as hard as he could, the inmate shouted abuse at the attacker and attempted to head-butt him until the pain of crushed testicles forced his attacker into submission. As soon as he was released, the injured attacker fled in agony pursued by the man he had thought of as weak, who had by then picked up a knife. Any further comments between the two were conveyed at a respectable distance.

While carrying a cup of coffee back to his hut one evening, one inmate was pushed and abused by another who disliked him. The intention was that the hot coffee should be spilled on the man, scolding him. Some did spill on him but it served only to aggravate him. He shouted "If you want the coffee that much, you can have it". The remaining contents of the cup were thrown into the face of the inmate who had pushed him. The man who threw it went back to his hut and was quickly pursued by the other. As the inmate pursuing him arrived at the others hut door, he attempted to barge in and attack him. Unfortunately he lost his footing and slipped before coming to rest on his ass. Inmates watching thought it was funny and laughed at him. He went back to his own hut, cursing, and embarrassed.

In the exercise yards one morning sat a very broken young man. Other inmates were curious as to why he seemed so shattered and one walked over to the young man, sat down on the concrete beside him and asked what was wrong. "I can't handle it," he replied. "I've just been sentenced. I might as well kill myself." The other inmate gave a sympathetic spiel about resigning himself to prison then asked the young man how long he'd got "Nine months" came the reply. The other inmate looked at him enviously. "You'll be out in 10 weeks mate" he said to the young man. "It'll go quickly". That inmate had just been sentenced to five years in prison.

There are some very strange people in prison. Two inmates were talking while exercising in the yards one morning. One asked the other what he was in for. "Flashing" came the almost proud reply. "But I've got bigger plans". His mind seemed to wander briefly "I've got an ambition. I want to do a rape then after I'm finished I'm gonna blow my head off all over the bitch, with a fucken shotgun, to make sure she never forgot it." He laughed sadistically. To the inmate he told, it was the most disgusting thing he 'd ever heard.

In the yards on another day, several inmates were basking in the sunshine. One, looking up, happened to catch a glimpse of something he couldn 't believe. "What's that woman doing in here?!"he exclaimed. Another inmate asked what woman he was referring to and told him there were no women in the prison. A transsexual sat in the corner of the yards. She winked at him. Curious, the inmate went over and sat beside her. After a bit of casual banter, the inmate began to ask, "Have. Have you.. Have you got..", He was interrupted by the transsexual. "Have I got tits?!" she said. "Yeah, would you like to see them?" She threw up her jersey revealing her breasts. The inmate reeled in shock, unable to say anything that made any sense. The other inmates laughed.

There was a plentiful supply of vegetables in the prison garden. A guard had been given some spare produce. Although he did not need it, he accepted it anyway. On his way home from work he gave it to someone he knew. That person passed it on to someone else. A few days later during an inmates ' telephone conversation to his mother, she told him that the prison grew nice vegetables. The inmate asked her how she knew and was told, "Some of them were delivered to us the other night." Small world..

Inmates like to have the odd picture of a naked woman on their cell wall. Because some of the guards were women, out of respect for them the unit manager decided that any visible vagina should be

censored. From then on this portion of the female anatomy was either cut out with a pair of scissors or blacked out with a marker pen. One of the female guards entered a cell during a board check. She looked at the picture of a naked woman on the wall, "Hmmm. ."she said. The inmate asked what the story was concerning censoring the pictures. The guard replied, "It doesn't bother me, but the rule is Tits are Ok, but Twat's not" She smiled and left.

Three inmates stood at the window from which their buy ups were to be dispensed. One, an intellectually handicapped inmate was standing at the window with his arms folded. The inmate behind him held his cigarette lighter to the intellectually challenged mans ' shirt and ignited it. The other two turned and walked quickly away as the shirt burst into flames An approaching inmate noticed the flaming shirt and hurried to where the man stood. The inmate wearing the flaming shirt had not noticed he was on fire. The approaching inmate, with nothing but his bare hands to extinguish the flames, grabbed at the shirt, smothering the fire. The flaming inmate thought he was being struck from behind and winced but it was not until he 'd returned to his cell did he discover the back of his shirt had been burnt. The inmate who extinguished him suffered burns to his hands.

It was a cold, snowy day. Inmates were out in the compound playing in the snow. One inmate, a tall solid bloke, decided it would be fun to slide on the ice. He took a run until gathering enough speed to slide speedily along the ground, then fell over. Finally he got it right and others joined in. After half an hour or so, there was an almighty "Thump!" It was heard all around the unit and many reported feeling the resounding jolt. The large, sliding inmate had run head first at full speed into a retaining pole which supported the verandah. As other inmates went outside to see what had happened, they saw the inmate stand up, shake his head and laugh, then walk away to have another go.

Prison has its share of wimps. One night, a younger inmate decided to abuse one of the older child molesters. He stood outside the child molesters cell and shouted abuse. The inmate within came to the door in an enraged state and approached the inmate giving him the abuse. As soon as he stepped out of his door, the tough young inmate ran away and hid in his cell. Later, the inmate he'd verbally abused severed the ear of another inmate during a bloody fight.

In the showers in the main wing one evening, several inmates were performing ablutions and discussing what they could do with a woman at that time. Suddenly all went silent and several of the very young, and older men rushed to cover themselves with their

towels. All eyes were on the door as two transsexuals entered the shower room. Clothing was rapidly replaced as the men left the showers as quickly as possible. It is not known why this occurred although the transsexuals were considered as women by many.

One inmate refused to leave his cell for other than meal parades or showers, and the odd recreation period. He wouldn't go out into the yards for daily exercise. When asked by other inmates why this was he replied, "There's no point in going to the yards, although I can see the sky, It's only replacing one cell with a bigger one"

In a discussion in the yards one lovely clear day, the topic of what each new inmate would miss the most came up. One inmate said "My wife". A young one, "My car" and a third said "Drugs". An older man said, "I'll miss the trees, the sky, and the freedom to sit beneath them both."

At his first dinner time, 4.00 p.m., in a remand prison, an inmate watched disgustedly as other inmates took left-over food from the plates of others back into their cell. "You'll never catch me doing that"he said to his cell mate, "It's disgusting" "Tell me that in 15 hours"came the reply. At dinner time the next day, the inmate was seen taking left-over food from the plates of others to his cell. 15 hours is a long time to go hungry.

Prison brings out the inventive side of most inmates. To stop a cell door blowing open in the wind, an inmate forced a phone card into the jamb. A guard doing a board check pushed open the cell door. The loud 'Clack ' from the bending phone card startled him and he jumped away from the cell door, to the delight of the inmates in the cell. The embarrassed guard thought he was being attacked, but was able to laugh about it with the inmates.

Inmates had made a batch of home brew, using sugar and Kiwi fruit. To allow it to ferment, they placed it on top of a shower unit out of sight of the guards. Unfortunately, the bottles fell down the back of the shower and could not be retrieved, although many attempts were made. Inmates waited for the inevitable. In a couple of weeks and in the constant heat of the showers, the plastic bottles burst. The smell of home brew was strong in the showers, but the smell was all the inmates got from that batch.

Every once in a while the "drug dog" was brought through all wings. One evening meal time, inmates watched from the dining room as the Labrador was lead from cell to cell searching for drugs during a surprise search. The dining room was deathly quiet as those who had received drugs during visits waited to be caught out. After half

an hour or so, the wing was declared clear of drugs and the dog was lead away. Later that night, almost one quarter of the inmates in that wing were stoned on the drugs which had not been detected. At another wing, inmates watched as the dog was lead around various out buildings searching for drugs. Although none were found, 16 litres of home brew were discovered in a laundry area.

Body searches were not always a serious matter. One inmate who was being "patted down " as he re-entered a wing after work was heard to say "Oh I like that, do it again if you like ", then he winked at the guard. Of course one would be careful which guard he said that to. Some didn't consider it funny at all.

A new guard arrived at a certain wing. He had no idea what to expect and didn't know the routine. He stood alone in the guard room and watched as an inmate walked over to the gate which lead to the outside. The guard didn't know who the inmate was or why he was standing at the gate. He was also unsure of what to do and since there were no other guards around to ask, he called over a passing inmate. "Who 's that at the gate? " he asked the inmate. The inmate told the guard the other inmates name. The guard then asked, "What am I supposed to do? "

"Let him out", replied the inmate. The guard opened the gate and the waiting inmate walked out. As it happened, the waiting inmate was just bringing in the days milk. Neither the guard nor either inmate mentioned the incident. The last anecdote shows that a level of trust must exist between inmate and guard. Inmates remain in prison, rather than kept there since it is obvious that if an inmate wants to escape, he will find the opportunity.

These anecdotes portray only a tiny fraction of similar occurrences in prison.