

*The Prison Labor Problem In*  
D E L A W A R E

*a survey by*  
*The Prison Industries Reorganization Administration*

NOVEMBER 25, 1936.

THE PRESIDENT  
THE WHITE HOUSE,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

MR. PRESIDENT:

AT THE REQUEST OF THE DELAWARE COMMISSION ON PRISON INDUSTRIES, A BODY APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR C. DOUGLAS BUCK AS DIRECTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE PRISON INDUSTRIES REORGANIZATION ADMINISTRATION HAS CONDUCTED A SURVEY OF THE INDUSTRIAL OPERATIONS AND ALLIED ACTIVITIES IN DELAWARE'S THREE PENAL INSTITUTIONS FOR ADULT OFFENDERS. OUR WORK HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 7194, DATED SEPTEMBER 26, 1935, AND WE HEREWITH RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT OUR REPORT.

THE THREE INSTITUTIONS STUDIED ARE THE NEW CASTLE COUNTY WORKHOUSE, THE KENT COUNTY JAIL AND THE SUSSEX COUNTY JAIL. THE PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OF THESE THREE PRISON PLANTS IS MODERN AND FOR THE MOST PART ADEQUATE; BUT THERE IS GREAT NEED FOR MODERNIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IF DELAWARE IS TO ACHIEVE PROPER CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS AND ELIMINATE SERIOUS IDLENESS.

WE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE BEST PLAN WOULD BE TO ADOPT A CENTRALIZED FORM OF ORGANIZATION BY WHICH THE STATE WOULD TAKE OVER THE PRESENT COUNTY PLANTS AND OPERATE THEM AS UNITS IN A COHERENT BUT FLEXIBLE STATE PENAL SYSTEM. UNDER SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT THE COORDINATION OF INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES WOULD BE SIMPLIFIED, DUPLICATION OF INVESTMENT WOULD BE AVOIDED, AND PROPER STANDARDS OF CLASSIFICATION COULD BE MAINTAINED.

IF IT IS IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS TIME TO CHANGE THE PRESENT DECENTRALIZED ARRANGEMENT, WE HAVE SET FORTH AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN INVOLVING CERTAIN MEASURES FOR FACILITATING COUNTY COOPERATION IN PENAL MATTERS.

WHATEVER FORM OF PENAL ORGANIZATION IS USED, WE RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. PASSAGE OF A STATE-USE LAW PROVIDING FOR THE COMPULSORY PURCHASE BY TAX-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES OF THE PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED FOR THEIR USE IN THE PRISONS.
2. EXTENSION OF THE POWERS OF THE BOARD OF CHARITIES AND CORRECTIONS TO CONTROL PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES IN THE WELFARE INSTITUTIONS IN ORDER THAT THERE MAY BE NO CONFLICT WITH ACTIVITIES IN THE PENAL INSTITUTIONS.
3. PASSAGE OF A LAW PERMITTING THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND THE STATE FORESTER TO USE PRISON LABOR FOR WORK ON THE HIGHWAYS AND IN THE STATE FORESTS.
4. EXPANSION OF FARM ACTIVITIES AT DELCASTLE FARM AND AT THE SUSSEX COUNTY JAIL AND ACQUISITION OF FARM PROPERTY FOR THE USE OF THE KENT COUNTY JAIL.
5. DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT THROUGH CLASSIFICATION WORK AT EACH INSTITUTION.
6. PLACING ALL MEDICAL SERVICE AT THE SEVERAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE HANDS OF THE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.
7. ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE PROBATION SERVICE TO COORDINATE THE WORK NOW BEING DONE AND TO DEVELOP IT IN ALL THREE COUNTIES BY MEANS OF ADEQUATE PERSONNEL UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A SKILLED DIRECTOR.
8. DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE PAROLE SERVICE TO PERMIT PRE-PAROLE INVESTIGATIONS EARLY IN THE TERM OF IMPRISONMENT AND CONSTANT COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PAROLE OFFICER AND THE CLASSIFICATION STAFF AT EACH INSTITUTION.
9. ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE AT STATE EXPENSE OF A NEW PRISON FARM FOR ALL WOMEN OFFENDERS.

UNDER EITHER THE CENTRALIZED OR DECENTRALIZED PLAN THE ONLY CONSTRUCTION REQUIRED IS THE ERECTION OF THE SMALL INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN, SOME REMODELING AT THE NEW CASTLE COUNTY WORKHOUSE, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ROAD OR FORESTRY

CAMP. THE PRIMARY NEED, HOWEVER, IS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REORGANIZATION, AND WHILE THIS IS OF COURSE A MATTER WHICH THE STATE ITSELF MUST DECIDE, WE WISH TO EMPHASIZE ITS IMPORTANCE AS A PREREQUISITE TO ANY FORWARD-LOOKING PENAL PROGRAM.

PREFACE

CHAPTER I. THE PENAL SYSTEM IN DELAWARE

II. REASON FOR THE STUDY  
 DELAWARE  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 LOUIS N. ROBINSON, CHAIRMAN.

III. THE PENAL INSTITUTIONS IN  
 RELATION TO STATE ORGANIZATION  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 JOSEPH N. ULMAN.

IV. THE QUALIFICATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL  
 PLAN  
 \_\_\_\_\_

V. THE EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 GUSTAV PECK.

VI. PROBATION AND PAROLE AS PART OF THE  
 PENAL SYSTEM  
 \_\_\_\_\_

VII. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 JAMES P. DAVIS.

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 LINTON M. COLLINS.

## PREFACE

THE DIFFICULTIES CONFRONTING THE PENAL INSTITUTIONS OF DELAWARE WERE FIRST PRESENTED TO THE PRISON INDUSTRIES REORGANIZATION BOARD DURING THE ATLANTA MEETINGS OF THE AMERICAN PRISON ASSOCIATION IN OCTOBER, 1935, BY MR. JOSEPH S. HAMILTON, CHAIRMAN OF THE DELAWARE COMMISSION ON PRISON INDUSTRIES AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NEW CASTLE COUNTY WORKHOUSE. MR. HAMILTON STATED THAT THE COMMISSION DESIRED ASSISTANCE IN STUDYING THE POSSIBILITIES OF DEVELOPING STATE-USE INDUSTRIES, DECREASING PRISON IDLENESS AND PROVIDING OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING.

ON NOVEMBER 20, 1935, THE COMMISSION ON PRISON INDUSTRIES AND THE PRISON INDUSTRIES REORGANIZATION BOARD HELD A JOINT CONFERENCE IN WILMINGTON, AT WHICH THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS PASSED:

"WHEREAS, THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE HAS APPOINTED A STATE COMMISSION ON PRISON INDUSTRIES, CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF REPORTING TO THE 1937 SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE, ON A PLAN FOR FULLY UTILIZING THE LABOR OF PRISONERS AND INMATES OF PENAL AND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS, WITHOUT ADDING TO THE TAXPAYERS' EXPENSE; THEREFORE BE IT

"RESOLVED, BY THE STATE OF DELAWARE COMMISSION ON PRISON INDUSTRIES, IN MEETING ASSEMBLED IN PARLOR G OF THE HOTEL DUPONT, WILMINGTON, DELAWARE THIS TWENTIETH DAY OF NOVEMBER, A.D., 1935, THAT THE PRISON INDUSTRIES REORGANIZATION ADMINISTRATION BE AND IS HEREBY INVITED TO CONDUCT A SURVEY OF THE INDUSTRIAL OPERATIONS AND ALLIED ACTIVITIES CARRIED ON BY THE SEVERAL PENAL AND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE, TO THE END THAT A SUITABLE PLAN FOR REORGANIZATION OF SUCH INDUSTRIAL AND ALLIED ACTIVITIES BE SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND WE, AS THE COMMISSION ON PRISON INDUSTRIES, EXPRESS OURSELVES AS BEING WHOLEHEARTEDLY IN SYMPATHY WITH THE MOVEMENT, WITH THE ASSURANCE THAT WE WILL GIVE TO THE PRISON INDUSTRIES REORGANIZATION ADMINISTRATION OUR UTMOST COOPERATION AND SUPPORT."

THE STATE OF DELAWARE DOES NOT ITSELF MAINTAIN ANY PENAL OR CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR ADULTS; INSTEAD, THE JOB OF CARING FOR ADULT OFFENDERS IS DIVIDED AMONG THE THREE COUNTIES. (THE INSTITUTIONS FOR JUVENILE DELINQUENTS RECEIVE STATE SUPPORT, BUT THEY ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS SURVEY.) OUR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS ARE THEREFORE BASED UPON OUR STUDY OF THE INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES AND CERTAIN ALLIED PROBLEMS AT THE NEW CASTLE COUNTY WORKHOUSE, THE KENT COUNTY JAIL AND THE SUSSEX COUNTY JAIL.