PROBATION IN ISSUE: THE REPORT OF THE PENAL POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE, 1981

The above document presented to the Minister of Justice in February 1982 is based on the submission of numerous groups and individuals made to five working parties appointed by the Review Committee. As well, in an attempt to gain widespread public participation, advertisements appeared in the national press inviting further written comment. A total of 269 submissions were received; unfortunately, this laudable use of the democratic process was negated to an extent by the mere ten months allowed for the preparation and collation of materials.

The ground covered by the Committee's working parties was extensive and, given an adequate time frame in which to deliberate, the Committee could have brought down a rather more useful and coherent report than the final product appears to be. Whilst there are many aspects of penal reform which deserved support, such as greater community involvement and a de-emphasis on incarceration, there are also inconsistencies and vaguaries in the Report which show that the policy framers have not come to grips with the practicalities of certain of their concepts: "Throughcare" is a striking example. This is disconcerting for those who are aware that the Review is likely to form the basis of the most important piece of legislation since the 1954 Criminal Justice Act. None are more apprehensive than members of the Probation Service, many of whom foresee an end to their role as social workers and the beginning of a possibly more sinister function in terms of community 'surveillance'.

In a very real sense the Probation Service forms the link not only between the judicial and penal processes via the disposition of offenders but it also provides the statutory means for ex-prisoners' rehabilitation within the community. The Service is, therefore, at the fulcrum of, and sensitive to, any change of policy in these areas. By the same token, the Service is of great strategic importance when the proposed policy has as its main thrust the diversion of offenders from incarceration to community-based sanctions. Such was the case with the recently introduced sentence of Community Service which, despite a proven track record in the United Kingdom and the decision to place the scheme entirely in Probation hands, was received with obvious suspicion by the national association.[1] The following discussion will disclose a similar response from those who sense again the prospect of their political manipulation, but probably on this occasion with more perturbing consequences.

It will first be necessary to look briefly at the history of the Probation Service in order to provide a baseline for the proposed changes. This will entail a critical evaluation of the function and role of probation officers whose perception of the job today is often very different from that of their predecessors. Secondly, a careful examination will be made of the Review Committee's specific recommendations relating to Probation, particularly where these are sustained by certain criticisms of the Probation method. Finally I make some tentative suggestions as to the shape and character of the new so-called "Offenders Supervisory Service", which for the idealist, is the Probation death-knell, though for the realist, merely the essential rose by another name . . . .

Probation in New Zealand had its genesis in the First Offender's Probation

1 N.Z.Assoc.Probation Officers, Select Committee Submissions, Criminal Justice Act (no 2), Feb. 1930.

Act of 1886 which made provision for first offenders who had not committed certain of the "graver offences", to be released on probation. Probation Officers were appointed with the task of supervising probationers and making enquiries about every person arrested for the first time to ascertain whether they could be expected to "reform without imprisonment". The sentence however, was infrequently used until 1920 when the Offenders Probation Act removed the first-offender limitation and the Crimes Amendment Act of the same year extended parole from "Reformative Detainees" to all men serving sentences of imprisonment.

Initially probation was a part-time undertaking with Police or Prison officials performing the supervisory function, but in 1915 civilian officers were appointed and in 1926 the first full-time officers joined the rather motley assortment (which by then included voluntary officers, usually clergymen).

In 1950, impetus was given to a growing awareness that the probation method offered a practical means by which an offender could be reformed, by the appointment of Mr S. Barnett as Secretary for Justice. He initiated a Probation Service free from prison administration and appointed Mr P. K. Mayhew (ex-Inspector of Probation, British Home Office) as Chief Probation Officer. It was the latter's drive and expertise which, through his involvement in the draughting of the 1954 Criminal Justice Act, led to the adoption of an approach which emphasised reformation as opposed to incarceration. Sir Clifton Webb[2] explained new departmental policy thus:

> First it is our prime duty to take every practicable step to divert men from a life of crime while they are yet malleable and comparatively inexperienced in crime. To this end we believe in a constructive penal policy and in a developed and fully effective Probation Service which offers the only continuing form of penal treatment that leaves the offender within the community under supervision.

Clearly the Probation Service was to be the vanguard of an experimental policy and the Act provided a framework for its development. Probation Officers were, when so required, to supply a report to the Court to determine the most suitable method of dealing with the case, and to this end the probation officer was to advise the court on the offender's suitability for probation. The court was empowered to release any person convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment to a period of not less than one, or more than three, years probation. In addition, the 1954 Act charged the probation officer with the supervision of parolees released following borstal training or a sentence of at least 12 months imprisonment.

The remainder of the 1950s saw a continued development of the Probation Service with the aim of providing skilled assistance to every court in the country. During the following decade the Service went through a period of consolidation during which districts developed still further under full-time probation officers, and preparation of pre-sentence reports became a major duty of all officers. More responsibility and the development of treatment skills came with the introduction of probation hostels, pre-release hostels and juvenile periodic detention centres. In an effort to deal with some of the more difficult clients, a probation treatment centre was set up in Auckland in 1968. This is perhaps an early indication of the growing number of the more intractable offenders being

2 "A Penal Policy For New Zealand" (1954), Justice Department.

released on probation both via the parole system and as a result of the type of split-sentencing (non-custodial) recommended in the 1971 and 1972 Justice Department Annual Reports, to reduce a burgeoning prison population. The latter trend has continued until recently when a comparatively slight drop in numbers has been attributed by government sources to the success of 'community service' operated by the Probation Service since February 1981.

The above summary has placed the currently proposed legislation in its historical context. We must now narrow the focus and consider certain practical realities wich confront the individual officer in terms of his function and role; for these are not merely defined by legislation, but by training and philosophical background.

For almost 100 years the Probation Service has been required to perform two basic functions, namely the furnishing of pre-sentence reports and the supervision of offenders. The former, since 1954,[3] has been defined as reporting on the "character and personal history" of an offender, "with a view to assisting the court in determining the most suitable means of dealing with his case", whilst the latter function has always involved the offender's reformation or rehabilitation.

This dual mandate remained for many years unquestioned by probation officers who saw themselves primarily as 'officers of the court'. But there has evolved over recent years an increasing identification with the social work profession and a concomitant attempt to diminish the more authoritarian aspects of the job. As a result there now exists within the ranks, both in New Zealand and overseas, an element of confusion over the probation officer's role. Part of this has arisen from a continuing disenchantment with the traditional client-centred social work approach based on the treatment paradigm. The belief that the individual offender can somehow be readjusted to fit back into 'normal' society is now often seen as untenable in relation to many offenders whose shortcomings are perceived as a reflection of *society*'s ills and the inequalities of a class structured system. Walker and Beaumont[4] put it this way:

> The suggestion that the interests of offenders and society are really complementary is based on a view of delinquency as an illness which both would be better without. The criminal act is seen as a piece of personal maladjustment rather than a conscious act with social and economic significance. This mode of delinquency requires the adoption of an extreme consensus view of society — all have a stake and can benefit, so only the maladjusted dissent from its common values and goals.

The practical experience of probation officers sharply contradicts that view. The whole ritual of the court makes it clear that the offender is in conflict with 'society'. Decisions are made which are directly against the interests of the individual for 'the greater good of all'.

Furthermore the authors challenge the commonly held assumption that pre-sentence reports are a straightforward analysis by the probation officer of the reasons for an individual's criminal act and the most effective course of treatment to prevent a repetition. They suggest that in fact the dominant influence on reports is that they are "written for an *audience* — the court". This determines the approach taken, the content and the style. It also acts as a constraint

3 Criminal Justice Act (1954).
4 *Probation Work: Critical Theory and Socialist Practice* (1981).

determining the limit of material considered relevant . . .

> The probation officer's purpose in writing reports is twofold: to influence the sentence imposed and at the same time to maintain credibility with the court.

There are an increasing number of officers today who are professionally qualified; in addition, all new recruits receive their social work training at generic social work courses. Information is accumulated on the job (from clients, colleagues and from written material and observation) which makes them uneasy about the system of criminal justice. Doubts about the need for particular laws, police methods, the way in which guilt is established and differences in punishments imposed on different types of offenders, all contribute to this uneasiness. For these reasons probation officers tend to see their reports as a means to redress the balance by influencing the courts towards more lenient sentences.

Notwithstanding the fact that many officers perceive their role in exactly these terms, there are others who would deny any manipulaiton of this sort and would be hard-put to accurately define their role. Some, like Hicks,[5] adopt an opposing stance and contend that far from mitigating penalty the traditional format of the report tends to "contribute to a system of selective justice in our courts and to high rates of imprisonment". He explains that:

> For decades probation officers have been producing reports on the 'character' (a highly judgmental concept) and personal history of offenders in order that courts may determine sanctions and dispositions. . . A content analysis of reports would probably reveal more negative information than positive and more historical than current data. Probation officers have developed a style and form of report preparation that encourages inequities; that treats people from 'good' backgrounds well and persons from 'poor' backgrounds not so well.

Definitions of the job vary considerably since personal values and orientations can be freely exercised. Probation officers who are unhappy with the authoritarian elements of their position can publicly accept such requirements which conflict with their social work values and later modify and adapt these in the privacy of their own offices. This flexibility is preserved so long as the social work approach remains intact, for there is no satisfactory way of structuring a therapeutic method based on a personal relationship. (By the same token it should not therefore be assumed that an officer is an autonomous figure in the casework area. In fact casework supervision and accountability are very real constraints.)

Flexibility, to a greater or lesser extent, is then the key to the incompatible demands of control and treatment placed upon the Service. It is also vital in terms of job satisfaction. Ann Fisher[6] argues convincingly that the Probation Service

> acts as a safety valve in the judicial system and in order to retain the flexibility required for such a role, minimal attempts have been made to clarify the function of the probation officer. Clarification has not been demanded by the Probation Service because it values the autonomy consequent upon such flexibility.

5 Addressing an Institute of Criminology Conference in Wellington, on 22.8.1981.

6 "The Probation Service Exists on an Elaborate System of Pretence" (1978), *Social Work Today*, 9.37.

Fisher points out that it is the Service's power, in association with the unlimited control of the courts, which lends it credibility, not its social work function; that in essence the Probation Service

> exists today because of an elaborate system of pretence. The judiciary and legislature pretend that the Service is a casework agency and know it acts as a subtle form of social control; the Probation Service pretends it is a subtle form of social control and knows it is a casework agency.

The experienced probation officer will not be surprised at falling prey to this judicial symbiosis or at his protrayal as an elusive, chameleon-like creature, but the reminder may yet be painful. But whatever his response, the fact remains that this freedom of role is valuable, if ever a source of professional and personal conflict. The latter is increasingly due to the changing nature of probation clientele who nowadays are more criminally sophisticated and a higher 'risk' in the community. The aforementioned inappropriateness of traditional casework methods for these clients in particular provides fertile ground for the proponents of a more structured role for probation officers. But what in essence is social work? The concept is quite clearly central to any ongoing discussion of the future of the probation service.

Social casework is a distinctly nebulous term and despite attempts to professionalise the approach by attaching it to scientific and pseudo-scientific theory, it remains somewhat vague and subjective. As noted earlier, a basic principle is its concentration on the individual from which follows diagnosis of a breakdown in his/her ability to 'function' adequately in society. A therapeutic approach has been developed to relieve the ensuing anxieties which involves expressions of understanding, warmth and support to enable the deviant to re-adjust. However, according to Fisher[7] for such a model to be appropriate three vital assumptions have to be made:

1. The individual's behaviour is non-functional,
2. The individual accepts that his behaviour is problematic, and
3. The individual is prepared to respond to help offered.

From this definition it follows that such assumptions cannot be made about many Probation Service clients and certainly those who are already socialised into patterns of criminal behaviour. Criminological studies have shown that deviant behaviour is in some communities a normal and functional response where dominant values of society are not universally accepted. This does not mean that illegal activity should be excused or concepts of punishment rejected, but it does suggest that such behaviour should not be seen as *individual* maladjustment and dealt with as 'pathology' by the Probation Service.

Whilst it is acknowledged that some clients exhibit signs of inadequacy, immaturity and instability (and are therefore potential candidates for casework), it must also be realised that for the therapy to be successful these clients too must willingly accept assistance. It is submitted that in this country at least, where clients are not voluntarily released on probation, there are even fewer occasions where such methods can achieve success.

It is this element of coercion, this authoritarian function in probation, which has been the sticking point for the dedicated social worker. For despite, as we have seen, the officer's opportunity to mitigate the impact of his authority, the

7 Fisher, *supra*.
8 Foren and Bailey, *Authority in Social Casework*.

demands of his role remain. For the purists, of course, there can be no compromise. Earl Rogers investigates the dilemma:

> Is it possible for the probation officer to be a counsellor . . . if he is responsible for deciding whether the individual has broken probation and hence is to be sent to an institution? . . . It seems to the writer that he cannot maintain a counselling relationship with the client and at the same time have authority over him. Therapy and authority cannot be co-existent in the same relationship.

Yet for Singer[9] the concepts of caring and controlling are not difficult to reconcile. Indeed for him they are complementary. 'Control' he prefers to call 'surveillance' and this in the pathological sense he defines as "spying, watching over". But in the juridicial sense the same work takes on a new meaning, i.e. "control as *directing* or *superintending*".

'Caring' for Singer, becomes 'supporting' in the sense of "advising, befriending and . . . preventing a person from giving way". The political component to Singer's explanation is provided by Foucault who asserts:

> offences provide the mechanisms of legal punishment . . . on individuals; not only on what they do, but on what they are, will be and may be.[10]

Thus, for Singer 'care' forms a part of the

> knowledge-power relation; it is part of *discipline* (in the ideological field of knowledge) and part of another discipline *i.e.* the political procedure of *support* which explains the probation officer's relationship to and with clients.

Having considered at some length the varying perceptions of the probation officer's function and role, and overall, the rather bleak prospect for fruitful casework within the modern Service, it is timely now to consider the not unexpected criticisms of its effectiveness contained in the Penal Policy Review.

The Report claims that there is an increasing body of evidence showing that Probation does not have a significant impact on rates of recidivism. It states:

> We regard this as diluting penal resources into the community to such an extent that the cost in time and money is hardly justified in terms of any gains to the criminal justice system. (para 314)

From submissions, it is clear that this assumption is based primarily on a 1979 Justice Department study of 500 randomly selected offenders released on probation in 1974. Of these 59% were reconvicted during a subsequent 30-months period (but half of those were 'improving', either by not re-offending or by re-offending in a less serious way). A similar 1967 report with "generally similar findings" was presented in support and several other overseas studies selected to show that attempts to improve Probation have not worked: *e.g.* the English IMPACT study (Folkland *et al*, 1976) which showed no improvement in reconviction rates for "high risk offenders under intensive treatment". But other submissions presented contrary findings and the overall conclusion reached by the working party is to the effect that:

> the use of recidivism rates . . . may not be the most useful or pertinent criterion for the success or failure of this treatment. But to date no other relevant indication of success has gained general acceptance . . .[11]

9 Singer, in (1980) *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, no 8.
10 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, (1977).
11 *Penal Policy Review*, Submissions — Probation, Introduction, p 4.

Whilst recidivism remains the criterion of non-effectiveness, the Probation Service will of course always be found wanting and the reasons are as diverse as the explanations of offending. However, the Review Committee appears at least to recognise the problem and endorses the views of those officers "who have simply re-defined the role from one of attempting to reduce offending" to that of "providing limited help and assistance or acting as brokers to other social agencies" (para 314).

What the Committee has overlooked however is the fact that probation officers *need* no redifinition of their role to perform the tasks suggested — they already do these. What *is* required is a more realistic yardstick for measuring the success which many officers can point to, *whilst seeking to prevent re-offending*. Hicks[12] for example, (who first qualifies the Committee's assertion by stating that about 60% of probation clients go 2 years without a significant offence) says:

> clients can be taught to recognise danger signals in which, say, hostility and alcohol make them likely to commit an assault . . . or . . . [undergo] assertiveness training which can help them cope with hostility in a more positive way.

Fisher[13] suggests that officers,

> can claim success — based on the prospect of reconviction — both in the wider social sense of improved personal relationships, employment, change of environment etc. and, through specific casework techniques, probation officers can reduce personal anxiety, resolve interpersonal conflict, provide individuals with insight, mediate between the underprivileged and the state and can, in short, improve the quality of an individual's life.

The Review Committee, however, by its own criteria of effectiveness, and for other reasons (which one assumes are economic), has reached the conclusion that the Probation Service needs to clarify its role. What then are the specific recommendations which are set to achieve this and how significant will these changes be for the individual officer and the community as a whole?

Many of the ideas presented in the Report are not new. In fact the guiding principle, "throughcare" is a concept developed by the British Advisory Council on the Treatment of Offenders in 1963. This gave English probation officers a much broader involvement in the penal area, including 'after-care' and the management of volunteers. Our present document proposes a similar wide-ranging role for probation officers and hence the new title, "Supervisors of Offenders", which apparently encapsulates the new generic connotation. Essentially "throughcare" has three distinct phases:

> The first relates to the new services to be provided at court . . . the second phase runs through the term of sentence. It should look forward to ultimate release. . . . The third phase involves the actual preparation for release and the period immediately after. (para 391)

The Probation Service will evidently be involved in all three areas, *viz*:

> supervising the 'throughcare' programme for prison inmates, and in marshalling the resources of society for them . . . we see the Probation Service as a

12 *Public Service Journal*, May 1982.
13 Fisher, *supra*.

co-ordinating and guiding resource-link with volunteers, acting as a 'broker' to advise the courts of the services available, and able to match offenders with programmes designed for their support and reform. (para 317)

So far the concept is sound enough and it is unlikely the Service would take issue with its increased involvement both prior to release, and at the post-release stage. It is in phase two of the throughcare process that the difficulty arises, for if throughcare is to be 'ongoing', at what point does the probation officer cease his rehabilitative function? The Report quite explicitly states (para 121) that the criteria for imprisonment are "incapacitation, denunciation . . . deterrence"; that "rehabilitation as a component of imprisonment has been found wanting" (para 116). As Wellington criminologist Stace[14] puts it:

> The Committee seems unable to abandon the idea, despite the evidence it presents to the contrary, that an effective rehabilitative programme can be operated in a penal institution.

To achieve the aims of 'throughcare' and clarify the function and role of the new Offenders' Supervisory Service, the Committee recommends three new types of order: a supervision order for surveillance and control (not requiring the offender's consent); the treatment order, and a community care order (both voluntary). The first of these orders in particular has already been a source of consternation for many probation staff, and not without good reason if one is to examine the following British precedents.

Raynor reports [15] that a fairly consistent decline in the use of probation orders in the United Kingdom, 1972–79, led to a reduction in probation credibility. This, coupled with recommendations from the 1974 Younger Report for "strengthened" non-custodial sentences, caused the Probation Service to develop a range of helpful services which can be offered to clients and courts on the basis of "whatever contract or agreement is compatible with commonsense ideas of justice". Another initiative has been the attempt to develop tougher probation orders, "probation with teeth", such as the "Supervision and Control Order" envisaged in the Young Adult Offenders Report (1979). By that, young adults not normally suitable for non-custodial sentences would become subject to rigorous enforcement of special restrictive conditions in probation orders including the probation officer's power to detain an offender for up to 72 hours without referral to the Court. The reaction of many officers to this suggestion was horror at the possibility of becoming "screws on wheels".[16]

Raynor[17] provides a further example of the "rising tide of controlism" in his reference to the recently opened "Probation Control Unit" in Kent, "where probationers are required to attend 6 days a week for 6 months including evenings and to conform to curfew when they go home to sleep. If they have jobs they report to the unit straight after work. Before a day off (limited to Sundays and Bank holidays), the probationer has the conditions of his order read out to him as a reminder and he is required to address staff at all times by their proper titles and surnames "to protect him from the danger of becoming over-familiar". Only one staff member is a trained probation officer. Documents describing the regime explicitly emphasise containment and deterrence and there is little

14 "The Continuing Debate", (1982) *NZLJ* 120.
15 Raynor, in (1982) *Social Work Today*, 13, 19.
16 Haxby, *Probation: A Changing Service* (1978), 162.
17 *Supra*.

reference to any procedures or practices designed to assess a client's needs or provide appropriate help.

Whilst our local prototype of the supervision and control order as such does not have the teeth of these British examples, its *use* has the potential to be even more draconian. This power is manifested in the use of volunteers who, according to the then Secretary for Justice,[18] will not need to be trained personnel but merely people "with their hearts in the right place, who care".

Volunteers are to be used "because a probation officer cannot become familiar with an offender's lifestyle from behind a desk" (P.P.R. para 320). As well, volunteers will be "especially valuable in supervising members of cultural and ethnic minorities" (para 321).

Howard Jones, a visiting British criminologist, makes the valid observation that this surveillance role is unlikely to work anyway because:

> prisoners are locked up all the time yet it is recognised that total control of prisoners is impossible. What hope is there of a probation officer having the slightest control unless he builds up a network of spies and surveillance officers? Not only is the probation officer going to be peeping through keyholes and asking neighbours about behaviour but he is also going to have a small group helping with this. It's awfully reminiscent of the Nazi idea of children spying on parents.[19]

In another forum,[20] Jones admits that his scenario is unlikely to have been intended by the Review Committee, but it is likely that:

> [The] surveillance will be totally ineffective and therefore it will be dangerous for the rest of the public who will have to contend with dangerous prisoners running about the community.

In addition:

> Mistrust between the new supervisor of offenders and his client will now make supervision *less* effective because the all-important relationship will not develop.

It is difficult to fault Jones' reasoning or to ignore his call for probation officers to adopt a firmly positive stance in the face of an essentially negative role proposed by the new supervision order. Particularly is this so when one considers the likelihood of most probationers becoming candidates for supervision rather than 'treatment' or 'community care'.

As for these last two orders, there is not a great deal to be said except to reassert the fundamental criticism that, by categorising offenders to this extent, probation officers lose their flexibility and thus their perceived effectiveness. Hicks, in this same context, makes the interesting observation that

> in some ways we will be creating a system in the community not unlike the elaborate systems we employ in prisons; of classifying, regulating, ordering and compartmentalising persons.[21]

To complete the obvious Foucaultian analogy we are reminded, like Singer,[22] of

18 Robertson quoted in *NZ Listener*, April 17, 1982, 44.
19 Jones, *ibid*.
20 Addressing the National Association of Probation Officers Conference, at Auckland, on 1.5.82.
21 (1982) *NZLJ* 130.
22 Singer, *supra*.

the probationer becoming the object of intense study and discipline, because "power is knowledge". Indeed, in the case of the supervision order, we could ask whether our beneficent volunteers will become the modern day equivalents of those staunch citizens whose duty it was to observe, without being seen, the inmates of Bentham's 'panopticon'.

Returning to the treatment order, it is sufficient to state that it proposes nothing which is not already available through the court via the probation order. But the suggested expanded funding for the setting up and use of such treatment centres as "Kahanui" and "Odyssey House" will no doubt exert political pressure on the judiciary to use such facilities. With bona fide treatment there can be no argument but extreme caution must precede the adoption of any policy which aims to cut costs and also to rehabilitate. It is likely the latter will become a secondary consideration and official sanction will be given to quasi-religious groups whose proselytising aims are concealed behind a facade of questionable treatment modes. Unless probation personnel become knowledgeable about such groups they will lose credibility on such matters before the court.

A similar reservation applies to the community care order which, prima facie, offers quite viable possibilities. It is proposed that consent will be required by an offender and a programme developed by his probation officer with the goal of putting him/her

> into a community environment where he/she will be subject to influences and examples expected to have a beneficial and supportive effect. (para 323)

Supervision in that environment will be performed by "an approved person or agency" and in this context the Secretary for Justice had in mind

> natural groups in society similar to Maori cultural groups in Lower Hutt who already work with prisoners from Wi Tako prison.[23]

Such programmes have been going on for many years, albeit in an limited way. The written order is therefore again unnecessary but may serve as a consciousness-raising device for both the courts and the Probation Service. However it will be essential that the aim of the order regarding "beneficial influences" is carefully examined in each case to avoid possible physical or mental exploitation. (Consent is not a totally 'watertight' safeguard in such matters when prison is the alternative.)

CONCLUSION

This discussion began by providing an historical account of the Probation Service, then narrowed to focus on the major consideration of 'function' and 'role' as it concerns the Service as a whole and the individual probation officer in particular. Some credence was given to the view that in many ways the Service has retained a unique and flexible role while providing a 'safety-valve' function for the penal system. Because of the perceived ineffectiveness of probation officers in terms of re-offending, however, such flexibility and a reliance on the social work method would be largely brought to an end if the proposals contained in the Penal Policy Review are ratified. A more authoritarian role for probation officers in the United Kingdom has already occurred and the rather

23 Robertson, *supra.*

draconian potential of the 'supervision order' was seen as evidence of a similar punitive trend in this country.

What then of the future for the Probation Service? The paradox is, of course, that the Penal Policy Review states quite clearly, reinforced by subsequent assurances from both the Minister of Justice and his Secretary, that the future is a bright one, with the Service expanding its empire into all corners of the penal system (including prisons where rehabilitation cannot take place). The real purpose, however, seems to be to reduce the number of officers and to substitute volunteers; quite simply to minimise government expense. The executive influence of the service may indeed be extended but at the expense of a flexible, innovative and dedicated group of public servants whose efforts have yet to be shown not to be worthwhile. It is unlikely, given their previous track-record, that they will shoulder the punitive yoke of a purely surveillance role without a struggle.

C. I. ROSSITER
Senior Probation Officer
West Auckland

Note: In addition to the materials footnoted, the writer wishes to draw readers' attention to the following:
Report of the Penal Policy Review Committee (1981), Government Printer, Wellington.
Stace, R., *Penal Policy in N.Z., 1961–69* (thesis).
Smith, N., *Probation in N.Z.* (thesis).
Bracey, O., *Casework Supervision in N.Z. Probation* (thesis).