HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS, 1875-PRESENT

Student Study Project #4016

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The purpose of this paper is to revise and update existing historical documents into a comprehensive history of the United States Disciplinary Barracks (USDB). Particular attention is paid to the operation of the facility, its staffing, and correctional programs utilized at the facility. Emphasis was placed on inmate populations and laws and regulations governing the operation of the facility. While a great deal of historical material concerning the facility was available, it must be noted that certain periods of time were somewhat poorly covered by the available references. In particular, little material exists concerning the USDB in the period 1917-1919, and the 1930's and 1950's.

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PREFACE

The scope of Student Study Project #4016 concerns the revising and updating of existing historical documents into a comprehensive history of the United States Disciplinary Barracks (USDB). Particular attention is paid to the operation of the facility, its staffing, and correctional programs utilized at the facility. Emphasis was placed on inmate populations and laws and regulations governing the operation of the facility.

While a great deal of historical material concerning the facility was available, it must be noted that certain periods of time were somewhat poorly covered by the available references. In particular, little material exists concerning the USDB in the period 1919-1917, and the 1930's, and 1950's.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the policies or the viewpoints of the United States Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, or the Department of Defense.

CHAPTER I

1870 - 1895

In 1870, military offenders were confined in 32 different stockades such as Castle William on Governors Island, New York, and Bedloe's Island, New York, as well as penitentiaries of different states. Punishments varied from stockade to stockade and penitentiary to penitentiary, and included flogging, the use of ball and chain, shackling, tattooing or branding, solitary confinement and execution.

All of these modes of punishment with the exception of solitary confinement and execution were banned in the Army in early 1871. However, the punishment administered in 1871 to the 346 military prisoners scattered in 11 different state penitentiaries was an entirely different problem. The War Department had very little control over military prisoners confined in state correctional institutions.

Brigadier General Thomas F. Barr submitted a letter to the Secretary of War in 1871 requesting that for reasons of economy and the existing lack of Department of War control over military offenders in the state institutions, the concept of a military prison be considered. The Secretary of War directed an investigation of the situation and a board of officers was sent to Montreal and Quebec, Canada, "to investigate and report upon the British (military) prison system, together with their mode of punishment."

The board found the British system far superior to our own, recommended the Army abandon certain custody and control practices and the immediate adoption of a more humane system of corrections in keeping with the then modern concepts of penology. The board's recommendations were approved at all command levels involved and were prepared as a bill for submission to Congress in January, 1872.

The most significant recommendation of the board was the building of a single military prison in New York harbor by evacuating one of the military posts located there, and converting the existing buildings into a prison. The House Military Committee, for reasons of economy, did not concur in the proposed location and submitted a new bill locating the military prison at Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois for the expressed purpose that prison labor could be used at the arsenal. The prison was to have a capacity of 400 inmates. This bill was passed by both Houses of Congress and became law when signed by the President on March 3, 1873.

Immediate objections were made to the proposed location by both the Secretary of War and the Ordnance Department. Reasons cited for the objections were that the prisoners could not be trusted to work with munitions and were not skilled in the manufacture of arms. Furthermore, the prisoners could not be learning a worthwhile trade they could follow upon their release from confinement. Additionally, the proposed location was very poor in terms of security (control of prisoners) and the excessive security measures required to compensate for the poor location would greatly restrict

the accomplishment of the primary mission of the arsenal.

In order to bolster his objections, the Secretary of War (through the Adjutant General) directed that a board of officers visit several of the best established state prisons and penitentiaries. The board (later known as the Miles Board) was to determine the best physical plan for a prison and the most current correctional programs in use. Though not charged with the responsibility of recommending sites alternate to Rock Island Arsenal, the board did just that.

The Adjutant General's letter of instructions to the Board President, Colonel Nelson A. Miles, states in part that:

> ".....provides for locating a prison at Rock Island, Illinois. It is presumed the intentions (of Congress) may have been to locate it on the public grounds belonging to the armory, near the town. The Secretary (of War) desires you to examine the locality, as well as the vicinity of the town, and to report your views as to the expediency of maintaining a prison on the armory grounds, and its probable influence upon the interests of the armory."

While no one will ever know what verbal guidance was given Colonel Miles, his board did recommend another site for all the reasons contained in the initial objections by the Secretary of War and the Ordnance Department to Rock Island, Illinois.

The Secretary of War presented the recommendations of the Miles' Board to Congress in early 1874 and on May 21, 1874, Congress approved an amendment to the act of the previous year which established the military prison. The amendment states that all provisions of the original act that were to be required at Rock Island were now to be required at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Additionally,

existing buildings at Fort Leavenworth were to be modified as necessary to facilitate the immediate establishment of a military prison.

A survey of the buildings to be involved at Fort Leavenworth was made and in June, 1874, Congress authorized a grant of $125,900 to be used to accomplish all required modification and remodeling of buildings involved.

In order to handle the remodeling and handle the funds authorized by Congress, the War Department issued orders on April 30, 1875 designating Major James M. Robertson, 3rd Artillery, Commanding Officer, and Captain Asa P. Blunt, Assistant Quartermaster, as disbursing quartermaster and officer in charge of construction.

Major Robertson and Captain Blunt reported for duty in May and June, 1875, respectively, and immediate construction of a wooden fence or "stockade" around the perimeter was initiated. The wooden fence was completed by the end of the summer, 1875, and many renovations were begun on the buildings within the compound to adapt them to prison use. (The first prison was built on the present site of the USDB).

In order to assist in the construction, Major Robertson requested the assignment of a guard company and it arrived in September, 1875. The company consisted of two officers and 60 enlisted men. Immediately upon the arrival of the guard company, commanding officers of posts with large numbers of general prisoners were authorized to send them to the military prison. The assorted talents of these prisoners were used in construction work and working

in a garden which was laid out in a 100 acre plot adjoining the prison.

One of the most severe shortcomings of the new prison was the lack of adequate hospital facilities and a request for a grant of $12,000 to build a hospital (with inmate labor) was submitted. An increase in the authorized strength of guard personnel was requested and obtained. During the year of 1876, the authorized guard strength was 85 and the number of prisoners had climbed to 332.

The concept of a military prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas appeared to be a self-fulfilling prophecy on the part of the Department of War. The Secretary of War, the Honorable J. D. Cameron, visited the prison in September, 1876 and commented:

> "The prison has now completed the first year of its existence as a distinct institution, and the result confirms the wisdom of the plan of confining prisoners serving long terms in one place, and utilizing their labor for the benefit of the government."

When the renovation of the existing buildings within the "confinement" area had been completed in early 1876, requests from most of the Army areas began arriving to determine if there was space for additional prisoners. Authority was granted by the Secretary of War and as previously noted, by September of 1876, the inmate population had reached a strength of 332.

With the arrival of large groups of new prisoners in the summer of 1876, a stone quarry project started in April, 1876 was well underway. The stone taken from the quarry was used in the construction of a permanent stone wall around the prison to replace

the wooden fence. Over 200 feet of wall had been completed by December, 1877.

1877 was a notable year in the prison's history due to the first vocational training program starting in that year. The need for adequate vocational/industrial activities to fully utilize the services of the prisoners and to provide them with an honorable trade upon release resulted in an experimental vocational program starting in May, 1877. The Commandant of the prison was granted permission to employ at least 75 men in making boots, shoes and similar products used by the Quartermaster Department. Space was made available for the shop on the ground floor of one of the existing buildings and the necessary machinery was purchased and installed. Civilian foremen were hired and the Quartermaster Department agreed to furnish all materials.

Prior to this vocational experiment, Army shoes were totally furnished by a civilian manufacturer under sole contract to the Army. The shoes were sold to the soldier for $1.00 a pair, but were so poor in construction and appearance that most soldiers purchased their shoes from privately owned civilian stores. The introduction of the first prison made shoes was favorably received. The shoes were uniform in style and a better all-around shoe. By 1878, the prison shoe factory was producing 150 pairs of shoes per day.

A large lime burning kiln to produce all the required lime for local construction was completed in 1877 and this greatly enhanced the on-going construction projects. May 13, 1877 was the

date that construction was started on the prison hospital and it was sufficiently completed for occupancy by August 13, 1877.

During the first two years of operation, a prison laundry was not practicable due to lack of space, labor, and equipment. Early in 1878, an existing building in the compound was modified and the laundry immediately began operation. The laundry operation provided immediate relief to Fort Leavenworth proper since the post facilities had not been adequate to support both the post and the prison.

Prior to 1878, Army prisoners sentenced to more than a year on the West Coast (Department of Pacific) were confined on Alcatraz Island, a facility operated by the federal government. In 1878, the Department of War directed that the prison at Fort Leavenworth would accept military prisoners from any and all Army areas and the first prisoners from Alcatraz arrived at Fort Leavenworth.

The years 1878 and 1879 were also significant in that advanced concepts of reformation and rehabilitation were first introduced in the prisons. Space for a chapel to serve all faiths was set aside and various services conducted. The chaplain was also charged with the responsibility of establishing a school to further the education of all prisoners, but especially the illiterates. In this segment of the overall program, the chaplain reported failure through the year 1879. The problems encountered were overwhelming. Among these were the lack of satisfactory instructors, lack of funds for school supplies, lack of free time in prisoners' daily schedules, as well as lack of efficient testing materials to determine the

amount of schooling already acquired by the prisoners.

The end of 1880 arrived and almost 2,000 prisoners had been or were confined at the prison. Also in 1880, another innovation in penology was started with the purchase of 667 books to form the nucleus of the prison library. The prisoners were encouraged to broaden their outlook and education through the medium of selected literature, textbooks and technical manuals.

By 1881, the prisoner population had increased to 447. This required the Commandant to suspend incoming prisoner transfers since the prison was capable of accommodating 450 prisoners. Shop facilities had been gradually increased to cope with the increased labor supply as prisoner strength grew. By 1882, the prison boot and shoe shop was supplying enough footwear to equip the entire Army.

A crash construction project was completed in the fall of 1882 and the suspension on incoming prisoners was lifted in December, 1882. The construction continued throughout 1883 and the capability of the prison was increased to approximately 600 inmates by the end of the year.

By 1885, the prison shops were producing barracks chairs and corn brooms in addition to the boots and shoes previously mentioned. The stone quarry, prison laundry, farms (begun in 1875) and lime kiln all served to make the prison virtually self-sufficient. Additionally, the boot and shoe shop had expanded its operation to facilitate the production of belts, harness, and other like items made from leather.

During 1888 and 1889, several significant events took place. The prison installed an electric plant to supply the entire facility with electricity. This in turn permitted the building and equipping of a cold storage room for food preservation.

In 1888-9, the War Department set up its photography section to photograph incoming prisoners for identification purposes. This procedure of establishing a permanent photographic record of the prisoners was so satisfactory that it has never been abandoned. It is believed that the military prison was one of the first correctional facilities to use photography as a positive means of identification.

The educational program for the prisoners was finally formalized in 1880 with the establishment of the first prison school. This school proved to be an unqualified success right from the start, with all prisoners who could not read and/or write required to attend.

Prison industries suffered a severe set back in late 1889. The labor unions had been lobbying for years to stop the prison from making shoes for the Army and were finally successful in late 1889-early 1890. The closing of the shoe manufacturing operations made a great deal of prisoner labor available for other vocational activities. To provide activities for these prisoners, the entire prison was repainted and a new industry was introduced with the installation of looms for weaving door mats and rug carpets.

By 1891, the prisoner population had leveled off at

approximately 520 prisoners. It was difficult to find activities sufficient to keep this number of prisoners occupied each day and numerous programs were tried and abandoned as they proved to be less than successful. Among the industries/activities attempted were soap making (very successful), beekeeping (marginally successful), hog and cattle raising (successful), brick making (unsuccessful), and tent and sail making (unsuccessful).

The original argument used by the Department of War in promoting the idea of a separate military prison was used once again to encourage Congress to abandon the same idea. The original intent in the establishment of the military prison had been to curb the steady increase of desertions and to remove the "hardened or incorrigible" military prisoners from the local guardhouse where he could influence minor offenders who were serving short sentences.

A review of the confinement and post-confinement records of some of the prisoners since the establishment of the prison led many senior Army officers to feel that the continued operation of the prison was a serious mistake and the prison should cease operation. The arguments submitted by Army officers calling for the abolition of the military prison may be summed up in an extract from the annual report of the Secretary of War for the year 1894:

> "Whatever may have been the necessities when the prison was established, large posts in every military department (area) are not well adapted to the confinement of offenders against military law. By detaining them at such posts within the department (area) in which offenses are committed an annual saving of $15,000 in transportation alone is practicable, while the labor could be turned to much useful and necessary

> work, relieving the soldier from distasteful and irksome tasks tending to discontent and desertion. The objects of punishment for violations of military law in most cases can better be served by confinement in smaller numbers at large posts than by questionable influence of a large prison.....Legislation authorizing the conversion of the Military Prison at Fort Leavenworth into a United States prison, under the care and custody of the Department of Justice, is therefore suggested as desirable on military and civil grounds."

Obviously, rehabilitation of the military offenders incarcerated at these local "guardhouses" was not a consideration of the Secretary of War. Available references indicate that the move to close the military prison was based on economical reasons and on the opinions of senior Army officers that the soldiers committing minor offenses suffered from exposure to the "hardened or incorrigible" element imprisoned at Fort Leavenworth.

The Secretary of War's annual report for the year 1894 was the first step in the abolition of the existing military prison at Fort Leavenworth. His report was followed by the action noted in the Army appropriation bill for the fiscal year 1895-6, which provided for the transfer of the prison from the War Department to the Department of Justice.

A bill was introduced in the House of Representatives in the 1894-5 session which dealt the final blow to the military prison. Entitled the Sundry Civil Appropriation Bill, the legislation contained the following text concerning the military prison:

> "The military prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, including all the buildings, grounds, and other property connected therewith, is hereby transferred from the Department of War to the Department of Justice, to be known as the United States Penitentiary, and to be used for the confinement of persons convicted in the United States courts of crimes

against the United States and sentenced to imprisonment in a penitentiary, or convicted by court-martial of offenses now punishable by confinement in a penitentiary and sentenced to terms of imprisonment of more than one year; and the Attorney-General is hereby directed to transfer to said United States Penitentiary such persons now undergoing sentences of confinement, imposed by the United States courts, in state prisons, as can be conveniently accommodated at the same penitentiary.....That convicts in said United States Penitentiary shall be employed only in the manufacture of articles and the production of supplies for said penitentiary, and in the manufacture of supplies for the government, and said convicts shall not be worked outside of Fort Leavenworth military reservation."

Numerous arguments, both pro and con, were introduced in the Congress relative to the legislation contained in the Sundry Civil Appropriation Bill. However, the bill was passed on March 2, 1895 and on June 30, 1895, the U.S. Military Prison passed to the control of the Department of Justice and became the United States Penitentiary on July 1, 1895.

The transfer of the United States Military Prison, closing out more than 20 years of operation, to the Department of Justice was another "first" for the facility. At its inception, it was the "first" U.S. Military Prison and upon transfer it became the "first" United States Penitentiary, which was to receive all prisoners convicted in the United States Courts of crimes against the United States and sentenced to more than one year's confinement.

Upon the transfer of the only military prison to the Department of Justice, more than 20 years of active operation as the Army prison were ended. The Army returned to the pre-military prison practice of "guardhouse" confinement with the more serious offenders sent to Alcatraz or a state penitentiary.

CHAPTER II

1896 - 1906

As early as 1891, Congress had enacted legislation authorizing the establishment of three United States penitentiaries, directing that one be located west of the Rocky Mountains and that two be located east of the same mountain range. However, no appropriation was included in this act to purchase the sites or to assume operation of any already available facility. Since no action of any kind could be taken without funds, the authority contained in this bill was not used until the military prison was transferred from the War Department to the Department of Justice on June 30, 1895.

The civil officials (Department of Justice employees) who were the first administrators of the former military prison were not satisfied with the physical facilities. They complained that the buildings were outmoded and the existing perimeter wall was not adequate as a security measure since it was less than 20 feet high in most places. They also complained that the necessity of using a larger number of prisoners on outside work than had been originally contemplated required the hiring of a larger number of guards than originally anticipated. The larger guard force greatly increased the day-to-day operating expenses of the facility. All of these complaints were sent to the Attorney General who included them in his annual report for 1896.

The Department of Justice set up standards for what was

considered a first-class penitentiary which was impossible to meet at Fort Leavenworth because the existing buildings were beyond the type of renovation which was required by the Department of Justice standards. Based on the complaints from the civil administrators at Fort Leavenworth, the Department of Justice felt fully justified in alleging that the former military prison was inadequate and that the War Department had not fully explained the "shortcomings" in the facility.

Early in 1896, a suggestion was made within the Department of Justice that an entirely new prison should be built. The Department was greatly interested in this proposal and succeeded in enlisting Congressional favor to assist in this project. On June 10, 1896, after Congressional enactment, the President signed a bill setting aside approximately 700 acres on the south side of the Fort Leavenworth reservation for the use of the Department of Justice in building a new prison. This site was considered an ideal location for a penitentiary, and an initial $150,000 was appropriated by Congress to commence the building program. In March, 1897, Congress allocated funds to finance the entire project and construction was started.

The success with which this action brought about a site and sufficient funds to build a completely new prison, in less than a year after the Department of Justice assumed jurisdiction over the old military prison, was actually not anticipated by the Department of Justice. However, the pending removal of a civil branch of the government from the center of a large military reservation

eased the tension and conflicts which had occasionally erupted between the civil administrators of the prison and the military authorities of the post.

Meanwhile, the War Department was having second thoughts about the transfer of the military prison to the Department of Justice. The abandonment of the military prison had failed to solve any problems of the military as affected the handling and confinement of military prisoners. There was no decrease in the number of military offenders sentenced to dishonorable discharge and confinement. Even though "prison posts" were designated at various installations, the practice of confining incorrigibles or "hardened" criminals in post stockades with young soldiers who were serving short terms of confinement for relatively minor offenses was criticized by post commanders as well as by War Department inspecting officers.

Other negative aspects of the system included the situation that in being confined in the local "guardhouse" or stockade, the general prisoner often had men of his own unit serving as his guards. This deplorable situation led to an easy life for the general prisoner as he was in a position where he could more or less have things his own way. Additionally, the practice of detailing soldiers from local post units to act as guards was a distinct negative morale factor on these posts.

Another justifiable complaint about the system was that the prisoners were not "earning their keep" in post stockades or guardhouses. No vocational or supporting type activities were in

operation at any post guardhouse due to lack of personnel and/or funds. No rehabilitative efforts were practiced; confinement, custody and control were the requirements. The "prison posts" were hard pressed to find useful and gainful employment for the prisoners and this was the subject of many negative communications from post commanders to the War Department.

Throughout the Army, it became generally known that the former military prison at Fort Leavenworth would be returned to the War Department upon completion of the new Federal Penitentiary. There was very little that the War Department could do to alleviate the undesirable conditions existing at the "prison posts." Numerous emergency measures were undertaken to seek a solution to the many overcrowded guardhouses throughout the Army. Everything encountered pointed to the extreme need for a military prison.

The War Department received formal notification, on December 17, 1905, from the Attorney General advising of the return of the old Military Prison to the control of the War Department on January 1, 1906. In anticipation of formal notification, the Secretary of War appointed a board of commissioners to oversee the prison as was provided for in the organic creation act of March 3, 1873. The appointment of the board was announced in General Orders No. 205, War Department, dated December 14, 1905, in which order it was directed that:

> "The board will assume control of the prison upon its transfer to the War Department by the Department of Justice, initiate the work necessary to re-establishment of the prison, frame regulations for the government of the prisoners, and perform such other duties as may be required by

Department to the Department of Justice.

CHAPTER III

1907 - 1916

The Commandant's annual report for 1907 states in part that:

> "This prison lacks at present almost everything needed by a modern institution of this kind. The buildings are old and of poor construction. There is a constant and increasing danger from fire, which is a source of continual and great anxiety. Some of the buildings are kept together by iron braces, and the constant vibration caused by the machinery and the walking of convicts on the upper floors make them very insecure. Repairs are always needed, and with the most extensive repairs little can be done to improve conditions. As in all old buildings of inferior construction, the ventilation and sanitary arrangements are a source of constant trouble. The lighting and heating systems are also in poor condition. It is hoped, therefore, that within the near future a liberal appropriation will be made by Congress for the reconstruction, on a comprehensive plan, of a military prison which will have all modern improvements."

With the possibility of an appropriation for new construction forthcoming the Adjutant General had all of the prison buildings inspected and plans for a new prison prepared.

Based on plans and recommendations presented by the Adjutant General, Congress, on May 27, 1908, approved an initial appropriation of $150,000 to begin construction of a new prison and stipulated that the cost should not exceed $583,000, when completed. An additional $60,000 was approved for the construction of a power plant on the site where it is located today. The Congressional bill also directed that prison labor be used on every possible phase of the construction.

The crowded conditions at the Military Prison and the lengthening of general prisoner waiting lists within the various Military Departments (areas) forced the establishment of a branch to the military prison. The first branch was activated at Alcatraz Island on March 21, 1907 and was officially designated as "The Pacific Branch of the United States Military Prison." With the expansion of the branch Military Prison limited by the relatively small size of Alcatraz Island, only the Department of California and Department of Columbia were authorized to send their general prisoners to the branch prison.

Construction at the main prison at Fort Leavenworth started in the early summer of 1908 and progressed rapidly. The entire facility was to be enlarged. Once again a brick making industry was started since the new prison buildings were to be made of brick construction. A brick plant was started and all bricks were made by the prisoners themselves.

A new railway terminal was installed on the post, which permitted a switch to be extended into the prison enclosure, thus saving a considerable sum of money which would have been spent for hauling. Additionally, the time saved by the use of the railroad allowed the construction to proceed much faster than had been anticipated. Enormous quantities of steel were ordered as all the buildings of the new prison were to be fire-proofed.

It was found that utilizing prisoner labor provided a maximum amount of employment for the prisoners and permitted them to learn useful occupations and trades which they could follow upon release.

In addition to the construction work on the new prison, the men were employed in the rock quarries, brick plant, saw mills, lime kiln, on the prison farm, and in the operation of concrete block machinery.

The prisoners maintained the post and reservation roads, and reservation forests. They worked on the railroad, and were engaged in the making of carpets, brooms, and clothes for prison use only. Also, they did blacksmithing, carpentry, or worked in the wheelwright shop, tin, plumbing, electrical, steam fitting, tailor, shoe and harness shops doing prison work only, as well as operating the laundry. The learning of any of these trades was not permissible under the old guardhouse or stockade system and this fact was emphasized in the annual reports covering the construction period.

The fiscal year annual report for 1910 reveals that of the 898 prisoners assigned, more than 200 were enrolled in the educational program open to the illiterates and others desiring school. The chaplain was responsible for this schooling program and all classes were taught by personnel assigned to the chaplain's section.

By the end of 1910, Congress had appropriated the entire amount allocated for the construction of the new prison. During the summer of 1910, the average inmate population hovered around 900, virtually all of whom were fully employed in either the prison industries or on the construction program. With the prisoner population almost doubled since the prison's reopening in 1906, the facilities were over-taxed and the building program tempo was greatly increased.

To further alleviate the crowded conditions at the main prison, another branch military prison was opened. On October 13, 1914, the Secretary of War designated a portion of the military reservation at Fort Jay, New York, as the Atlantic Branch of the United States Military Prison. By the same order, the main prison was redesignated as the United States Disciplinary Barracks with Pacific and Atlantic Branches.

Further, the same order provided that the government and control of the United States Disciplinary Barracks and of all offenders sent there for confinement and detention would be vested in the Adjutant General of the Army under the direction of the Secretary of War. Additionally, the Adjutant General was to submit a full statement of the fiscal and other affairs of the prisoners to Congress annually for the previous fiscal year.

The year 1914 is also notable in that it marked the initiating of an innovative program of evaluation at the military prison. The program was administered solely by medical personnel, to include psychiatrists, and the purpose was to evaluate prisoners both physically and mentally. The department was charged with the duty of making an investigation of the mental and moral character of each prisoner admitted to the institution. After examination, a recommendation is made in connection with every general prisoner as concerning his potential for restoration to duty, as well as to clemency and parole. Those prisoners who had been sentenced to death were not examined.

During the period 1907-1916, activities at the USDB were

focused on renovation of existing buildings, erection of new structures and a general program of upgrading the entire facility. The Justice Department, with its virtually brand new prison located at Leavenworth, Kansas, had no need to look at the USDB for the housing of any Federal prisoners. The period was marked by a sense of complacency and satisfaction shared by the officials of the USDB.

CHAPTER IV

1917 - 1929

The United States entered World War I in 1917 and the strength of the U.S. Army jumped from under 30,000 men to more than four million men in less than two years. As could be expected, disciplinary problems increased accordingly. However, the Army was in the best position of its history to cope with the problem of the military offender with branch USDB's located on each coast and the main USDB, at Fort Leavenworth, rapidly nearing completion of all upgraded, permanent-type buildings.

Early in the summer of 1917, the vocational activities of the main prison experienced almost phenomenal growth and expansion. Congressional financial aid was necessary to get this program fully underway but, once the initial outlay provided the required buildings, equipment, materials and livestock where needed, most functions became self-supporting and produced enough revenue from their operations to be able to contribute to the upkeep of the institution itself.

For the first time in the history of the USDB, the Farm Colony, comprising a dairy farm, poultry farm, hog farm, cannery, farm and garden department, and greenhouse, was put on a solid productive footing in the fall of 1917 and the spring of 1918. Some of these operations are still in existence today, while the dairy farm and the cannery were the first to be terminated in the 1950's.

In 1918, a new cold storage facility was constructed and an

ice house with a capacity of producing 25 tons of ice daily was built. The work proceeded rapidly and ice deliveries to the entire post were started during the first week of July, 1918. The ice plant was successful in supplying the USDB and the entire post with ice, providing a boost to the vocational training program and saving untold funds in the preservation of food.

The shoe repair shop was enlarged and additional machinery installed which increased the capacity to 500 pairs of shoes per day. The tailor shop's capacity was also increased so that, in addition to the work of altering and mending prisoner's clothes, the shop was able to produce civilian and military garments in the amount of almost 22,000 pieces in 1918. All clothing received by the prisoners upon release was made in the prison tailor shop. Along with the tailor shop, a dry cleaning plant, which was completed by August of 1914, had the capability to clean and press 1,500 uniforms a month.

The vocational training program also had an activity known as the Model Room where prisoners were trained in the making of models, carpentry, art work, cabinet-making, landscape painting, water color painting and in mechanical drawing. This operation produced models of fortification sets, terrain sets, as well as combination sand table sets of these two, various target designation sets and musketry landscape sets. These instruction sets were widely used throughout the Army and were made available to outside interests as well. The Model Room, for unknown reasons, ceased operation in late 1920. However, it was reinstituted in the 1950's as the Training Aids Section and is still operational today.

On July 1, 1917, the prisoner population was 1,536. In spite of this large population, a letter from the Adjutant General was received by the Commandant on September 14, 1917, directing the Commandant to prepare plans for handling an expected increase of 3,000 prisoners. Accordingly, plans and cost estimates were prepared and forwarded, which were approved and an appropriation of $236,000 provided by Congress to commence construction on January 3, 1918.

The prison equipment, permanent and temporary, was expanded to accommodate 5,000 prisoners of which 3,000 could be placed in temporary barracks without cells. 1,500 prisoners could be placed in open cells and 500 in locked cells. Additionally, extensions within the walls were required with a 150 bed extension built on the hospital and the enlarging of the laundry and cooking and baking facilities. One wooden 2-story barracks building was also constructed inside the wall to provide additional billeting space.

All of the construction projects were completed by the first week of May, 1918 and the Guard Companies, which had been billeted inside the wall, were moved to new quarters where they were billeted in a barbed wire stockade outside the wall. This move was a morale booster for them as they were quartered inside the wall. This move also made it possible to exclude all the guards from the USDB proper except when on duty.

In addition to the vocational activities and industries previously mentioned, a print shop began operation sometime in 1918. This shop, still operational today, is now known as the Screen

Process Printing Shop.

The work of the Department of Psychiatry and Sociology, began in the fall of 1914, did not become accepted until 1917. Within the tremendous influx of prisoners contemplated, the procedures established by this department in examining and classifying new prisoners became invaluable. The basic procedures, with modifications, are still used today and in the year 1918, the Department opened a psychiatric ward in the prison hospital to handle a maximum of 30 prisoners.

As of June, 1918, available records indicate that paroles had been available for only a short time (three years) and a total of 543 paroles had been granted up to that time. Of this total, 230 prisoners were paroled between June, 1917 and June, 1918. The violation of parole percentage up till June, 1918 was 7%. It must be noted that, at that time, all prisoners were required to serve half their sentence before they were eligible for parole consideration.

The first Clemency Board was appointed in February, 1919, to review and determine clemency action on the case of every general prisoner in the institution. In five months time, the Board had acted upon 3,360 cases and had obtained Secretary of the War action on all but 273 cases which had not been returned at the end of the year. The records reveal that a total of 941 prisoners were restored and 1,412 received remitted sentences during the fiscal year 1919.

The second progressive step of this period was the organization of the General Prisoners' Conference Committee on June 10,

1919. This step was actually an experiment, directed by the Adjutant General, in effecting cooperation between the USDB administrative personnel and the prisoners "for the betterment of conditions generally and for the maintenance of proper order and discipline." As an experiment, the Committee proved to be a complete failure through the attempted usurption of control of the institution. This action on July 22, 1919, after 42 days of existence brought about the abolishment of the Committee.

The last progressive step of this period was the establishment of the Morale Department on May 22, 1919. Upon the activation of this section, numerous requisitions were submitted for athletic equipment and an athletic field was layed out, which included a baseball diamond. This section was charged with arranging for the delivery of addresses and short talks on such subjects as loyalty, patriotism, discipline, sex morality and other subjects. Every man processing in and out of the institution was interviewed by this section and special attempts were made to aid the prisoner's morale by writing letters for him in an effort to rectify compassionate matters and also in an effort to obtain employment for the man prior to his release.

On November 1, 1919, the USDB supply function was discontinued and the activity, including all supplies on hand, was transferred to the Post. This necessitated the requisitioning from the Post of every item needed for the operation and maintenance of the USDB. With the discontinuance of the local supply office, the salvage and reclamation activities acted as liaison in all supply

law or by orders from the War Department."

The transfer of the prison back to the War Department was delayed one month due to some construction problems encountered in building a new cellhouse, but the transfer was officially accomplished on February 1, 1906.

The re-establishment of the Military Prison was carried out with a minimum of delay which necessitated the temporary drafting of administrative and security personnel from the Fort Leavenworth post garrison. Major George S. Young, 18th Infantry, was detailed as Commandant and the first guards were detailed from post units. In June, 1906, Congress gave authority to the War Department to permanently detach enough men to form two guard companies, numbering 165 men.

In the summer of 1906, the commanding generals of all the United States military departments (areas), excepting the Department of California and the Department of Columbia, received orders to transfer to the Military Prison all general prisoners having one year or more to serve. Subsequently, these commanding generals were directed to designate the Military Prisons as the place of confinement for all general prisoners sentenced to terms of one year or more, except those who were to be sentenced to confinement in a penitentiary.

The reactivation of the United States Military Prison made it possible to relieve the overcrowded stockades and guardhouses throughout the Army. It also provided a return to the system which was abandoned at the time the prison was transferred from the War

matters with the Post.

Fiscal year 1920 found the prisoner population of the institution to be rapidly dropping and then becoming fairly stable at 1,200-1,300 inmates. This strength stabilization permitted the reorganization of many staff sections resulting in a considerable reduction in force and in the number of guards assigned to the Guard Companies. From a peak strength of over 700 men in 1919, the Guard Battalion was reduced to 490 men in 1920.

Very little is known about the operation of the USDB for the period 1920-1929. Department of the Army records reflect little correspondence concerning the facility for that period. Records available do indicate that the War Department became very interested in the vocational activities at the USDB and the ultimate disposition of the funds received from the products produced for sale by the prison industries. Several letters are available which directed the Commandant, USDB, to prove detailed financial statements for all vocational activities and industries which made "profits."

In the early spring and summer of 1929, the Federal Government (Justice Department) carried out a massive campaign against racketeers and other Federal law violators. The campaign resulted in an almost instantaneous overflow of prisoners at most Federal correctional facilities. In August, 1929, the Justice Department approached the War Department with a request that the USDB be turned over to the Justice Department for the incarceration of Federal prisoners. This request was generated by the tremendous overcrowding of prisoners at the Federal Penitentiary in Leaven-

worth, Kansas.

The Judge Advocate General, when asked for an opinion as to the legality of such a transfer, replied to the Adjutant General as follows:

> "To turn over the entire plant of the United States Disciplinary Barracks to the Department of Justice, or to permit that Department to use vacant space in the plant for the confinement of convicts sentenced to confinement in a penitentiary, would be to act out of harmony with the purpose of Congress in repealing the old prison status (1895) and substituting therefor the disciplinary act, and would serve to convert the Disciplinary Barracks, in whole or in part, from a military reformatory into an annex of the United States Penitentiary.....I am satisfied, however, that the department is without authority in this area.....For reasons previously outlined above, it is the opinion of this office that the courses of action proposed in your letter of the 10th instant would be without authority of law."

In spite of the Judge Advocate General's opinion, action to transfer the facility to the Department of Justice was taken in September, 1929. This action was taken following a riot of major proportions at the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, which was seriously overcrowded while the prisoner population of the USDB was far below its accepted capacity.

The USDB was to be operated as a Penitentiary Annex by the Department of Justice and the USDB was deactivated on September 14, 1929 on a five year lease to the Department of Justice. This lease was later renewed for six additional years.

CHAPTER V

1930 - 1948

The Pacific Branch of the United States Disciplinary Barracks, located at Alcatraz Island, California, was deactivated in 1933. In the same year, it was transferred in its entirety to the Department of Justice.

The Atlantic Branch of the USDB at Fort Jay, New York, functioned as the main confinement installation of the Army for the eleven year period (1929-1940) during which the parent USDB was operated as the Penitentiary Annex by the Department of Justice.

With a possible war in the near future, the Secretary of War requested that the USDB at Fort Leavenworth again be placed under his control. The Justice Department no longer had need for the facility and the transfer was accomplished on November 16, 1940. Preparatory to reactivating the facility, an advance detachment consisting of three officers and three enlisted men reported for duty on October 25, 1940. This cadre contingent was charged with making arrangements for the command's arrival upon the closing of Atlantic Branch, USDB, on November 6, 1940.

Upon arrival on November 8, 1940 the prisoners from the Atlantic Branch were housed in one wing of the facility as the installation was still under the control of the Justice Department. The official transfer was effected on November 16, 1940 and the Army became responsible for the installation's maintenance and operation

on that date. Yet, in reality, this transfer was not complete as 150 federal prisoners remained in the facility under custody of the Justice Department. The last of these prisoners were transferred to federal institutions on December 16, 1940, placing the entire facility under military control on that date.

Numerous obstacles were encountered in assuming operational control of the physical plant and its outlying properties. Civilian foremen and supervisory personnel were retained in their former capacities and greatly aided the authorities in getting some of the shops and activities operating under military control. However, a complete reorganization of the entire institution was necessary to insure the efficient operation of the facility and to inaugurate the necessary security measures.

When the USDB was transferred to the Justice Department in 1929, most of its properties were located outside the walls. Gradually, these properties were transferred to the Post proper and gradually disbanded. Upon the returning of the USDB to the Army in 1940, only the greenhouse was still operational. War Department action instructing the return of the properties to the USDB was only partially effective. The greenhouse was the first of these properties to be returned and this was accomplished on December 1, 1940. On February 24, 1941, the farm colony and the cemetery were transferred to the USDB. This colony, consisting of a truck garden, farm proper, and hog ranch, was officially reestablished on March 15, 1941. The chicken ranch and dairy farm were not placed in operation. The first of numerous inside activities to be placed in operation

were the paint shop on February 21, 1941 and shortly thereafter, the laundry, dry cleaning plant, tailor shop, shoe shop, and utilities shop were operational. All of these activities were staffed almost exclusively with prisoner labor. Additionally, a considerable number of prisoners were furnished to the Post for the golf course, mosquito control, post police, and as garbage truck workers. Some of these daily details were made possible through the reestablishment of local parolees and "honor gangs."

Physical deterioration was found to be widespread throughout the institution at the time of the transfer. Seventeen major repair and reconstruction projects were deemed necessary to prevent a breakdown in operation of the physical plant. Roofs, plumbing, floors, and walls were found to be in the greatest need of immediate repair. Within weeks of the reactivation, the cell blocks, basements, and kitchen facilities were cleaned and placed in a sanitary condition.

The mess section was found to contain a great deal of antiquated and unserviceable equipment, which appeared to be the result of poor maintenance. Even the mess hall tables were of poor construction and were extremely difficult to maintain in a satisfactory condition. Fortunately, there was still enough serviceable equipment to permit the operation of a mess comparable with any organizational mess in the Army. A Cooks and Bakers School was organized and operated in conjunction with the mess, with an average of 20 prisoner students.

On January 2, 1941, the Employment Office of the USDB, initiated in 1917, was reorganized due to a drastic change in the

organization of the USDB itself. The purpose of this section had remained fairly constant since its inception and its concept of the requirements involved in prisoner job placement is reflected in its annual report for 1941 as follows:

> "The major purpose of the Employment Office is to promote the satisfactory work placement of the prisoners for the good of both the prisoner and the institution. To do this it becomes necessary to consider their intelligence, education, health, aptitudes, interest, and emotional makeup. It is also necessary to consider the physical requirements, degree of skill, and amount of training required by the job. Complete success is achieved in a given work placement when the prisoner has characteristics reasonably well matched with the factors involved in a specific job."

With the reactivation of the facility, a varied athletic program was organized and active participation in some form of recreation was urged on each prisoner. With the adoption of a regular recreation schedule, indoor and outdoor, a good percentage of the population participated in baseball, softball, horseshoe pitching, volleyball, outdoor basketball, touch football, track and field events, physical training, and boxing. In the first four months of reactivation, 170 men received some training under the boxing program and 134 men were engaged in physical training through gymnasium work. The field and track activities were the main event on holidays, with good representation by the inmate population.

The Education Section got off to a slow start early in 1941, when 18 students were enrolled in academic and vocational courses, but the emphasis was on vocational work which was offered in conjunction with work in the various shops. The next course to be offered was one in show card and sign painting which started in

March, 1941. By the end of June, 1941, 280 men were enrolled in some type of educational program. The rules regarding educational programs were voluntary enrollment and compulsory attendance. Proficiency certificates were awarded upon successful course completion.

One of the major problems encountered during the reactivation was the USDB Hospital. The Hospital, presumably built by the War Department prior to the transfer of the institution to the Justice Department in 1929, was found to be inoperable as a hospital through a combination of normal wear and neglect. The roof, plumbing and wiring were in need of immediate repair. Much of the medical equipment, especially physiotherapy, X-ray, clinical laboratory, and operating room apparatus, was unserviceable. The Hospital Mess could not be used because of unserviceable ranges and refrigerators. By the end of the first fiscal year reporting period, a great deal of progress had been made in overcoming the conditions noted above through renovation, repair and replacement. The exact date is unknown but the hospital reopened sometime in 1941.

The Department of Psychiatry and Sociology was set up soon after reactivation with a psychiatrist, an assistant psychiatrist, and a psychologist, all of whom worked with, and at the direction of the surgeon. This department was charged with the responsibility of compiling a case history on each prisoner (as is still done today) through personal interviews, review of individual military records, and through questionnaires sent to the prisoner's former organiation commander, relatives, former employers, etc. This information then permitted the psychiatrist to make his summary and impression of the

prisoner which was referred to the Clemency Board.

The Psychologist assigned to the department was charged with conducting psychological examinations as a part of the educational, employment, vocational, and mental health program in the institution. However, because of administrative organization and non-availability of time needed for complete psychological studies, his office confined itself primarily to administering group and individual intelligence tests. All incoming prisoners were given the Army General classification Test, and when this proved beyond a prisoner's comprehension he was given the Termas-Merrill Revision of the Stanford-Binet Tests of Intelligence. These tests were found to provide a reasonably dependable classification of men according to their general capacity to learn. By June 30, 1941, the entire prisoner population of 593 had been administered one or both of the tests.

With the entry of the United States into World War II, the Army had been built from a strength of 188,000 in 1939 to 1,686,000 by December, 1941. By May, 1945, there were over 8,000,000 men bearing arms. With this gigantic growth the disciplinary problems increased proportionately. The number of general prisoners (persons sentenced by a general court-martial to confinement and to dismissal or dishonorable discharge, whether the dishonorable discharge was suspended or executed) rose to a peak in October, 1945, when 37,766 general prisoners were in confinement.

In 1943, the USDB's capacity at Fort Leavenworth was 1,600 and the inmate strength in June, 1943 was 1,593. By mid-1944 this population had jumped to a fairly consistent figure in the 2,800-

3,000 range. Temporary buildings were erected, but the situation was one of overcrowding and this situation deteriorated on virtually a daily basis.

By July, 1944, three branch DB's had been opened at the following locations: Eastern Branch, Green Haven, New York; Southern Branch, North Camp Hood, Texas; and Northwestern Branch, Fort Missoula, Montana. In 1945, seven additional branches of the USDB were established as follows: Southeastern Branch, Camp Gordon, Georgia; Central Branch, Jefferson Barracks, Missouri; Northern Branch, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Midwestern Branch, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana; Southwestern Branch, Camp Haan, California; East Central Branch, New Cumberland, Pennsylvania; and Northeastern Branch, Pine Camp, New York. Available records reflect that the ten branches received a total of almost 2,000 prisoners in the year 1945 alone.

In addition to the branches of the USDB, the Army also operated the New York State Prison at Green Haven, New York (leased from New York State) and in January, 1947, the Army acquired the modern 1,551-man Disciplinary Barracks at Lompoc, California. The facility at Lompoc was patterned after the United States Penitentiary at Terre Haute, Indiana, and was designed jointly by the Army's Correction Branch and the U.S. Bureau of Prisons. The facility, leased from the Bureau of Prisons, was surrounded by a single wire fence with guard towers and was classified as medium-to-maximum security. The living facilities included dormitories, honor rooms, inside cells and outside cells.

It had a large industrial building (for vocational programs), maintenance shops and educational facilities, and 3,000 acres available for farming.

With one exception (Lompoc), the branch DB's consisted of blocks of typical Army barracks, mess halls, and other buildings, surrounded by a double wire fence and guard towers. Though not very desirable in terms of security, these barracks were invaluable in confining part of the prisoners in the Disciplinary Barracks System. At its peak in October, 1945, the System had a prisoner population of 13,873 general prisoners, and as late as March, 1947, it had a population of 10,691 general prisoners.

The 13,873 general prisoners confined in the Disciplinary Barracks System in October, 1945, just about taxed the system to the bursting point. Were it not for the following procedures and policies practiced by the Army in its corrections program, the prisoner population during the years 1944-48, would have been virtually impossible to confine and control.

Until the cessation of hostilities, it was the Army's policy to hold convicted general court-martial prisoners overseas, except those given life sentences and other very long sentences which were to be served either at the main Disciplinary Barracks or in a Federal Penitentiary. It was deemed unfair to soldiers serving honorably in combat zones to return men sentenced to dishonorable discharge to the safety and comparative comfort of the Disciplinary Barracks and Federal penal institutions in the continental United States.

After the war with Japan ended, this policy was reversed.

Of an estimated 23,000 general prisoners received for confinement at overseas installations up to July 1, 1946, approximately 7,000 were considered nonrestorable and were transferred to the United States as shipping space became available. Between December 15, 1945 and February 28, 1946, approximately 5,000 general prisoners were transferred from Europe to the United States in shiploads of 400 prisoners per shipload. The prisoners were processed and classified at receiving branches at Fort Hancock, New Jersey and New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, and were then transferred to the military confinement facility or federal institutions designated as the place of confinement.

Another program which helped to keep the prisoner population of the Disciplinary Barracks System at a manageable level during the war was the establishment of Rehabilitation Centers. During World War II and the immediate post war years, the Army's policy was to screen, train and restore to duty as many general prisoners as possible. This was in addition to the so-called "garrison prisoners" who had been convicted of minor offenses and sentenced to periods of short-term confinement but not to discharge. In December, 1942, the first of nine Rehabilitation Centers located in the various Army Corps Areas was established. These centers received both general and garrison prisoners and the mission of the Centers was training and restoration to duty of all prisoners possible. The Centers were gradually closed after the hostilities terminated and the last one was deactivated in May, 1946. The peak population of the Rehabilitation Centers was 5,873 in October, 1945.

During their existence, the Centers restored a total of 17,450 men to duty.

While the Rehabilitation Centers operated in the continental United States, the Army also operated Disciplinary Training Centers in the various overseas theaters of war. These Centers combined the functions of a Rehabilitation Center and a Medium Security Disciplinary Barracks. The function of screening restorable prisoners and training them for return to duty was usually exercised more rapidly than in the United States, since prisoners located in overseas areas could be restored to duty by the court-martial convening authority. In October, 1945, when the Army's general prisoner population was at its peak, there were approximately 11,500 such prisoners in overseas installations including the Disciplinary Training Centers. Unfortunately, records which reflect the number of men returned to duty from the Disciplinary Centers are not available if, in fact, such records exist.

The final program/policy which served to keep the prisoner population at a manageable level involved the restoring of carefully selected prisoners to duty from the Disciplinary Barracks System itself. While the USDB has had authority to restore prisoners to duty since 1914, this authority has generally not been used to any extent during periods of peacetime. As soon as the United States entered World War II, the Disciplinary Barracks stepped up its restoration rate sharply. Prisoners convicted of civil offenses, as well as military offenders, were restored to duty. The restoration program went into high gear in 1944, and after the war ended, the

program continued at an even higher pace. The Army had two major goals for its wartime restoration policy. First, to salvage much-needed manpower for the Army; secondly, to save thousands of soldiers, most of them very young, from carrying the heavy burden of a dishonorable discharge for the rest of their lives. The road to restoration was not closed to military prisoners confined in Federal institutions. During and after the war, hundreds of men determined to be restorable were transferred to the Disciplinary Barracks from the Federal system and restored to duty from the Army system.

The training for restoration to duty at the Disciplinary Barracks, the Branches, and the other confinement facilities was thorough and the screening of prisoners was rigorous. A total of 82,243 general prisoners were committed to Army installations in the United States and overseas, and to Federal correctional institutions, from the mobilization of the Army in 1940 through December, 1946. Of this total number, about half were restored to duty. From November, 1940 through March, 1947, a total of 7,323 prisoners were restored to duty from the Disciplinary Barracks System.

It was impossible to determine what percentage of these men restored to duty made good. However, it has been estimated that over 90 percent of the over 42,000 men restored did not become general prisoners again. This number was about the same strength of three full infantry divisions. Further, it was impossible to measure what salvaging a good Army record and a honorable discharge meant to these soldiers and their families for the rest of their lives.

As previously noted, the Army policy of returning selected prisoners to duty was rigorously pursued during times of war/ conflict. This policy was finally formalized for the first time as an ongoing program in 1968. On July 1 of that year, the Correctional Training Facility (now the U.S. Army Retraining Brigade) was established at Fort Riley, Kansas, as the Army's principal restoration facility.

World War II was the severest test of the Disciplinary Barracks since its inception in 1875. The System proved more than adequate to accomplish its mission. This period also pointed out the need for a formalized program geared toward returning selected prisoners to duty.

CHAPTER VI

1949 - 1967

Existing records concerning the USDB during the period 1942-1967 are sketchy. As can be expected, one can safely assume that the prisoner population once again took a sharp surge upward during the years of the Korean conflict. By mid-1950, the prisoner strength had dropped from a World War II high of 1,961 (at Fort Leavenworth) to 695. During the years 1952-55, the inmate population varied from a low of about 1,100 to a high of approximately 1,400 prisoners. After 1955, the population was on a gradual downward trend until the early years of the Vietnam conflict when it started upward once again. In the period 1965-68, the population jumped from a low of 706 to a peak of 1,459, more than a doubling of the population in a period of three years.

This period was marked by several especially significant events. Complete racial integration was accomplished throughout the entire facility during the final year 1955. The integration of the main dining facility was the final phase of a desegregation program started in 1945. From its inception in 1875, the facility had been a completely segregated facility.

Another change which took place in the early 1950's was the removal of the block letters "USDB" from all outer garments of prisoners. Along with the removal, prisoners were issued individual name tags which helped to restore the prisoners to persons each

having an individual identity.

During this period, probably the single most significant activity began in late 1954. With the inception of the Korean conflict, the Army was once again not fully prepared for the drastic rise in prisoner population experienced at the USDB. Few renovation or construction projects had been initiated since the crash renovation program of 1940-41. The existing facilities were in poor shape and Congress was reluctant to appropriate money since World War II was considered to be the last of global wars.

In late 1953, the Army began a compaign with an ultimate goal of building another confinement facility, permanent in nature, to complement the USDB. It was envisioned that this new facility would be kept in a constant state of readiness and in the event of major hostilities, could be put into operation immediately.

Available records indicate that the Army had an additional purpose for the construction of a new permanent facility. It appears that the Army hoped to make the new facility a permanent site for the rehabilitation of prisoners with emphasis on vocational and industrial training. If the new facility was opened, the USDB would be relegated to an institution with a mission of solely custody and confinement.

The site for the new facility was finally decided to be the New Cumberland General Depot, New Cumberland, Pennyslvania. During World War II, a temporary type facility had been conducted at New Cumberland and functioned as a Branch of the USDB until 1947. From 1947 the facility was used only sporadically and by no stretch of

the imagination could the existing facilities be considered adequate for a permanent type facility.

Within the Army in 1955, the Quarter Master General (QMG) strongly supported the proposal for the construction of a facility at New Cumberland. However, due to financial and political constraints, the QMG strongly urged that the project for construction of a permanent type disciplinary barracks facility, with a total capacity of 1,500 prisoners, should be included amont priority items recommended for the Military Construction Five Year Program commencing in 1958. The Adjutant General was not satisfied with this proposal and an extensive lobbying effort was conducted with the goal of immediate Congressional appropriation of funds.

Unfortunately, it appears that the QMG had a better grasp of the political climate than did the Adjutant General. A proposal went to Congress as part of the current Military Construction Program. The proposal called for a preliminary appropriation of $850,000 to provide necessary funds for the designing and specifications of the proposed Disciplinary Barracks, and a request for funds for the overall construction in the sum of $17,000,000.

The proposal was returned without action by Congress in the fall of 1955. The accompanying Congressional memorandum indicated that the proposal might be better received if it was included in the Military Construction Program beginning in 1958.

The campaign to secure a permanent type facility at New Cumberland continued with numerous efforts at various levels of government agencies involved. In hopes of making the proposed

facility more attractive to Congress, the capacity of the facility was lowered to 1,000 prisoners in 1956 and other changes to lower the projected costs were incorporated into the plans. The proposal for inclusion in the Military Construction Program for 1958 was also returned by Congress.

On August 25, 1958, the hopes of the Army for a permanent type disciplinary barracks at New Cumberland were dealt the final blow. A letter from the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics to the Provost Marshal General was written on that day and the following partial quote of that letter tells the whole story:

> "The subject of Disciplinary Barracks Installations in CONUS is presently under study by a special board within the Department of the Army. Construction of a permanent Disciplinary Barracks at New Cumberland must be deferred until the findings and recommendations of that board become available. This presumably would be too late for consideration in the Fiscal Year 1960 Military Construction (Appropriations) Program. If the finds of the Board should be favorable toward long-term utilization of New Cumberland Disciplinary Barracks, a request for permanent construction could be considered in the Fiscal Year 1961 Program."

The dealt blow was further formalized on December 24, 1958 when the Provost Marshal General was notified that not only was a permanent type facility not to be built, but also that the temporary facility at New Cumberland was to remain closed forever.

In spite of all the Army's efforts, the Vietnam conflict found the Army's corrections facilities to consist of just one institution. The USDB at Fort Leavenworth, operating with some buildings constructed in 1875, was the extent of the Army's confinement facilities for long-term prisoners.

CHAPTER VII

1968 - 1977

During the Vietnam conflict and until 1974, the USDB was under the direct protection of the Department of the Army. General Order Number 30, Headquarters, Department of the Army, dated June 28, 1968, established the United States Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth as a Class II activity under the jurisdiction of the Provost Marshal General effective July 1, 1968. On the same effective date, the Correctional Training Facility at Fort Riley, Kansas was established as the Army's principal restoration facility. The Disciplinary Barracks terminated its restoration training program on December 31, 1968. From then until the present, all punitive discharge prisoners who have been approved for restoration to duty are transferred to the Correctional Training Facility (redesignated at the U.S. Army Retraining Brigade in late 1973).

The administration responsibilities of the Provost Marshal General with respect to the Disciplinary Barracks was spelled out in a change to Army Regulation (AR) 210-170, which was published on August 14, 1968. The regulation change also covered the responsibilities of major commanders. The change read, in part, as follows:

> ".....a. The Provost Marshal General has Department of the Army Staff responsibility for policies and procedures concerning disciplinary barracks. He will exercise command over disciplinary barracks as Class II activities and will conduct technical inspections of disciplinary barracks as required.

b. Major commanders are responsible for provision of administrative and logistical support to disciplinary barracks within their commands in accordance with host-tenant support agreements developed following the guidance contained in current Army regulations. They will select, process and transfer military prisoners to disciplinary barracks in accordance with the criteria established in AR 633-5.

c. Commandants of disciplinary barracks are responsible for accomplishing the disciplinary barracks mission and the objectives, adhering to policies established by this regulation, and promulgating such additional instructions, policies, and procedures as may be required....."

With both the Correctional Training Facility and the Disciplinary Barracks under the jurisdiction of the Provost Marshal General, the Army's corrections programs experienced the first effects of the Vietnam conflict. The prisoner population at the USDB jumped from 1,207 in Fiscal Year 1967 to 1,459 on June 30, 1968. However, the USDB was fairly well prepared for the surge in prisoner population and few significant problems were encountered. Most of the problems during the period of the Vietnam conflict were of a physical nature. Because of the age of the majority of the buildings, maintenance was a continuing problem.

During the period 1968-1977, there were several significant events unrelated to the Vietnam conflict. Since 1945, the USDB has served as the Army's confinement facility for both Army and Air Force prisoners. In 1974, based on an agreement formalized between the Department of the Army and the Department of the Navy, Marine Corps inmates were integrated into the USDB population. The agreement was one of the results of the discontinuance of the Naval Disciplinary Command at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. 1974 was also

significant in that it was the first year enlisted women were assigned to the cadre complement of the USDB.

The control of the USDB was changed in Fiscal Year 1974. With the elimination of the office of the Provost Marshal General, the USDB was placed under the U.S. Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). In order to facilitate continued smoother operation, the TRADOC Provost Marshal was directed to exercise staff supervision over the USDB. Though this change stripped the USDB of its status as a Class II activity of the Department of the Army, few if any negative results were experienced due to this major change in status.

During Fiscal Year 1975, a major reorganization of the USDB resulted in the personnel savings of 51 military personnel being realized. Also, a feasibility study of the confinement of Army female prisoners commenced and continued into Fiscal Year 1976. The goal of the study was to determine whether a female correctional treatment program could be established which would parallel that which was available to male Army prisoners.

On September 2, 1976, the USDB was assigned to the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. No major command, logistic or administrative problems were encountered. The move was made in the interest of financial savings, to remove some duplication of staff efforts, and to provide orderly lines of command and control.

As the USDB came to the end of 1977, it remained as the only maximum security type confinement facility for Army, Air Force and Marine prisoners. Its capacity is 1,882 prisoners and its primary mission is "to provide the correctional treatment and training, care

and custodial supervision necessary to return military prisoners to duty as effective soldiers or to civilian life as useful citizens with training in a marketable skill and with improved attitudes and motivation."

CHAPTER VIII

THE USDB TODAY AND A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Today

As previously mentioned, the USDB is the only maximum security type confinement facility for Army, Air Force and Marine prisoners. 1978 has brought to the DB its first Navy prisoners and the first female prisoners are expected at any time. With the arrival of the Navy prisoner, the DB became a true joint session confinement facility.

Today's prisoners are serving a variety of sentences ranging from 30 days to life. Offenses range from Absent Without Authorized Leave to murder and approximately 97% of the inmates have received sentences which include punitive discharges. Sentences are subject to regular reviews by the appropriate Clemency and Parole Boards, located in Washington, D.C., and are forwarded to the Secretary of the individual's particular service for final action. Based in part on the recommendations of the USDB staff, sentences may be reduced.

The mission of the USDB is generally considered to be two-fold in nature. First, to incarcerate those persons who are sentenced under the Uniform Code of Military Justice to confinement. Second, to provide the correctional treatment, care, training, and supervision necessary to return inmates back to duty or to civilian life as useful citizens with improved attitudes and motivation.

The motto of the USDB is "Our Mission - Your Future." This

motto, according to several DB officials, symbolizes the can-do attitude, the spirit of teamwork, and the philosophy of the United States Disciplinary Barracks. Correctional treatment is the driving force and this term means different things to different inmates. For most, it means schooling, learning new job skills, learning how to live with others, making plans for the future, learning to control their temper, or merely "maturing" and doing what is expected of them.

The Disciplinary Barracks realizes that each inmate is a composite of his past experiences. To prepare a correctional treatment program for each individual, the advice of many sources is solicited in building a "Treatment Profile." These sources include the Red Cross, family, friends, local police agencies, former commanders of the inmate, the DB Mental Hygiene Staff, and the formal military records of his military service. This data, together with the evaluations of work and domicile supervisors, counselors, and other members of the USDB staff form the basis for the periodic "Boards" (a panel of USDB staff members who meet with the inmate). These boards are responsible for inmate job assignments, custody levels, and making recommendations regarding clemency and restoration to duty. The final approving authority for Clemency and Restoration to Duty is the Secretary of the man's respective service.

In order to ascertain what the future may hold for the USDB, interviews were conducted with several key officials of the facility. Comments from these officials indicate that the operation of the DB,

along with all state and federal confinement facilities, will probably come under closer scrutiny in the future in the area of prisoners' rights. In particular, physical living areas, communications (written and oral), and appeal procedures will probably be matters of greater interest to the judicial system(s) in the future.

Regarding the DB itself, it may very well become a Department of Defense (DOD) facility, along with the U.S. Army Retraining Brigade at Fort Riley, Kansas. It is envisioned that both facilities may be operated under the guidance of a DOD Policy Council. Operating as DOD facilities, both organizations would more likely be more cost effective. A recent Government Accounting Office (GAO) report has criticized the Army Confinement system at less than cost effectiveness.

Future

In the future, the correctional treatment programs of the USDB will probably be more balanced in terms of work ethics and vocational skills. Hopefully, this balance will return a more useful and productive person to the civilian community. Perhaps, in the future, inmates will no longer be paroled to civilian life. Rather, they will be paroled to their respective branch of the Armed Forces and their commander may well act as their Federal parole officer. Such a program would mean a tremendous savings to both the Federal government and the Armed Forces in terms of manpower retained.

Though this paper is a historical summary, the writer would be remiss if a few personal observations were not included by way of closing. Prior to attending Command and General Staff College, the

writer had the good fortune to serve at the U.S. Army Retraining Brigade for over four years. While at that organization, interface with the USDB was constant and often on a daily basis. Without doubt, the writer feels that the USDB is accomplishing its mission in an outstanding manner. Dedicated staff personnel and a high degree of professionalism have built for the USDB a reputation unequaled in the confinement field, including military, state and Federal confinement systems.

APPENDIX A

PRISONER STRENGTHS OF THE

UNITED STATES DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS (1875-1977)

Since starting operation in 1875, the USDB has experienced tremendous fluctuation in its prisoner population. Records are not available for every year of operation, but the following listing covers all but 28 of the years that the USDB was operational. Strength figures used generally reflect the prisoner population on the last day of the fiscal year. As previously mentioned, the USDB was operated by the Justice Department on two separate occasions. These two periods are annotated.

YEAR	NUMBER OF PRISONERS
1875	225
1876	332
1877-80	not available
1881	323
1882	447
1883	453
1884-86	not available
1887	496
1888-91	not available
1892	520
1893-95	not available
1896-1906	Justice Department facility
1907-08	not available
1909	774
1910	not available
1911	898
1912-13	not available
1914	951
1915-16	not available
1917	1,536
1918	2,676
1919	3,703
1920	3,105

YEAR	NUMBER OF PRISONERS
1921	1,250 (approximate)
1922-28	not available
1929	709
1930-39	Justice Department facility
1940	171
1941	593
1942	651
1943	888
1944	1,659 (not including branches)
1945	1,578 (not including branches)
1946	1,961 (not including branches)
1947	1,833 (not including branches)
1948	1,056
1949	865
1950	695
1951	884
1952	1,388
1953	1,058
1954	1,035
1955	1,173
1956	993
1957	857
1958	806
1959	763
1960	649
1961	879
1962	826
1963	760
1964	775
1965	706
1966	855
1967	1,207
1968	1,459
1969	1,359
1970	1,076
1971	873
1972	950
1973	1,156
1974	1,383
1975	1,371 (average monthly strength)
1976	1,189 (average monthly strength)
1977	1,060 (average monthly strength)

APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED STATES DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS (1978)

The USDB is currently organized with a directorate type staff. To assist the Commandant, the staff is composed of six primary staff sections, organized as the following Directorates:

The Directorate of Resource Management includes the Budget Division and the Manpower Management Division. Sub-divisions include the Vocational Training Fund, the Personal Deposit Fund, the Personal Property Section, and the Inmate Morale Support Fund.

The Directorate of Training includes the Vocational Division, Academic Division, and the Learning Center. This Directorate is responsible for the operation and administration of all academic education and vocational training programs.

The Directorate of Custody has immediate charge of all prisoners and is responsible for their custody, control, care and security, regardless of their location. This includes those prisoners domiciled within the walls, the local parolee unit, and the vocational farm. This Directorate also administers athletic and recreational programs for the prisoners.

The Directorate of Classification is responsible for seeing that prisoners' correctional treatment programs of work, education, training, and treatment are carried out in accordance with classification board actions. This Directorate is also responsible for

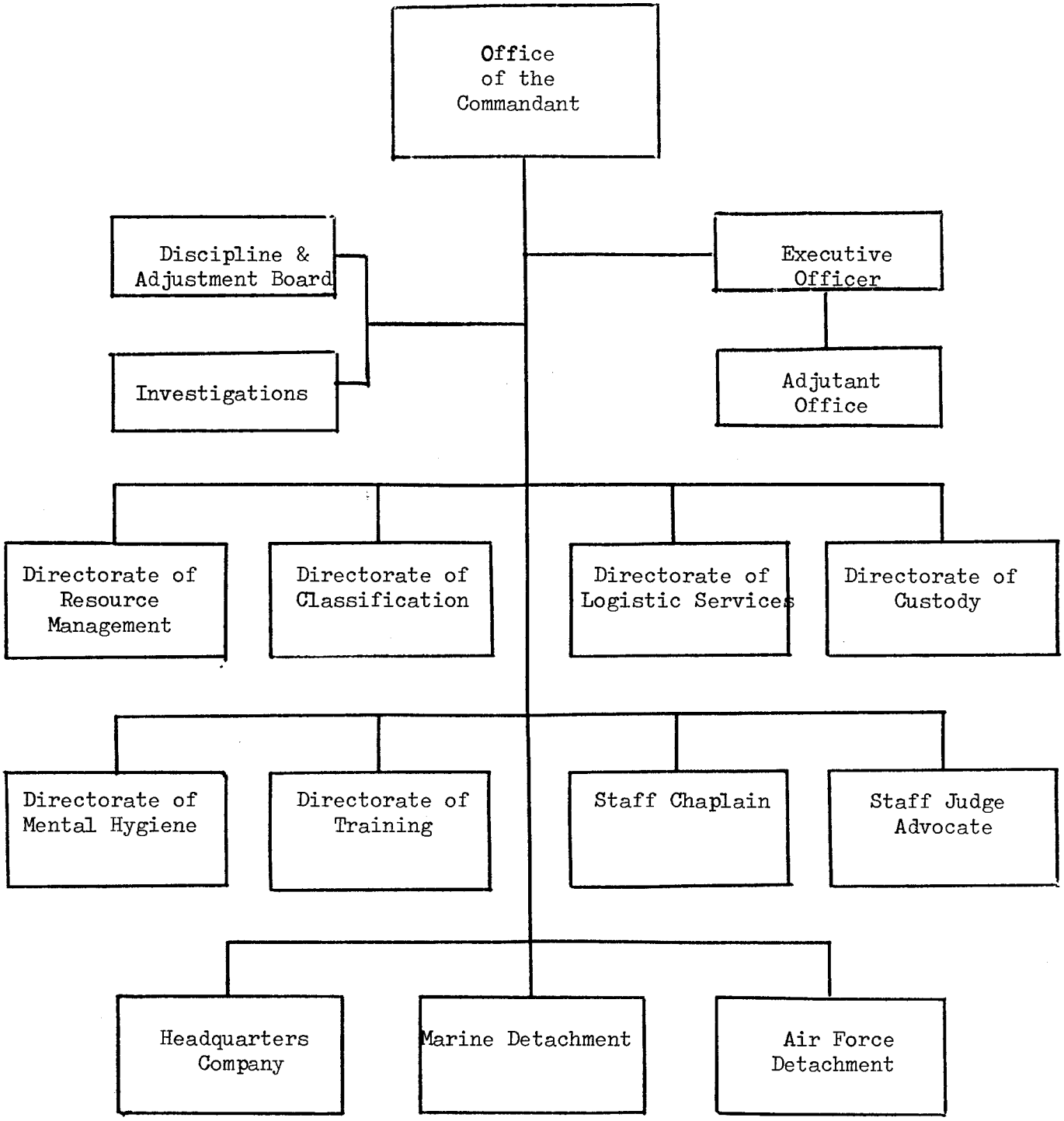
establishing dates of eligibility for consideration for restoration, clemency and parole, for convening disposition boards to consider these matters, and for processing releases under clemency and parole decisions. The director also has responsibility for supervision of the Prisoner Pre-Release programs of work/study and/or employment placement. Other duties performed by this Directorate include approving prisoners' visits, transfers to other facilities, and release on temporary parole.

The Directorate of Mental Hygiene has the mission of providing comprehensive mental hygiene consultation services with emphasis on inmate evaluations and processing, inmate treatment and services, staff consultation and training, and research. This Directorate also administers inmate self-help programs including Alcoholics Anonymous, the Right Path Drug Program, and the 7th Step Foundation (a national self-help organization of former state and federal inmates).

The Directorate of Logistics Services provides maintenance, food service, supply and all other service type support. This Directorate employs one of the largest prisoner work forces at the USDB. The Supply Division requisitions and accounts for all supplies and equipment used by the institution.

The USDB's directorate type staff provides responsive support in the operation of the institution. Last of several types of organizations used since 1875, it appears that the present organizational structure has proved to be the most appropriate for this type of correctional facility.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART UNITED STATES DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS



APPENDIX C

DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES (1978)

When the site of the Military Prison was selected as Fort Leavenworth instead of Rock Island Arsenal (1874), a survey of the buildings to be involved at Fort Leavenworth was made and the following action recorded: "After mature consideration.....it was decided that the grounds and buildings occupied by the quartermaster's department on the north side of the post present greater opportunities for.....a proper prison than the buildings within the arsenal grounds enclosure....." As near as can be determined, only three buildings of the original compound exist today within the perimeter walls of the main complex.

As previously noted, the wooden fence to enclose the main compound was completed in 1875 and many renovations were started on the buildings within the compound to adapt them to prison use. In the following 103 years, many changes to the physical plants have taken place. Buildings were constructed, torn down and then rebuilt. Renovations have been on-going since 1875 and continue as of this writing.

As 1978 began, the USDB finds itself with facilities located at three different places on the Fort Leavenworth military reservation. The Main Unit is the walled area of the USDB and consists of approximately 12-1/2 acres and is joined on the north by a five acre recreation field which is enclosed by a double link fence. The

field is equipped with lighting which is adequate for night recreation. Within the walled area of the Main Unit are 26 buildings, ranging in age from six to over 138 years old. The plurality of the original buildings were constructed during the period 1863 to 1878. The main prisoner domicile, known as the "Castle," was constructed during the period 1909 to 1921. The "Castle" consists of eight wings projecting from a center area, which houses the Control Room of the Directorate of Custody. Four of the wings are domiciles for prisoners. The large Consolidated Prisoner Dining Facility covers one entire floor of the largest wing (5-Wing). Below the Dining Facility is the USDB Laundry, which employs 60 to 70 prisoners daily. This vocational activity takes in laundry from the entire Fort Leavenworth reservation. Above the main dining facility is a large gymnasium, used for recreation and also serving as a movie theater for the inmates. Included in the "Castle" are the offices of the Directorate of Custody, the Investigations Section, the Chaplain Section, the Library, and the Supply Division. The perimeter wall enclosing the yard and buildings of the Main Unit varies in height from 15 to 41 feet, with the original section being constructed of native stone quarried by prisoners from various locations on the reservation itself. The newer sections of the wall, built to enclose the area occupied by the "Castle" are of cast concrete block. Headquarters Company, USDB, is located to the immediate west of the Main Unit.

The Vocational Farm and Greenhouse are located approximately two and one miles, respectively, northwest of the Main Unit. The

Farm encompasses a total land area of 760 acres. The complex includes swine barns, poultry houses, and other typical farm structures. A one-story brick building provides housing, dining area, and space for recreational activities for the minimum custody prisoners assigned to the Vocational Farm. The Greenhouse is located midway between the Main Unit and the Farm. Numerous varities of both indoor and outdoor plants and flowers are grown in the Greenhouse and this building also serves as the primary sales outlet for the Farm and Greenhouse products. The proceeds from the sale of these items provide revenue for the USDB's Vocational Training Fund.

The Local Parolee Unit is located approximately 3/4 of a mile northwest of the Main Unit in the area of the Reservation designated as Sherman Heights. The Unit consists of a two-story administration building, a two-story 80-man barracks, a two-story 144-man barracks and a separate kitchen and dining hall building. The buildings are all of modern design and have been in use since early 1965, with exception of the 80-man barracks which was completed in May, 1971. The complex also includes large indoor and outdoor recreational areas and a picnic ground with appropriate facilities for use by the parolees and their families.

APPENDIX D

PRISONER VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (1978)

Since its start in 1875, the USDB has tried numerous educational and vocational programs. At the close of Fiscal Year 1977, the following programs were operational:

	PROGRAM	AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRISONERS ASSIGNED	DESCRIPTION
1.	Upholstery Shop	21	Training to teach the total skill of furniture upholstery
2.	Academic Day School	20	High school studies
3.	Vocational Garage	18	Training in all phases of automotive repair
4.	Shoe Repair	10	Training in all phases of shoe repair, to include orthopedic corrective shoes
5.	Sheet Metal Shop	9	Training in the trade of sheet metal work, fabricating and repairing sheet metal items
6.	Print Shop	16	Training in the technical aspects of printing, offset, letter press, process photography, bookbinding, and engraving
7.	Barber Shop	24	Training in all phases of barbering
8.	Screen Print Shop	34	Training in screen process printing and related functions
9.	Vocational Warehouse	3	General warehouse and stock records instruction

	PROGRAM	AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRISONERS ASSIGNED	DESCRIPTION
10.	Vocational Office Clerks	5	Sales, clerical and janitorial training
11.	TV and Radio Repair	14	Training in all phases of television and radio repair
12.	Vocational Greenhouse	6	Training in all phases of florist work
13.	Welding Shop	16	Training in the skills of acetylene and electrical arc welding
14.	Vocational Farm	21	Training in general farm work, including operation and maintenance of farm machinery
15.	Electrical Appliance Repair	22	Training in the repair of household appliances, to include air conditioners and house wiring
16.	Furniture Repair	11	Training in cabinet and furniture making and repair
17.	Learning Lab	13	Educational program designed to operate at an individual's own pace
18.	Preventive Maintenance	0	Training in basic carpentry, plumbing, electrical and building maintenance skills
19.	Masonry Shop	7	Training in all aspects of masonry work
20.	Carpenter Shop	9	Training in all phases of carpentry work
21.	Laundry	70	Training in the operation of various types of laundry and pressing equipment
22.	Laundry Control	17	Training in all phases of commercial laundry control and distribution

	PROGRAM	AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRISONERS ASSIGNED	DESCRIPTION
23.	Dry Cleaning Plant	18	Training in the operation and maintenance of dry cleaning equipment
24.	Training Aids	15	Training in the operation of woodworking machinery and the construction of training aids
25.	Electric Shop	12	Training in the theory and skills of general electrical work
26.	Plumbing Shop	12	Training in all phases of plumbing
27.	Machine Shop	15	Training in general machine work and locksmithing
28.	Paint Shop	18	Training in the surface preparation and craft of painting
29.	USDB Supply	10	General clerical, stock handling, and records keeping training
30.	Jaycees	1	General clerical work for inmate Jaycee Chapter and leadership training
31.	Auto Body Shop	15	Training in all phases of auto body repair
32.	Photo Lab	3	Photographing and processing of cadre and inmate ID badges and photography training
33.	Data Processing	14	Training in the skills of ADP programming, card punching and machine operation
34.	Food Service	130	Training in operation of food service facilities to include maintenance of equipment
35.	Special Services	33	Training in the operation and management of recreational and athletic facilities, including the operation of a radio station

	PROGRAM	AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRISONERS ASSIGNED	DESCRIPTION
36.	Inside Police	22	Training in janitorial work and limited institutional maintenance
37.	Job Placement	3	Assists in preparing inmates for release by assisting in securing employment
38.	Right Path Program	2	Conducts orientation classes, and educational programs concerning drugs, their use and abuse, counseling sessions and pre-release classes regarding resources in the civilian community
39.	7th Step Program	1	Conducts orientation classes, and group and individual counseling sessions for behavior modification
40.	Work Release	15	Civilian positions being filled by inmates
41.	Car Wash	17	Exterior preparation and upkeep of automobiles
42.	Post Stables and Kennels	0	Training in the care of dogs and horses
43.	Post Engineers	0	Training with the Post Engineers in routine maintenance of grounds and facilities
44.	Museum	0	Draft plans for, build, and set-up displays
45.	Commissary	14	Stocking shelves and bagging groceries

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