

A/CONF.6/C.1/L.6

FIRST UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION  
OF CRIME AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS  
GENEVA 1955

PERSONNEL

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF PRISON STAFF  
IN TRUST AND NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES  
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF WHICH  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM  
IS RESPONSIBLE

by Sir Lionel Fox, C.B., M.C.,  
Chairman of the Prison Commission for  
England and Wales, London



UNITED NATIONS

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF PRISON STAFF  
IN TRUST AND NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES  
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF WHICH  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM IS RESPONSIBLE

by Sir Lionel Fox, C.B., M.C.,  
Chairman of the Prison Commission for  
England and Wales, London

Statements of fact in this report are the responsibility of the author, and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of organs or Members of the United Nations.

In accordance with the tradition of past Congresses, it has been possible to secure the co-operation of certain national prison administrations for the printing of documentation for the First United Nations Congress on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, which is from an historical point of view the Thirteenth International Penal and Penitentiary Congress. Thus the present report has been generously printed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons of the United States of America, in the prison printing plant at Leavenworth, Kansas.

A/CONF.6/C.1/L.6

8 December 1954

The Secretary of State for the Colonies maintains a continuing review of the penal system of the trust and non-self-governing territories of the Commonwealth. To assist him in these matters an Advisory Committee on the Treatment of Offenders in the Colonies has been in existence for many years. The members, appointed by the Secretary of State, include United Kingdom experts in the various methods of treatment (probation, approved schools, Borstals and prisons), persons with experience in the territories concerned, and others. The Committee meets frequently and members have from time to time made tours of different parts of the Commonwealth to examine the penal systems and institutions on the spot.

It is to be understood however that in all territories the criminal laws and the laws governing penal administration in the territories are enacted locally by the governments themselves, and the prisons and related institutions are directly controlled by the territorial governments, whose departments of prisons administration are entirely distinct from, and should not be confused with, Her Majesty's Prison Commission in the United Kingdom.

On the advice of the Committee, the Secretary of State encourages the governments of the territories to bring the standards in their penal systems, both in principle and in practice, as close to those of the United Kingdom as their conditions and resources permit. Senior officers for the territories are frequently recruited from the United Kingdom Service, and there are routine arrangements for the training

of their prison staffs in the United Kingdom. This effort is especially directed to the selection and training of prison staffs and to securing conditions of service such as will, having regard to local circumstances, be likely to attract and retain adequately qualified staff, for it is recognized that this is the central problem of the penal systems in these territories.

In all territories the prisons and related institutions are directly controlled by a separate department of prisons, the head of which is usually known as the Commissioner or Director of Prisons, and the department recruits and controls a separate and specialized prisons staff.

The following studies have been made on the basis of material furnished at the request of the Colonial Office, by the governments of the territories concerned. The writer, who is a member of the Advisory Committee, has also had the advantage of visiting penal institutions in all the East African territories including the Staff Training School at Luzira, Uganda.

## I. THE GOLD COAST

The Minister responsible for prison administration, the Director of Prisons and most of the senior staff in the Gold Coast are Africans.

Applicants for service in the Department of Prisons are interviewed by a Departmental Selection Board and if successful they undergo a course of training for twelve weeks at a central warders training depot. Generally, candidates are required to possess the Middle School Leaving Certificate (Standard 7 Certificate), but applicants without this qualification are accepted according to staff requirements. Instruction at the depot includes lectures on general penal administration, the treatment and training of prisoners, leadership, methods of instruction, physical training, unarmed combat (Judo) and foot drill. Practical training is carried out in the two central prisons (closed prisons), at James Camp (open prison) and at the open Borstal institution. Examinations are held at mid-term and at the conclusion of the course. Any candidate who fails to obtain 60 per cent of the total marks is not retained in the service. At the conclusion of the course the recruits are posted to the establishment for which, by reason of character, language and race they appear most suitable.

Matrons are selected in the same manner as warders and they also attend the course at the training depot.

The staff is divided into three main categories, i.e. staff warders, discipline warders and trade instructors. Staff warders undertake such duties as clerks in the various offices, reception, gate, stores, officers in charge of halls or wards and keepers of the local prison establishments. From the ranks of the staff warders, chief and principal warders are selected. The discipline staff undertakes such duties as escorts, court duties, supervision of discipline in the various workshops, escorts to outside working parties and yard duties. Trade instructors, as the name implies, undertake the technical and industrial training of the prisoners.

Third class warders selected as potential staff warders undergo a course of eight weeks training in the various staff duties mentioned above. An examination is also held at the conclusion of this course and if a warder fails to pass he returns to his establishment as a discipline officer.

The first long training course for promotion to the rank of prison superintendent commenced in August 1954. Seven selected staff warders are attending this course, which will last for twelve months and will cover all aspects of penal administration.

## II. UGANDA

### European staff

In this service the Commissioner and his deputy, and the superintendents and assistant superintendents of the prisons, are Europeans.

Superintendents and assistant superintendents may either be seconded from the United Kingdom prison service, or specially recruited either in the United Kingdom or locally, or transferred from other colonial prison services.

Officers other than those transferred from other territories or seconded from the Home Service serve a probationary period of two years and all officers are required to pass examinations on laws and regulations appertaining to prisons and the written and oral Swahili language. Failure to pass either examination constitutes a bar to confirmation in appointment or to further promotion. The officers recruited in the United

Kingdom who have not had experience as prison officers, are given a short course at prisons in the United Kingdom before being posted for duty in Uganda. Officers recruited locally are posted for training under an experienced senior officer usually at the Central Prison, Luzira.

#### African staff

All African staff are required to be not less than 5' 7" in height, 22 years of age and of sound physique, and are recruited in Uganda from all tribes offering themselves for enlistment. They are first seen by the officer in charge of the prison nearest their home, and if he thinks them suitable they are sent to the central warders' training school. The officer in charge of the school selects for training those he thinks suitable.

The training school, which accommodates 100 trainees, is contained in pleasant modern buildings specially erected for the purpose, situated near the Central Prison, Luzira. It includes dormitories, dining-room and kitchen, gymnasium, class-rooms, recreation rooms and administration.

Under the European officer in charge there is a senior African officer (jailer), as well as five African instructors and an African schoolmaster.

The training curriculum is the same for all types of trainee except matrons. The length of the basic training varies according to the branch of the service the trainee has been selected for.

Instruction is given in the following subjects, in all of which trainees are examined at the end of their training in the school: prison duties and prison rules, etc., drill, baton drill, musketry, physical training, first-aid; hygiene, Swahili language, arithmetic, geography and history. Matrons do not receive instruction in drill, baton-drill, musketry and physical training, but they work in the female section of the central prison when they are not occupied in the class-rooms.

Before qualifying to leave the training school the marks obtained by each recruit in the examinations plus the marks awarded for general conduct are totalled and must exceed 50 per cent of the possible total. A further proviso is that at least 50 per cent of the possible marks for knowledge of prison duties and rules etc. be obtained in both a written and an

oral examination. The oral examination carries twice as many marks as the written examination.

During the first few months of training, recruits must pass a literacy examination written in the Swahili or English languages and based on a Primary IV education test. Recruit African jailers, warder-clerks and tradesmen are exempted from this test as they have to produce proof of their higher educational standards before being admitted for training. Until a recruit warder passes this test his salary is abated by Shs.5/- per mensem.

All instruction is given in the Swahili language, therefore some knowledge of this language is required before the applicant is accepted and the teaching of the language is a most important part of the work of the schoolmaster.

Competition is encouraged by the award of a trophy to the dormitory earning most marks for work, conduct, smartness and games. The trophy, which takes the form of a shield, is awarded twice yearly and a silver medal is also awarded to the best recruit. These awards are innovations and it is hoped that the general standard of the recruits will be raised by the competitions.

For warders the full curriculum of the school is covered in a six months period with the full examination at the end of that time. Failure to pass the examination entails either discharge, unlikely to become effective or deferment for a short period. At any time during this six months course a trainee may be discharged if the officer in charge of the training school considers him to be unlikely to become efficient. The standard of education required is Primary VI but the literacy test applied is of Primary IV Standard, which allows a fair margin for the recruit joining the service with a long gap between enlistment and leaving school. Posting as a third class warder to the central prison follows this training. There are variations for specialists such as warder-clerks and instructors. In 1952, 53 out of 159 were rejected.

#### Senior African Staff

#### Jailers

The rank of jailer is the top grade for Africans; they may be put in charge of small prisons. After having been selected

by the Commissioner of Prisons, who has satisfied himself that their educational standard is at least the equivalent of that required to enter Makerere College, they spend six months in the warders' training school and complete the syllabus in the same way as do recruit warders.

At the end of 3 months they are reported upon by the officer in charge of the training school and if they are allowed to continue their training they must pass the same examinations as the recruit warders at the end of six months before posting to the central prison for further training.

During the next six months they are watched closely by the officer in charge of the central prison whilst they get practical experience in all the duties of a warder and on various clerical jobs. At the end of this period, i.e. after one year's total training, they are examined in prison duties, rules, etc. and, if successful, they are promoted to the rank of probationary African jailer. For a further year they then perform the duties of a junior officer, usually at the central prison, before they are required to pass their final examination on prison duties, prisons ordinance, rules, etc. By this time too they should have passed the same Lower Standard language examination in Swahili that the European officer must pass. Failure to pass either examination constitutes a bar to confirmation in the appointment.

#### **Non-commissioned officers**

Warders showing any promise of leadership and maintaining a good standard in their prison duties are appointed lance-corporal warders.

Usually prior to further promotion, i.e. corporal-warder etc. all junior non-commissioned officers in the department attend a refresher course at the warders' training school.

During this six weeks' course all the normal subjects taught to recruit warders with the exception of the purely educational subjects are revised and examinations are held at the end of the course. A literacy examination is also included in the end of course tests.

The work and conduct of the trainees, both on and off duty, are closely observed by the officer in charge, who submits a full report on each individual. These reports and the examina-

tion results are filed in their records of service and considerably assist in the selection of potential senior non-commissioned officers. Promotion in some cases is accelerated where a non-commissioned officer has excelled on his training course and has, moreover, received similar good reports from his commanding officer.

### **III. MALAYA**

The discipline prison staff in the Federation of Malaya consists of superintendents, chief officers, principal officers, chief warders, matrons, warders and wardresses.

#### **European Staff**

With the exception of one officer who is a Malay, the Commissioner and the senior officers, i.e. superintendents and above, are Europeans and members of the Colonial Prisons Service who have been selected for appointment by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Generally, senior officers who are Europeans have been transferred to Malaya from other territories or have been promoted from the junior ranks.

Formerly, chief officers and principal officers Grade I were recruited by direct entry chiefly from the non-commissioned officer class in the Regular Army and all were Europeans. At the present time, a number of Asians who have been promoted from the subordinate ranks hold the rank of Principal Officer I. Recruitment of Europeans ceased on the introduction of a cadet scheme for Asian officers.

#### **Asian Staff**

Chief warders and other subordinate officers are Asians. The majority consist of Malays but there is a number of Sikhs, Pathans and Indians. The male Chinese do not apply for appointment as discipline officers and all efforts to attract them to the Service have been unsuccessful. There are, however, a number of Chinese women officers. The principal Officer Grade II is a cadet rank for Asian subordinate officers who have been selected for special training and accelerated promotion.

Between 1950 and 1953 steps were taken to improve the pay and conditions of service of the subordinate staff and at the present time these are now the same as in the police force.

In 1950, a scheme of service was introduced which laid down the minimum qualifications which an Asian candidate must possess before selection. Provision was made for the grant of efficiency pay when a warder reached a certain standard and examination bars were introduced into the salary structure in addition to the usual increments. At the same time the uniform of the staff was improved and made much more smart and attractive. Pending the establishment of a proper training school, arrangements were made whereby all staff attend lectures at their prisons at least twice weekly.

### The Training School

In 1950, the construction of a training school at Taiping—where the Headquarters of the Department are situated—was commenced and full scale training of serving warders and recruits was introduced in 1951. The staff at the school consists of a chief officer in charge, principal officers (Asian) as lecture instructors, drill instructors, physical training instructors and a certificated teacher as school-master. The senior superintendent is responsible for the general supervision and training in addition to his other duties as officer in charge of the central training prison for Star prisoners. The school consists of dormitories, lecture rooms, canteen and recreation rooms. It stands in large grounds and has its own football field and sports field. There is accommodation for 50 trainees and 6 cadets. Trainees are granted a subsistence allowance in addition to their salary during the training course. All uniforms and equipment are supplied by the school. Each course is divided into two divisions, each with its own instructors, and the competitive spirit is encouraged.

### Selection

Candidates for appointment as warders must possess at least a Standard V (Malay) certificate of education or its equivalent. They must not be below 5 ft. 4 ins. in height and must pass a strict medical examination. Confidential reports are obtained from the police, employers and other persons. When candidates have been considered from these points of view, they are interviewed by a senior officer and a final selection is made. Selected candidates are then sent to the

training school as recruit warders. Should a candidate be selected when a course has already commenced, he is appointed a recruit warder and employed at the prison until the next course.

With a view to the training of serving officers, arrangements are in force whereby a number of such officers attend each course. The number depends upon the number of recruits but, as a rule, approximately 50 per cent of a course of 50 trainees consists of serving warders. The latter are selected by taking the warders with the least service and progressing upwards from the bottom of the seniority roll. A certain latitude is permitted to establishments in the selection of serving warders for training courses in order that officers considered suitable for promotion in the warder grade should receive training and testing.

### Training

The training course covers a period of 13 weeks. During the first few weeks emphasis is placed upon drill and physical training and lectures are given on the history of prisons, the rules which govern them and the principles which dictated the choice of such rules. After the initial training period, full scale lectures are given on the Prisons Ordinance, the Prison Rules and Standing Orders. All aspects of the administration, treatment and control of prisoners are taught. The training system and its aims are thoroughly explained.

Practical training is given at the central training prison which is about two miles from the school. Each division of trainees receives instruction at the prison in turn. During such instruction the trainees are placed under the charge of experienced officers and perform duty in each department of the prison. Their powers of leadership and control are encouraged and developed by making them take charge of prisoners at the physical training parade and also by taking drill and physical training parades of trainees at the school. During the course, trainees attend education classes in simple English and civics and attend courts, visit social welfare centres and other social service projects. Once a week a quiz contest and an "Any Questions" session is held. A copy of the curriculum is attached (Annex A).

A written and verbal examination is held at the expiration of six weeks. Reports from instructors and senior officers who have had charge of the trainees in the prison are considered. Should it appear that a recruit is unlikely to become an efficient prison officer his appointment is terminated. Others who may not have received good reports but who are considered worthy of further training are personally interviewed and informed of the faults which they must correct.

At the end of the course a final examination is held and further reports by instructors and senior officers are considered. The recruits who satisfy all conditions are accepted and appointed as prison warders. It says much for the standard of recruit now attached to the service that generally not more than four in each course are found completely unsuitable for appointment. It should be noted that in order to maintain a competitive spirit, each division competes for a shield while individual prizes are awarded to trainees who are the best in drill and physical training, in prison rules and general turnout. A special baton of honour is presented to the best all-round trainee on each course.

#### Posting and Probation

Careful consideration is given to the type of prison for which recruits are most suitable and they are posted according to their qualifications and temperament. On passing out of the school, officers are placed on probation for 12 months and, subject to satisfactory progress and reports, they are then confirmed in their appointment. An officer becomes eligible for employment on the pensionable establishment after he has completed three years service.

By the end of 1954, over 570 officers will have passed through the training school. When all serving officers have attended a course of training, it is the intention to institute refresher and promotion courses.

#### Training of Senior Officers

It has not been possible to provide special training courses at the training school for chief and principal officers. However desirable this may be, the urgent necessity to train subordin-

ate officers, especially in view of the new prison legislation, had to receive prior consideration.

Arrangements were made, therefore, for these officers to undertake a series of lectures at their establishments. In addition, whenever an expatriate officer proceeds on leave to the United Kingdom he is required to attend a course for prison officers at the Imperial Training School, Wakefield.

So far as superintendents are concerned, these officers attend the Study Course for Overseas Prison Officers which is held each year by the Prison Commission, England and Wales. Nearly every superintendent has now attended such a course. In addition, arrangements are made for Superintendents on leave in the United Kingdom to visit certain penal establishments and study certain aspects of the training system.

#### Training of subordinate officers for accelerated promotion

In 1952, it was decided to cease the recruitment by direct entry of expatriate principal officers and to provide opportunities for selected Asian officers with a good standard of education to be promoted to principal officer rank. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that promotion to chief officer and superintendent grades is from the principal officer rank and the Schemes of Service provide that a warder can proceed to the highest rank.

Candidates from the ranks must possess a standard of education equivalent to the English School Certificate. They must have at least five years service and must be recommended by their superintendent. No restriction is placed upon rank and candidates may be chief warders, senior warders or warders. Their history and record is studied by the administration and if they are considered suitable material, candidates appear before a selection board and are examined. Should they be successful, the officers are sent to the training school to undergo a special course and are known as cadets.

The course at the school lasts twelve months and is strenuous and exacting. For the first thirteen weeks, cadets must undergo the ordinary training given to recruits. In the next thirteen weeks the curriculum includes the study of such subjects as the theory of punishment, the law and law making and the Criminal Procedure Code in addition to lectures on prison pro-

cedure, the Prisons Ordinance and Rules and the principles behind them. The higher administration and internal economy of a prison, the training and welfare of the prisoner and methods for the prevention of crime are also studied. Cadets are also expected to instruct in physical training and drill.

After the expiration of six months, cadets are required to act as lecture instructors on prison duties to the recruits under the supervision of the permanent instructors. They are posted to a division of the training class and are required to act as advisers to the trainees in their division. At the end of a training class, cadets are expected to produce a "write up" on each trainee in the division.

Throughout the whole period discussion groups and quiz contests are held and there are frequent written tests. At the end of each period of six months, examinations are held and reports by the senior superintendent, who is in charge of the course, and other senior officers are studied. A cadet can be returned to his prison if it appears that he is unsuitable by temperament or ability to hold a senior rank. It must be clearly understood that in the selection of cadets their suitability to the posts of Chief Officer and Superintendent and not only to that of Principal Officer, is borne in mind.

Should cadets be successful in passing the twelve months course and provided they obtain good reports, they are promoted to Principal Officers Grade II and are posted to a regional or central training prison for practical training in the duties of a principal officer for a period of six months. Subject to good reports by the superintendents concerned, the cadet is confirmed in his appointment as Principal Officer Grade II and becomes eligible for promotion to Principal Officer Grade I at the end of two years from the commencement of his training.

Since the scheme was introduced, eighteen Asian subordinate officers have completed the course and eleven have been promoted to posts formerly held by expatriate officers. Six cadets are still on probation. So far only one officer has been found unsuitable and returned to duty. The scheme has stimulated interest and ambition amongst the junior staff while at the same time it has attracted candidates for a career in the prison service. Although up to the present, it has been

possible to find suitable candidates from serving warders, provision is made for recruitment by direct entry should this become necessary. Direct entry candidates will undergo the same course of training but their probationary period as Principal Officers Grade II will be longer.



## ANNEX A

### Curriculum of the warders' training school at Taiping

- (1) History of prisons
- (2) The Prisons Department in the Federation of Malaya
- (3) Security
- (4) Gate duties
- (5) Reception duties
- (6) Admissions
- (7) Discharges
- (8) Transfers
- (9) Location of prisoners
- (10) Party control
- (11) Landing duties
- (12) Equipment and bedding
- (13) Diets
- (14) Searching
- (15) Escapes
- (16) Supervision and discipline
- (17) Classification
  - (a) Prisoners
  - (b) Prisons
- (18) The progressive stage system
- (19) The earnings schemes
- (20) Offences
- (21) Punishments and restraints
- (22) Escort duties
- (23) Banishment prisoners
- (24) Condemned prisoners
- (25) Appeals
- (26) Petitions
- (27) Applications and complaints
- (28) Letters and visits
- (29) Checking of prisoners
- (30) Duties in halls and workshops
- (31) Warrants—computation of sentences and remission
- (32) Court duties
- (33) Recreation
- (34) Religious instruction
- (35) Libraries

- (36) Educational classes
- (37) Handicrafts and hobbies
- (38) The Prisons Ordinance and Rules
- (39) Medical aspects of prison work
- (40) Discharged Prisoners Aid Societies
- (41) The Henry Gurney Schools (Borstals)
- (42) Juvenile Courts Ordinance
- (43) Prison visitors
- (44) Visiting justices
- (45) Unconvicted prisoners
- (46) Debtors, trials and remands
- (47) The probation system
- (48) Fines
- (49) Instruction in English language

This archiving project is a collaborative effort between United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and American Society of Criminology, Division of International Criminology. Any comments or questions should be directed to Cindy J. Smith at [CJSmithphd@comcast.net](mailto:CJSmithphd@comcast.net) or Emil Wandzilak at [emil.wandzilak@unodc.org](mailto:emil.wandzilak@unodc.org).