1. HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, 1978
(ONE FOLDER ONLY)

SCOMM

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SCOMM # 25
SPECIAL COMMITTEE #25

HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS 1978

One folder

Contents:

one (1) audio cassette ~~tape~~ filed with tape collection

Corrections Masterplan Advisory Committee*, public hearing at Anchorage 12/4/78 notes (5 sheets)

Corrections Masterplan Advisory Committee, public hearing at Fairbanks 12/3/78 notes (3 sheets)

"An Evaluation of the Staff Terminations at the Anchorage Jail Annex," a position paper of the Coalition on Corrections (3 sheets)

* Membership on this committee appears to include Attorney General Av Gross, Representative Russ Meekins, Commissioner of Health and Social Services Helen Bierne, and Commissioner of Public Safety P. Nix. Mr. Fred Moyer was a consultant.

5/6/83 (KHS)

Public Hearing 12/4/78 [Document No. 1]

AN EVALUATION OF THE STAFF TERMINATIONS AT THE ANCHORAGE JAIL ANNEX

A Position Paper of the Coalition on Corrections

The poor conditions at the 6th and C Jail Annex, i.e., the overcrowding, the inadequate staffing, the poor ventilation, etc. have been a major concern of the Coalition on Corrections since its organization two years ago. We commend the Commissioner of Health and Social Services, Helen Beirne, and her office for the work that has been done to alleviate these and other problems in Alaska's correctional system. At the same time we are distressed by the recent decision of the Department and the Division of Corrections to terminate nine staff members at the Jail Annex.

We do not wish to enter into a discussion of whether in fact staff members at the Annex violated their contract agreement by participating in the alleged "sickout". It is our opinion, however, that even if the staff members in question were in violation, the response of termination was lacking in justice and is having a deleterious effect upon the operation of the Division in general and upon the 6th and C facility in particular.

We think that Superintendent Moses and his staff were doing an outstanding job under very adverse conditions. Despite numerous requests sent through established channels, very little had been done over the past two years to alleviate the problems. Throughout the Spring and Summer of this year, as well as the year before, the 6th and C staff worked double shifts, and often six and seven days a week under great pressure. Our investigation covering this past summer revealed that some of the staff who worked under these conditions did so despite sickness and injuries. And one staff member did so without being paid for the overtime involved. (It should be noted in this connection that the cost of the overtime involved exceded what the salaries of the necessary additional staff would have cost the State.)

We believe that once these serious problems were brought to the attention of Commissioner Beirne, she began to take corrective measures. Unfortunately, her office did not succeed in overcoming the breakdown in communication that has existed within the Division for some time now. Consequently line staff at the 6th and C facility were not aware of these corrective measures. The pattern of vague reassurances that something would be done followed by inaction seemed to them to be repeating itself. If there had been direct communication between the office of the Commissioner and the 6th and C staff during this time, the ensuing difficulty probably could have been avoided. But, unfortunately, such communication did not occur. Indeed, line staff at the Jail Annex had been explicitly forbidden to initiate any such communication.

Who was responsible for the poor planning and staff allocations, the repeated failures to deal effectively with the numerous problems of the Annex, the undermining of the State Legislature's intent to correct the inadequate staffing by shifting personnel positions intended for the Annex to other services, the breakdown in communication? Again, we do not see it as our responsibility to affix blame

in these matters. One thing is clear, however. The correctional officers and support staff who have been fired are not the ones to be blamed. And in view of the repeated failure of those who were responsible to deal with the problems, the apparently somewhat desperate attempts of Annex staff members to bring the problems to public attention is very understandable, yes, even commendable. If it is in fact the case that violations of contract were involved, it seems to us that a week's suspension - at the very most - followed by commendations for their patience and performance under very adverse conditions would be a far more appropriate and just response on the part of the Department and the Division.

But the injustice done in this matter is only part of our concern. We are also convinced that the public interest has been done a great disservice. Our investigation indicates that the particular staff members involved in this matter were, by and large, notable for their length of service and experience in correctional work and for their outstanding records of performance. Finding experienced and qualified staff to work in our state's correctional system is a difficult problem in itself. Finding experienced and qualified staff to work at the Jail Annex is even more of a problem. We do not believe the experience and committment of the Annex staff who were fired can be replaced. We believe that the permanent loss of these particular staff people not only has further exacerbated the staffing problem at the Jail Annex but that it is a serious blow to the morale and capability of the whole correctional system in Alaska.

The temporary borrowing of officers from other correctional facilities which themselves are understaffed and the hiring of new and for the most part inexperienced staff, and the shifting of Superintendent Moses to another facility has disrupted the other facilities and lowered the operating efficiency of the Jail Annex to at times near chaos resulting in injustice to inmates, unnecessary inconveniences to the public, and even avoidable injuries to staff members and inmates. And it appears to us that the morale and the potential for mosre open communication within the Division of Corrections itself has been weakened seriously.

For the sake of a just resolution to these problems which will best serve the public interest, the Coalition on Corrections respectfully urges that the following steps be taken by the Department of Health and Social Services and its Division of Corrections:

(1) that the suspended officers and support staff be reinstated with full back-pay for those who, after due process,* cannot be shown to have been in violation of their contract. For those who were absent without proper excuse, we urge reinstatement with partial back-pay;

(2) that Superintendent Charles Moses be transferred back to the Jail Annex;

* A cursory examination of the termination process causes us to believe that due process was denied most if not all of the terminated staff.

(3) that all Division of Corrections personnel be formally advised that they may communicate directly with the office of the Commissioner without fear of retribution for doing so;

(4) that a state-wide citizen's advisory board be instituted for the Division of Corrections, and that this board be linked with boards set up for each D.O.C. facility in the state.

The Coalition on Corrections was founded upon the proposition that it is the people of Alaska who are ultimately responsible for how well or how poorly the public institutions of our state are being run. If problems such as those addressed in this paper as well as many others we are facing are to be overcome in the future, it is imperative that there be good planning and adequate budgeting. In general we are very favorably impressed with the work underway in the Master Plan. But good plans without an adequate budget won't get the job done. And if this past election is any indication, adequate budgeting for the programing, staffing, and construction of the few facilities we actually need is fast becoming the major obstacle. What is needed, obviously, is public education. It is our conviction that one of the best ways to accomplish this is to get the public involved in the everyday work of corrections through volunteer and advisory programs and as acceptance and understanding grows, to get corrections into the everyday life of the public through community programs. The Coalition on Corrections and its member organizations are committed to this task of public education through public involvement. And we look forward to the close cooperation of the Department of Health and Social Services and the Division of Corrections in this venture.

FAIRBANKS

CORRECTION MASTERPLAN PUBLIC HEARING 12/3/78

RM 127 WOOD STUDENT CENTER, UofA, FBX.

TAPE 1.

1. OPENING BY MEEKINS
2. MOYER - short presentation, review of consulting work to date
   - emphasis of study: just deserts
     public attitudes identified to date: local control
     adequate living conditions
   - implications: - 4 in hospital plant
     - 3 travel approach ?
     - maximum use of alternatives to incarceration
     - greater use of community based
   - correctional facilities
     1. capital most facilities
     2. rated them against 72 standards, most facilities fall short
     3.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

1. CHARLES BELLAIRE
   - Appears to see high degree of coordination between various levels + branches of govt.
   - congratulated Chairman on his involvement

2. TED SPONSEL - PRESBYTERIAN HOUSE
   - work with juveniles, especially teenage girls
   - work both with DHSS & D.O.C.
     1. hold tanger for future disposition if there is no other adequate place.
     2.
   - would like some kind of security ~~court~~ facility to deal with incorrigible teenager with a therapeutic approach.

3. RALPH WARNER
   - Presently a purchasing officer
   - would like sufficient storage space built into every correctional facility

BACK TO CONSULTANTS

MAGEL – PRISON INDUSTRIES

HEARST – JUVENILES

ANCHORAGE 12/4/78

CORRECTIONS MASTERPLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE { AN GROSS, R. MEEKINS, H. BIERNE, P. NIX, PUBL SAFETY, FRED MOYER - CONSULT
PUBLIC HEARING

000 INTRO. BY CHAIRMAN

048 FRED MOYER - CONSULTANT
- summary of research to date

311 KALE SAXON - Coalition on Corrections
- in favor correctional volunteer program
- " " decreasing prisoner population
- " " prison industries
- " " chaplains in prison
- " " community advisory boards & state-wide advisory board
- " " additional training for staff
- " " in favor of diversion programs.
- against new pre-trial facility

422 JOSHUA LILJENSTOLPE - Co
DOCUMENT #1 - submitted written testimony to supplement verbal testimony, mostly he just read written testimony

≈600 NUGENT - STUDIO CLUB

629 BEAU BASSAT - YOUTH SERVICES
- more community involvement in programs for adults & juveniles
- need more alternatives for juvenile offenders 1. at court intake level
2. at disposition level

BEAU BASSET (cont'd)
- greater funding for probation, many juveniles are detained in facility after adjudication because of lack of probation personell
- more counseling & crisis intervention program
- more group home types of treatment instead of incarceration at McLaughlin - out of state, believes this approach is more "cost effective" (cheaper)

HOLMAN →
- in favor of aftercare & treatment
- likes restitution based programs for public & for juvenile offender, mostly property offense.

793 SYLVIA SHORT - UNITARIANS
- purpose of correction should be reformation etc.
- shouldn't build anymore prisons etc

1078 BREAK

~1080 DAVE CLITHROE - SALVATION ARMY
- wants a chaplain in the Anchorage area (this is a resolution by Christian Fellowship & Anchorage Ass. of Christian - these names may not be correct)

#1213 LINA BARRELL - OMBUDSMAN (SPECIFICALLY FOR CORRECTIONS)
- will ~~comp~~ submit complete written testimony in January

1254 ELLEN NORTHRIP - Anchorage Arts Council
- art is a necessity of life; should provide some means for creative expression in prison
- both therapeutic & practical (vocational ed.)
- currently have program of art in prison, ~~from~~ funded by state match grant, have contract with D.O.C.
- wants an art program written into masterplan

1411 MARJORIE McNEIL - AK LEGAL SERVICES
- has been working on Mahaney Case.
- correction in AK is inhumane, unnecessary in illegal, constitutional threat in ~~many~~ manner
- would like 3 things:
  1. bring everyone within home.
  2. ~~more~~ incarcerate as few as possible
  3. keep institutions as small as possible

1475 Mic MONROE - COALITION ON CORRECTIONS
- greatly in favor of alternatives to incarceration

1500 CHAIRMAN ASKS FOR QUESTIONS
- DUNCAN FOWLER - OMBUDSMAN - will there be any more public hearings when Masterplan is complete

Marjorie McNiel - wanted to hear from Hunter Hearst on guidelines

1545 Bill Nist - comm. member.
- asked question of audience - something about regionalization I think.
- ~~[illegible]~~ further discussion followed.

1835 BILL ~~[illegible]~~NAGEL - MASTERPLAN CONSULTANT
1913 MARION KOMACKI - TASC
- question on presumptive sentencing

2000 BILL NAGEL - MASTERPLAN CONSULTANT
- Prison Industries
2341 HUNTER HEARST - MASTERPLAN CONSULTANT

2697 CLOSING COMMENTS BY CHAIRMAN

2756 END

SIGN-UP SHEET TO TESTIFY

	NAME	ORGANIZATION
1	Kalen Saxton	- Coalition on Corrections
2	Joshua Lilljenstolpe	- Coalition on Corrections
3	Leonard Morgan	Dir. Studio Club -
4	Beau Bassett	- General Public 835 D St. Anchorage 99501
5	Sylvia Short	- Unitarian Universalist Service Comm.
6	Capt. Dave Cathcart	The Salvation Army
7	Lino Barrios	Ombudsman
8	Ellen Northup	Anchorage Art Council
9	Margie MacNeill	- ASC
10	MICHAEL MONROE	COALITION ON CORRECTIONS MEMBER
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