

Corrections in Asia and the Pacific

**Record of the Ninth
Asian and Pacific Conference
of Correctional Administrators**

Australia: September 1988

Australian Institute of Criminology

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INTRODUCTION

This is the Record of the Ninth Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators held in Australia between 5 and 10 September 1988. Sections of the Conference were held in each of Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne.

Delegates from eighteen countries attended the Conference and addressed four formal agenda items through oral commentary and discussion at business sessions of the Conference. This Record includes summaries of each of the agenda items which delegates at the final business session agreed accurately reflected the substance of those discussions.

Copies of participating countries' formally prepared discussion papers on the agenda items were circulated to all delegates at the Conference. Correctional administrators from countries not represented at the Conference should contact the Executive Director of the Conference, at the Australian Institute of Criminology, if they have an interest in those formal papers.

During the course of the Conference a number of Australian correctional administrators made presentations relating to current Australian correctional practice, and a number of private corporations who had sponsored some parts of the Conference described the services they were currently providing to Australian correctional administrators.



WELCOME TO AUSTRALIA

Delegates to the Conference first came together at a welcoming breakfast sponsored by the Northern Territory Government. At that breakfast, held in Sydney, the Minister for Corrections for the State of New South Wales, the Honourable Michael Yabsley, formally welcomed delegates to Australia. Minister Yabsley indicated his delight at Australia being the host for the Conference. He added that correctional problems in Australia were not dissimilar to those in other countries in the Region and he believed that the discussion about them during the Conference would be mutually beneficial to delegates.

Appointment of Office Bearers

At the commencement of the first business session of the Conference it was unanimously agreed that chairmanship would be jointly shared by Mr Noel Day (from the State of New South Wales) and Mr Peter Harmsworth (from the State of Victoria). It was also unanimously agreed that Mr Dennis Challenger (from the Australian Institute of Criminology) would act as Executive Director for the Conference.

The Conference's symbolic mace, a Fijian war club presented by General M. V. Buadromo (Fiji) to the Conference in 1985, was presented to Mr Day by Haji Nik Ariffin from Malaysia, the location of the Eighth Conference. This simple ceremony marked the commencement of discussion of the four agenda items previously determined at the 1987 Conference.



AGENDA ITEM 1

TRENDS AND PATTERNS IN PENAL POPULATIONS: SIZE, COMPOSITION, TYPES AND CHARACTERISTICS

At the Eighth Conference of Asian and Pacific Correctional Administrators, it was agreed that each country would provide some basic statistics relating to their prison population as at 1 April 1988. These statistics were to be aggregated at the Australian Institute of Criminology to allow for a Region-wide view and for some comparison to be made between countries in the Region. A paper was prepared and circulated to delegates.

The statistics for the Region, which showed that a total of 467,799 adults were held in prisons, provided the basis for discussion of this agenda item. The results of the data collection appear in Table 1.

Table 1: Statistical Profile of Adult Prisoners in the Asian and Pacific Region (as at 1 April 1988)

Class of Prisoner	Male	Female	Total
Convicted prisoners	251,583	8,696	260,279
Prisoners awaiting trial	185,052	5,216	190,268
Others in custody (e.g. detainees, awaiting deportation)	16,117	1,135	17,252
TOTAL	452,752	15,047	467,799

Trends in Prison Populations

While delegates from some countries such as India and Korea described their prison populations on the whole as stable over the last few years, others reported continuing increases in the numbers of prisoners. A delegate from Japan reported a slight increase while delegates from Thailand, Malaysia and Australia indicated steady and substantial increasing prison populations.

The New Zealand delegate reported that despite the provision of a wide range of community-based options to imprisonment, the prison population was not being held at past levels but was currently increasing at more than 10 per cent per year. A delegate from the Solomon Islands described a disturbing growth rate from an average of around 100 prisoners in the 1970s to a peak of 470 during 1987 and a figure of around 300 at present.

Rates of Imprisonment

Rates of imprisonment for countries in the Region were calculated by taking the number of adult prisoners as at 1 April 1988 and dividing them by the total adult population. An overall rate of 69 prisoners per 100,000 adults was obtained for the Region and individual countries were grouped according to their relationship to this average rate. These groupings are shown in Table 2.

It was noted that there are problems with rates of imprisonment especially where small numbers of prisoners are involved, and where special factors peculiar to particular countries need to be considered. By way of example, a delegate from Indonesia suggested that the low rate of imprisonment there was due to the "gradually improved condition of economic and social life". The delegate from Singapore explained the high rate in his country as being greatly affected by two factors. First, Singapore is a "global city" having a high foreign population which is reflected in a high percentage of foreign born prisoners who push up the imprisonment rate. This fact was also raised by a delegate from Brunei Darussalam where 80 per cent of prisoners in 1987 were foreign born. Second, the Singapore Government has a "tough" posture towards crime and this leads to greater numbers of offenders in prison than in countries where governments' attitudes to crime are less forceful. These factors were seen to be highly relevant to Singapore's imprisonment rate.

Table 2: Ranking of Countries in the Asian and Pacific Region by Imprisonment Rate (as at 1 April 1988)

Adult Imprisonment Rate	Country	Number of adults in Prison
Very High (200 and over)	Cook Islands	57
	Tonga	126
	Thailand	76,903
	Singapore	4,884
	Malaysia	20,743
High (150 - 199)	Fiji	841
	Western Samoa	162
	Kiribati	72
	Hong Kong	7,058
	Solomon Islands	273
	Papua New Guinea	3,183
	Korea	44,696
Medium (70 - 149)	Sri Lanka	12,832
	New Zealand	3,197
	Brunei Darussalam	149
	Australia	11,519
	Philippines	26,884
Low (under 70)	Macau	292
	Japan	54,558
	India	163,352
	Indonesia	36,018
TOTAL		467,799

Explanations for Trends

A number of factors were identified by some delegates as contributing to their increased prison populations but they cannot be used to explain rises across the Region as a whole. Delegates from both Hong Kong and Australia indicated that there seemed to be a gradual, but noticeable, move to longer sentences which plainly leads to larger prisoner numbers.

The delegate from Sri Lanka indicated that the combined effect of the new *Prevention of Terrorism Act* and emergency regulations in effect in his country had led to an increase of around 900 in the prison population. A delegate from Hong Kong indicated that illegal immigrants recently accounted for 16 per cent of admissions to prisons there.

A significant change to legislation in Singapore which sets down a two year mandatory sentence for a number of property offences had contributed to increased prisoner numbers in that country. A delegate from India pointed out that the emergence of crime had led to some increase in the number of prisoners - an increase which was likely to continue.

The length of time for which persons had to remain on remand was plainly seen to contribute to increased prisoner numbers, especially in countries where a large percentage of the prison population is being held awaiting trial. The Sri Lankan delegate pointed out that over 20 per cent of the remandees (who comprise over 40 per cent of the total prison population) had spent over six months awaiting trial.

Efforts to Reduce Prison Populations

A number of delegates mentioned initiatives that had been used to try and reduce prison populations. Possibly the most far reaching was reported by the Philippines' delegate. He indicated that his Government had, with the introduction of a new Constitution in 1987, effectively changed their previous tough posture towards offending, leading to amongst other things, the abolition of capital punishment.

More traditional approaches included the increased use of parole, which was mentioned by delegates from Macau and Japan; increased use of suspended prosecutions in Korea; increased use of suspended sentences in Korea and the Solomon Islands; and the development of community service in Kiribati.

A particularly dramatic, but unique, reduction in Thailand's prison population was achieved last year with the release by Royal Pardon of 37,400 prisoners in recognition of the sixtieth birthday of the King.

Types and Characteristics of Prisoners

Throughout the world, the numbers of females held in prisons belie their representation in the general community. The Region is no

different in this regard with 3.2 per cent of all prisoners being female. Table 3 shows the percentages of females among both convicted prisoners and those awaiting trial in all countries in the Region. Once again, caution is necessary when considering smaller countries, as small populations produce exaggerated rates. For instance, Brunei Darussalam's female remand rate, which is specified as 9 per cent in real terms, consists of only a single female out of a total of 11 remandees.

**Table 3: Female Prisoners in the Asian and Pacific Region
(as at 1 April 1988)**

Country	Percentage of Females Among:	
	Convicted Prisoners	Prisoners Awaiting Trial
Thailand	5.4	6.8
Papua New Guinea	5.4	4.3
Western Samoa	5.4	-
Australia	5.0	5.6
Kiribati	4.3	-
Japan	4.1	6.2
Hong Kong	4.0	3.8
New Zealand	3.7	7.8
Korea	3.3	5.9
Macau	2.7	3.0
Indonesia	2.4	2.7
Malaysia	2.2	3.0
Cook Islands	2.1	-
Singapore	2.0	3.0
Fiji	1.8	3.0
Philippines	1.7	2.0
India	1.7	1.0
Sri Lanka	1.6	4.2
Brunei Darussalam	1.5	9.0
Solomon Islands	-	-
Tonga	-	-
REGION	3.3	2.7

The number of remandees in the Region's prisons was identified at the Eighth Conference as being "probably the single most significant factor" contributing to prison overcrowding. Table 4 indicates proportions and the numbers of such prisoners across the Region. The contribution of the Indian situation to the Region's overall remand rate of 40.7 per cent is quite apparent from Table 4.

Recalculating that rate without India provides a rate of 27.8 per cent, a figure that nevertheless reflects a continuing heavy demand on prison accommodation in the Region.

Table 4: Prisoners Awaiting Trial in the Asian and Pacific Region
(as at 1 April 1988)

Country	Percentage of Prison Population Awaiting Trial	Number of Prisoners Awaiting Trial
India	64.8	105,780
Sri Lanka	54.6	7,008
Philippines	47.4	12,750
Korea	36.6	16,349
Thailand	28.3	21,739
Malaysia	25.3	5,252
Indonesia	25.3	9,097
Papua New Guinea	23.3	742
Macau	22.9	67
Cook Islands	17.5	10
Australia	16.4	1,889
Japan	15.1	8,262
New Zealand	10.8	345
Western Samoa	9.3	15
Singapore	8.1	397
Fiji	7.8	66
Brunei Darussalam	7.4	11
Hong Kong	6.7	473
Solomon Islands	4.8	13
Kiribati	4.2	3
Tonga	-	-
TOTAL REGION	40.7	190,268

Some common factors appeared amongst prisoners across the Region. Broadly speaking, young people were overly represented in the prisoner population. By way of example, prisoners aged in their twenties accounted for 54 per cent of New Zealand prisoners, 53 per cent of Sri Lanka's prisoners, and 56 per cent of prisoners in the Philippines.

While these figures indicate the youthfulness of prisoners in the Region, the problem is compounded by the lengths of sentence they

may be serving. A particularly graphic example of this was provided by the New Zealand delegate who reported that there were currently fifty-three prisoners under the age of nineteen and sentenced to life imprisonment in New Zealand. However, it is mostly short sentence prisoners who comprise the major group of prisoners in other countries.

A delegate from India reported that in the State of Madhya Pradesh, 50 per cent of prisoners had been sentenced to less than one month. A Papua New Guinea delegate reported that 70 per cent of prisoners in that country were serving sentences of less than six months, while in Sri Lanka, it was reported that prisoners in this category accounted for over 60 per cent of prisoners.

One characteristic of prisoners that was raised by a number of delegates was that of previous prison experience. The delegate from New Zealand pointed out that over 70 per cent had served at least three previous prison terms and over 70 per cent had previous convictions for violent offences.

A delegate from Hong Kong also reported that the prisoner population was dominated by repeat offenders with a maximum over the last ten years of 75 per cent of prisoners meeting this description. However, the figure has since reduced and is now fluctuating at around 50 per cent of total admissions.

These statistics would seem to indicate a substantial rate of re-offending following a prison sentence. However, this is not true for all countries in the Region. The delegate from the Philippines, speaking of the Federal Prison System in his country where prisoners serve sentences of three years or more, reported that only five in every 100 prisoners released from prison later returned.

A delegate from Hong Kong reported that prisoners' average educational standard was lower than that of the general population, some 10 per cent of them having no schooling and the majority having only primary education. The poor educational standard that prisoners had reached was also noted by delegates from Indonesia and Papua New Guinea and the Sri Lankan delegate indicated that there was a 52 per cent illiteracy rate amongst prisoners in his country.

A number of countries reported high unemployment amongst prisoners coming into prison; however, the delegate from Singapore reported that 85 per cent of prisoners were employed before being imprisoned.

There were, of course, other factors where differences were apparent between countries in the Region. For instance, the types of offences for which prisoners had been sentenced differed across the Region. Delegates from Papua New Guinea and Thailand indicated that it was property offences that had been committed by most prisoners, but delegates from the Philippines and New Zealand indicated that offences of violence filled that role in their countries.

Drug offences provided increasing and substantial numbers of prisoners in both Malaysia and Sri Lanka. A delegate from Brunei Darussalam indicated that about 65 per cent of their convicted prisoners had committed immigration offences - a category of offence with virtually no impact in other countries.

Sentences and the Prison Population

A number of delegates made reference to the practices of sentencing when discussing this topic and two important issues received particular comment. First, a delegate from Malaysia suggested that sentencers should be encouraged to visit prisons to see the crowding problems first-hand and appreciate administrator's difficulties. In turn, such visits may encourage sentencers to use alternative sanctions especially for petty offenders. Until that occurs, prison populations would seem likely to increase requiring the building of more accommodation (as Malaysia was currently doing).

Second, delegates from Australia referred to the current moves in one State for "truth in sentencing". This philosophy states that prisoners should serve the full term of imprisonment that the sentencer sets, so that a three year prison sentence means precisely that the offender spends three years in prison.

In practice, this would require the abolition of remission for good behaviour, a valuable if not vital management tool for correctional administrators. Most delegates were concerned about this particular development and a delegate from Tonga suggested that through supporting such a move, governments were effectively ignoring the possibility and value of rehabilitation.

AGENDA ITEM 2

INTER-AGENCY CO-OPERATION WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, NAMELY BETWEEN CORRECTIONS AND OTHER AGENCIES

Inter-agency co-operation between the criminal justice system was generally seen by delegates to be of obvious importance. Delegates from some countries reported their agencies' interaction with other government agencies as quite straightforward - a Japanese delegate reported "no difficulties" and the Philippines delegate called such relationships "smooth". A Macau delegate reported that it was easy to contact and to be assisted by other agencies, and a Korean delegate indicated that help from other agencies could be had on demand. However, other countries indicated some strains within their systems.

Delegates identified the key parts of the criminal justice system as being: police, courts, and prisons.

A number of other government agencies and voluntary groups were identified as providing important support to correctional organisations.

Relationships with the Police

Generally speaking, most relationships with police were good: however, prisoner overcrowding had led to tension in some countries when prisoners had to be temporarily held in police watchhouses or lock-ups; this was particularly the case in Australia. An Indian delegate indicated that this was not a problem in his country as the police would not house such prisoners, and a Macau delegate also indicated that police would not provide such a service.

On a more positive note, a delegate from Brunei Darussalam reported a regular exchange program between police and prison officers and the possibility for either group to make study visits to the others' training facilities. A delegate from Macau indicated that both police and prison officers underwent basic training together.

Further evidence of co-operation was provided from Hong Kong where police and prison officers undertook hostage negotiation training together; and from Sri Lanka where police trained corrections staff in firearm use.

Relationships with Sentencers

A number of delegates reported that sentencers (that is, magistrates and judges) had a right of access to prisons, a practice which helped increase interaction and understanding. For instance, a delegate from Brunei Darussalam indicated that the judges occasionally made visits to prisons in his country.

An Indonesian delegate reported that since 1981, when an integrated system of justice was introduced in his country to foster co-operation, judges could visit prisons at any time to check that sentences are being properly carried out.

The delegate from Sri Lanka, where open access is also available, reported that judges "seldom" visited, and a Malaysian delegate indicated an earnest desire that more sentencers would visit his prisons.

An Australian delegate endorsed this view and indicated that it was essential to keep judges informed not only of prison conditions but also of the range of correctional sanctions that were available. In all Australian States this is done through providing advice to all courts where community corrections options are seen as appropriate. In some Australian States professionally produced handbooks or pamphlets on the role of corrections are available to all judges as well as the public at large.

Relationships with other Government Agencies

Many delegates mentioned their sound relationships with health departments (for the provision of medical services to prisoners), education departments (for literacy, correspondence, and formal educational classes), public works departments (for maintenance, repairs and construction of prison buildings) and welfare or social service departments (for assistance to prisoners and their families and to prisoners on release).

An Indian delegate suggested that relationships with other agencies concerned with prisoner labour showed strains mainly because staff from the relevant departments often had an immediate loyalty to their own departments rather than to corrections' agencies. Cases of indifference, however, tended to occur at senior levels of the department rather than at the work level. Thus departments of industrial and vocational training provide valuable assistance to prison workshop programs and departments of agriculture were vital to prison farms.

Most areas of government were of potential assistance to corrections. By way of example, a Macau delegate indicated how the National Library provided prisoners with reading material and a Brunei delegate reported an excellent relationship with the Immigration Department with respect to their foreign prisoners. Delegates from Sri Lanka and Korea indicated that the armed forces were available to assist during disturbances, and all other countries had ready access to, and co-operation from emergency services such as fire brigades or ambulances during major incidents.

Improving Relationships

While inter-agency relationships in most countries were generally positive it was quite apparent that delegates supported closer and possibly more formalised relationships. A delegate from Tonga pointed out that if one Minister had responsibility for the three major parts of the criminal justice system, most difficulties should be overcome. In Tonga, the Minister of Police has responsibilities for the police and prison services and "straddles" the courts. He also chairs a committee of senior ministers with the primary purpose of fostering good relationships between all relevant criminal justice agencies.

Delegates from Kiribati and the Solomon Islands both reported that they also operated combined departments of police and prisons and confirmed that this arrangement allowed for easy co-operation.

A number of countries, however, are still operating a more traditional criminal justice system in which the integrity of each component of the system was only seen as achievable by vesting responsibility in separate independent departments. These organisational arrangements could produce problems of co-ordination. In some countries these co-ordination difficulties have been addressed by establishing inter-agency committees.

Examples of co-ordination by committees were cited by a Thailand delegate who reported a co-ordinating committee had been established in 1984 and met six times a year. That country also runs seminars jointly organised by government agencies to discuss issues that relate to the operation of the criminal justice system.

A Hong Kong delegate outlined a number of such committees including the Fight Crime Committee - this was chaired by the Chief Secretary (the Head of the Public Service) and involved all relevant agencies, working together to recommend measures to reduce crime.

A similar committee of Permanent Heads of Departments is operational in Papua New Guinea, and other versions of Law and Order Committees have been established in the twenty provinces of that country. In addition, a Papua New Guinea delegate reported the creation of a number of co-ordinating Ministerial Committees.

The New Zealand delegate outlined how co-ordination and commitment at the political level was essential. He described how his country had established the Criminal Justice Strategy Group comprising the Ministers of Justice, Finance, Police and Maori Affairs with attendance by other Ministers such as those responsible for Health, Social Welfare or Education depending upon agenda items. This Group also involves senior public servants, the Chief Justice and the Chief District Court Judge, a similar situation to that in Indonesia where such co-ordination occurred periodically through visits by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Minister of Justice, Attorney General and Head of Police.

It was considered that such a committee provides a positive response to criminal justice problems and ensures excellent inter-agency co-operation. A key purpose of this Group is to evaluate fully the likely consequences of new government policy on the various parts of the criminal justice system.

Overall it was agreed that the work of co-ordinating committees in the criminal justice system would ensure that continuous attention would be given to inter-agency co-operation. The necessity for this was emphasised by delegates from both Singapore and Thailand.

AGENDA ITEM 3

SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN THE PENAL SYSTEM

Prisoners' Rights

During discussion it was plain that delegates basically agreed on the rights that prisoners should have. These encompassed personal safety, freedom from inhuman treatment or forced labour, communication with the outside world, visits, religious freedom, provision of food and clothing, medical care, and procedures for the making of complaints.

These matters are all included in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners which were seen to be the basis for the elaboration of prisoners' rights in most countries. An Indonesian delegate indicated that those Rules were reflected in his country's policy for corrections which was adopted in 1963 and no longer focuses on punishment. Delegates from Papua New Guinea and Malaysia indicated that those Rules were effectively enshrined in their relevant Acts and Regulations. An Australian delegate reported that one Australian State had explicitly included a section on prisoners rights in its 1986 legislation.

Making Prisoners' Rights Known

Delegates noted that it is one thing to legislate for prisoners' rights but it is plainly necessary to make sure that they are known to prisoners and staff. Prisoners in the Region learn of these rights in a number of ways. In Macau, for instance, copies of the appropriate legislation comprising lists of rules, rights and obligations are made available in all cells. A Korean delegate reported that prisoners were entitled to purchase (or have sent to them by their families) copies of laws and regulations relating to correctional administration. Induction interviews were identified by a Hong Kong delegate as being the method of ensuring prisoners in that country knew of their rights. And this method was also mentioned by a Brunei Darussalam delegate along with the provision of explanatory notices throughout the prison.

Prison staff learn of prisoner rights through training courses in most countries. A Hong Kong delegate described a Handbook that was additionally made available to staff.

It was acknowledged that knowing these rights was not simply all that staff needed to do. A Macau delegate stated that there was an obligation on staff to know just how to treat prisoners to ensure their rights were met. This was referred to as better training in the handling of inmates by a delegate from Thailand who also said that it was essential to train staff to appreciate the value of humane treatment. An Indian delegate suggested that staff needed to be motivated to help prisoners and that had to be done within the context of prisoners' rights.

Breach of Prisoners' Rights

All countries had procedures that could be implemented if prisoners alleged that their rights had not been acknowledged. In Korea, for instance, such prisoners could seek an interview with the warden to redress the situation. If dissatisfied with that the prisoner could then petition the "touring public official" and if still dissatisfied an appeal to the Minister of Justice was possible. Other personnel such as ombudsmen, visiting justices or official visitors filled such roles in other jurisdictions.

Of course, as a delegate from Papua New Guinea pointed out, the existence of legislation makes it difficult to neglect or violate prisoners' rights, but they can still occur. Several delegates indicated that when rights are infringed it is necessary to take swift and certain action against any staff who may have been negligent or malicious towards prisoners. A delegate from Japan indicated that such a staff member would be given "disciplinary punishment". A Korean delegate reported a similar approach but added that "criminal punishment" might be necessary depending on the seriousness of the case.

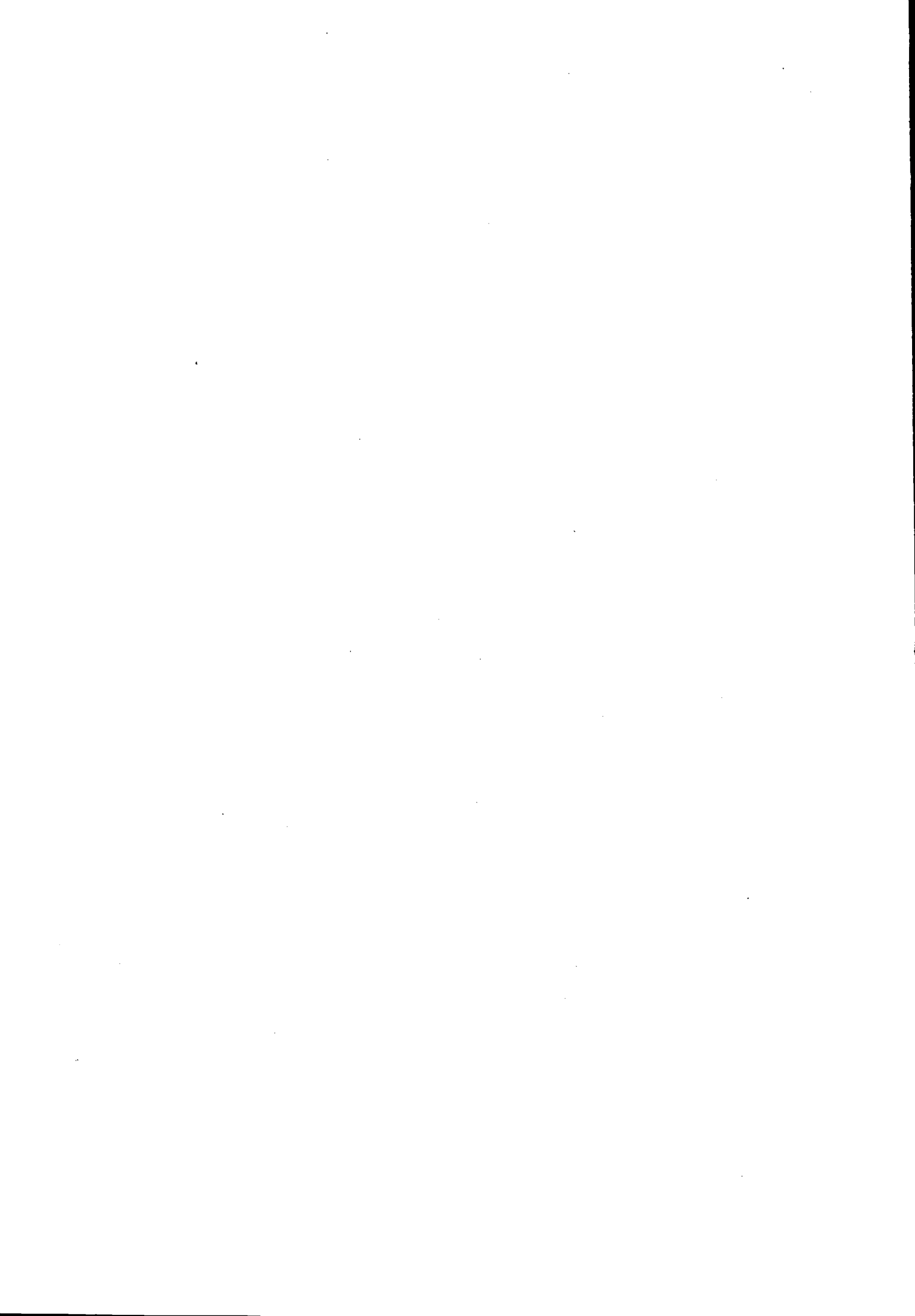
Practical Considerations

It was pointed out that practical realities can make it more difficult to meet some prisoners' rights. For instance, the delegate from Sri Lanka pointed out that overcrowding in prisons brought uncomfortable physical conditions for prisoners that might come close to threatening their rights to safe accommodation.

However, the local culture of particular countries can have considerable impact upon prisoners' rights. A Tongan delegate described the "Pacific Way" of treating prisoners. That effectively allows for prison staff, who have received nine months training, to treat prisoners as members of their extended families. As such, there is no possibility of their rights being ignored. The delegate from the Philippines also emphasised the philosophy of treating prisoners as people and ensuring their rights through such an approach.

Still in the South Pacific, the delegate from Kiribati, while pointing out that the *Prisons Act* there did include limited rights for prisoners, indicated that the rights of prisoners were sufficiently well known so it was not necessary to circulate them to prisoners. A delegate from the Solomon Islands was keen to point out that, rights of prisoners notwithstanding, it was necessary to draw a distinction between giving and earning rights. There were, according to that delegate, advantages for the prison regime and the self respect of the prisoner if some services are earned not given.

This notion that the granting of listed rights to prisoners should not lead to general relaxation of standards of behaviour in a prison was extended by the delegate from Singapore. That delegate expressed concern that the movement to clarify and establish prisoners' rights should not deny administrators the prerogative to run their prisons in an effective fashion.



AGENDA ITEM 4

THE MEDIA, ITS POWER AND INFLUENCE UPON CORRECTIONS SYSTEMS

The Importance of the Media

Delegates agreed that the media could play a valuable role in making correctional practices known to the public. The New Zealand delegate indicated that members of the public learnt about crime and corrections almost exclusively from the media, and it was therefore important that the media reported facts accurately. That was particularly important, a Hong Kong delegate emphasised, because the majority of the public seldom questioned the truth of the information they gain from the media.

That the media could provide a valuable service to the public was referred to slightly differently by various delegates. An Indonesian delegate saw the media as valuable because it was useful to let the public know what was going on; an Indian delegate saw them as providing a chance to inform the public of correct facts about prison administration; a Hong Kong delegate saw them providing a supportive role for correctional workers through making the public aware of their work; and a Japanese delegate reminded delegates that the media had an influence upon both administrators and administrations.

Different Types of Media

During discussions it became apparent that different branches of the media posed different levels of difficulty for administrators. Most discussions focussed on the print media, primarily newspapers, whose concentration on atypical, piecemeal, sensational, episodic and superficial matters was mentioned particularly by the delegates from Hong Kong and New Zealand. The delegate from the Philippines indicated that tabloid newspapers posed the worst problem in his country, both through the material they published and also because their material was often picked up by radio and re-broadcast. That mode of public information dissemination was particularly hard to respond to if facts were wrong.

An Australian delegate pointed out that coverage by the third media service, television, was less problematic. News items were

generally of less than one minute in duration and television documentaries were usually more considered and thoughtful.

Interest in Corrections by the Media

The general interest in corrections by the media was summed up by a Japanese delegate who stated that they seemed very interested in bad news and not much interested in good or positive news about prisons. His comment was endorsed by an Indian delegate who stated further that in his country most media coverage was generally critical. Notwithstanding that, the larger countries reported that they still had fair relationships with the media.

The smaller countries had slightly different experiences. The delegate from Kiribati indicated there was infrequent interest from the media in his country. A Tongan delegate said that while the media in Tonga were critical from time to time they had no power or influence. The Solomon Islands provided information only on a one-way "need to know" basis which seemed to work well. A Macau delegate indicated that at their first attempt to inform the media, including an invitation to visit prisons, there was no response, although that had changed recently and relationships were now good. A delegate from Brunei Darussalam also described his relationship with the media as good with no major problems.

Providing Information to the Media

No delegate reported regular press conferences for the media although most indicated that such conferences would be held for particular events. A Korean delegate typified this by stating that if any case "arousing the public concern and interest" occurred, a special press conference might be held.

Most delegates indicated that media access to particular prisoners would not be allowed. An Australian delegate expressed concern about "cheque book journalism" through which certain notable prisoners might receive substantial sums of money for speaking to particular journalists. The impact upon victims was also mentioned by this delegate who was concerned about prisoners receiving publicity which could alarm or upset their victims.

The reverse process, by which prisoners might themselves make contact with the media was also generally not permitted. A Korean delegate indicated that might be allowed if it was "necessary for correctional purposes". The delegate from Sri Lanka added that prisoners in his country could send literary or academic communications to the media.

Access to prisons for media representatives was not a great problem in the Region. A Macau delegate indicated that media representatives can visit prisons, but for their own safety they will always be accompanied on their visits by correctional officials. A Malaysian delegate welcomes such prison visits and indicated that the Director General in that country tried to accompany such media people on their prison visits personally.

Problems with the Media

The major problem for correctional administrators with the media is the inaccuracy of media reports. In some cases these inaccuracies are simply errors of fact but in other cases there seemed deliberate distortions. A Papua New Guinea delegate provided an example of a newspaper headline about "holidays" for prisoners to describe a prisoners' home-leave program. The Sri Lankan delegate provided another where all prisoners, rather than the correct few, were described in a headline as vicious criminals.

It was agreed that the problem with such reports was having them corrected in the public arena. Generally, while newspapers would print corrections, those did not appear as prominently as had the original story, and were often hidden away. While a Korean delegate reported that a Press Arbitration Committee existed in his country to deal with disputes of this sort, it had, to date, been unnecessary to use it.

A Papua New Guinea delegate pointed out that inaccurate media coverage could actually worsen a situation. This view was supported by a Hong Kong delegate who indicated that over-exposure of the work of a corrections department could actually interfere with its efficient running.

A Positive View of the Media

Some delegates indicated that it was most important to use the positive potential of the media. The delegate from Singapore urged administrators to turn media interest to their advantage and take a pro-active rather than reactive stance. An Australian delegate supported this and pointed out that issuing "no comment" to a media inquiry was simply wasting a good opportunity.

A number of delegates provided examples of pro-active media contact although a delegate from Papua New Guinea related that on occasions when media coverage could have been helpful, no media persons could be located.

A Thailand delegate reported a number of positive media contracts which arose through particular events including the Prison Trade Fair which attracted a daily 100,000 visitors over 11 days and generated A\$6 million in sales of prisoner-made goods. That delegate also mentioned successful media coverage of prisoners' family days, when families can stay at the prison for half-day contact visits, and the media is allowed access to the prison to inspect it.

The Sri Lankan delegate indicated that media coverage of overcrowding was in fact of positive value to administrators insofar as it drew public and political attention to that problem. Both Indonesian and Philippines delegates indicated that adverse media publicity sometimes caused their administrators to investigate the allegations in such media reports actively, and visit institutions in which irregularities were suggested to have occurred.

An Australian delegate suggested a final way in which the media could provide positive help to administrators was through the broader use of public opinion polls. Polls relating to new correctional initiatives could be conducted and, being newsworthy, could be published in the media. That could prepare the community for such initiatives as well as making them known and would certainly constitute a positive and pro-active use of the media.

CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

Presentations

During the Conference, representatives from the various Australian jurisdictions made the following presentations:

Corrective Services in New South Wales:

An overview of the correctional system in that State presented by Mr Noel Day;

Corrections in Victoria:

A discussion of the development and existing services in that State presented by Mr Peter Harmsworth;

An Evaluation of a Short-Term High Intensity Fitness Program in a Tasmanian Prison:

A report of an experiment on the effects of a carefully structured intensive fitness program presented by Mr John Hagan representing the Tasmanian Law Department which has responsibility for corrections in that State;

South Australia's Correctional Service:

A presentation by Mr John Dawes outlining the range of correctional services in that State;

Higher Education in Justice Administration:

Presented by Mr Guy Hall on behalf of the Western Australian Department of Corrections and outlining the development of an educational course focussing on corrections offered at tertiary level in the educational mainstream;

Home Detention and Electronic Monitoring:

Presented by Mr Ross Lay from the New South Wales Department of Corrective Services. This address had been requested at the Eighth Conference.

Apart from these formal governmental presentations, a number of private corporations who had sponsored parts of the Conference made formal presentations to delegates. Private sponsorship was a new development for the Conference and had been arranged to help defray some of the costs incurred in organising it. Presentations by

sponsors covered prison design and building, and security hardware. Those presentations were made in an educational rather than commercial context.

Inspections

During the course of the Conference delegates were able to inspect the following Australian prisons:

Long Bay Prison Complex in New South Wales:
here delegates inspected old prison accommodation, a female prisoner's unit and parts of the main prison;

Parklea Prison in New South Wales:
a four year old maximum security prison with extensive workshops;

Tarrengower Female Minimum Security Prison in Victoria:
a newly opened prison in the Australian countryside providing cottage-style accommodation for females.

These visits of inspection were greatly appreciated by delegates who were uniformly impressed with this insight into Australia correctional practice and were most kindly assisted by staff at these institutions.

Hospitality

Delegates engaged in an active social program some of which was a direct result of sponsorship by various organisations. The programs comprised:

A welcoming breakfast in Sydney sponsored by the Northern Territory Government;

A lunch in Sydney hosted by the New South Wales Department of Corrective Services;

A Sydney Harbour cruise and dinner hosted by CHUBB Australia;

A lunch in Sydney hosted by the Turner Corporation (Australia);

A "Farewell to Sydney" Dinner hosted by Civil and Civic Pty Ltd;

A lunch at Parklea Prison provided by the New South Wales Department of Corrective Services;

A visit to a Native Animal Park in Canberra and a visit of inspection to Australia's New Parliament House;

A dinner at Parliament House hosted by the Australian Minister for Justice, Senator the Honourable Michael Tate, at which event the Minister addressed delegates, welcoming them to Australia and wishing them great success with their deliberations;

A working breakfast in Canberra hosted by the Government of Tasmania;

A visit of inspection to the High Court of Australia;

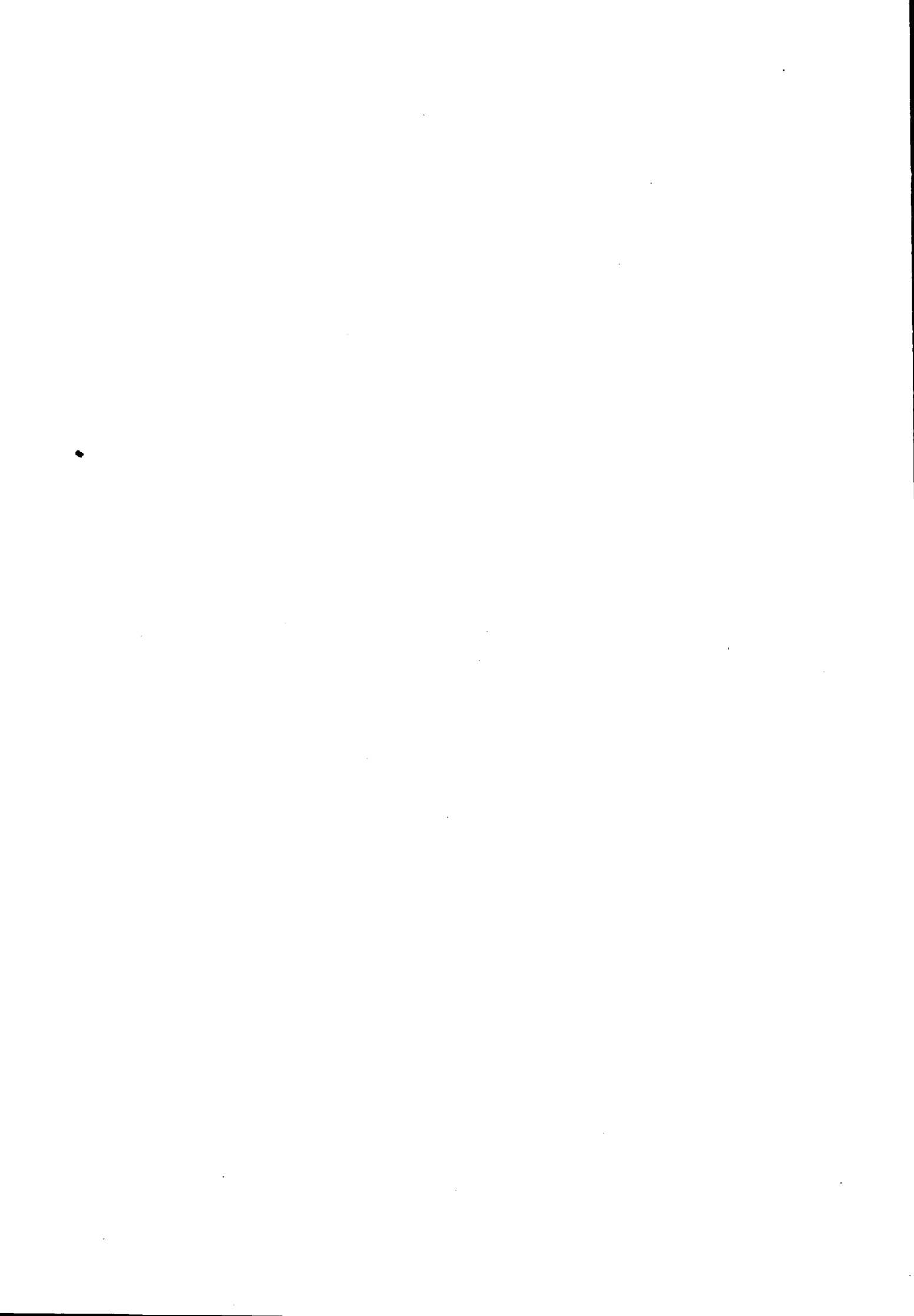
Lunch and dinner on "The Daylight Express", a train travelling from Sydney to Melbourne, hosted by the South Australian Government;

A cocktail party on "The Daylight Express" hosted by Thiess Contractors Pty Ltd;

A lunch in Melbourne hosted by Arnold Industries Pty Ltd;

A farewell dinner at Emu Bottom Homestead, near Melbourne, jointly hosted by Mayne Nickless Pty Ltd and Thiess Contractors Pty Ltd;

A lunch in Melbourne hosted by Holland-Stolte Pty Ltd.



GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Mr Baharuddin Lopa from Indonesia had tendered a written document comprising a motion and preamble to the Executive Director and this had been distributed to all delegates. The motion called for the establishment of a "Correctional Welfare Body for the Asian and Pacific Region" to assist countries with less resources by establishing a pool of money to which all countries would contribute commensurate with their capacity and prosperity.

Delegates chose to discuss the substance of the motion without its being formally moved. Delegates from Japan and Korea indicated that they needed more detail on the proposition and expressed a view that it seemed a matter that would need to be considered by their national Parliaments. This latter view was supported by delegates from Hong Kong and Australia. The Philippines delegate agreed that the matter needed to be dealt with on a Government-to-Government level, and expressed further concern about funding, an aspect of the proposition which also greatly concerned a delegate from Papua New Guinea.

It became apparent that the proposition raised a number of quite important issues for national Governments and it was generally agreed that the proposition could not be dealt with at this Conference. It was agreed that the proposition should be considered at the next Conference after delegates had had the chance to test it with their respective Governments. Mr Lopa indicated that this course of action was agreeable to him and stated that he was pleased for countries to consider his idea.

Specifically then, Mr Lopa's proposition is that

each country in the Asian and Pacific Region should contribute to a fund commensurate with their capacity and prosperity, to establish "The Correctional Welfare Body for the Asian and Pacific Region". The collected funds will be distributed proportionately to countries which need aid, that normally being the less prosperous countries. Such funds could be sums of money or goods such as tools which could be useful for work in correctional institutions, such as in farming, plantation, factories, etc, either inside or outside the perimeter.

2. Building upon earlier discussions at the Conference, especially those relating to Agenda Item 2, the following motion was formally moved

That this Conference agree that judges and magistrates be strongly encouraged to visit prisons periodically to keep them informed of contemporary correctional developments.

Moved: Australia

Seconded: Papua New Guinea

After considerable discussion the motion was passed without dissent.

3. Building upon the previous discussion, a delegate from Papua New Guinea suggested that there might be merit in extending participation at future Conferences to include judicial officers and police as delegates. A number of delegates disagreed with this broadening of attendance and it became clear that the view of most delegates was that invitations to attend future Conferences should be restricted to correctional administrators.

4. The Executive Director sought clarification from the Conference concerning the future involvement of the Australian Institute of Criminology in their deliberations. He pointed out that the Institute's first Director, the late William Clifford, had been a driving force behind the Conference and had been its Executive Director until his untimely death. A delegate from Tonga indicated that during his involvement with the Conference, Mr Clifford had given a commitment that the Institute would provide the focal person for the continued functioning of the Conference.

In order to clarify the situation it was moved

that the Australian Institute of Criminology provide the Executive Director for future meetings of the Conference.

Moved: Australia

Seconded: India

The motion was passed unanimously.

5. A delegate from Papua New Guinea drew the attention of delegates to a motion concerning a Regional Training Institute which had been passed at the Eighth Conference after being raised by his country. Specifically that Conference had resolved to

ask the Executive Director to explore with all relevant agencies the possibility of setting up an appropriate Training Institute for correctional officers within the Region.

It was noted that the resignation of the previous Executive Director had meant that no action had been taken in response to the motion. After some discussion about the difficulty of funding such a body it was decided by delegates that it would still be useful for some approach to be made by the current Executive Director to the United Nations and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

6. Some interest in the deliberations of the Conference had been shown by members of Australia's media, so the Conference considered whether it wished for media coverage of their activities or for a media release to be issued.

After discussion it was agreed that the Conference provided a private forum for the frank exchange of views and mutual information sharing for correctional administrators from the Region. It was felt that those most useful activities could be jeopardised by having media involvement or by spending valuable discussion time trying to produce one single media release which would faithfully reflect the considerable content of the Conference.

The Executive Director reminded delegates that this Conference had been the first to involve outside involvement through the participation of private sponsors whose involvement had helped defray some of the costs of running the Conference. He sought delegates views as to whether that involvement had detracted from the Conference's aims or deliberations.

All delegates who responded to this issue expressed no regrets with respect to private corporations being involved in the Conference in the low-key way in which the current sponsors had participated. Some delegates indicated that many of the private corporations' presentations had been most informative and potentially useful to them.

Next Conference

Shri Basak, on behalf of the Indian Government, invited delegates to attend the Tenth Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators in New Delhi in late 1989. That offer was greeted with enthusiasm by delegates and accepted with acclaim.

The delegation from Macau indicated that they hoped their Government might agree to host the 1990 Conference.

Agenda Items 1989

Delegates had identified eleven topics for consideration as agenda items for the Tenth Conference. After discussion it was decided that four agenda items were the ideal number for consideration at the Conference. That number would also allow for smaller workshop discussions to be held, a concept suggested by a Hong Kong delegate.

Considerable discussion of the merits of the suggested topics concluded with a vote by delegates which led to the following topics being selected as the 1989 agenda items:

1. **Current Penal Philosophy.**
A discussion of the current working objectives of correctional systems in the Region;
2. **Current Alternatives to Prison.**
An overview of the range of non-custodial correctional programs in the Region, and commentary on their effectiveness;
3. **The Changing Work Role for Prison Staff.**
A description of changes in the responsibilities and duties of prison staff and indications of how staff have been prepared for these re-designed roles;
4. **Current Crisis Management Techniques.**
A discussion of various training approaches for handling prison crises including riots, fires, hostage-taking, escapes, strikes, etc.

Vote of Thanks

Mr Tee Tua Ba, from Singapore, moved a vote of thanks to all Australian Governments, correctional departments and various sponsors who had contributed to the success of the Conference. He wished to place on record also his and delegates' thanks to the workers behind the scenes.

CLOSING ADDRESS

**THE HONOURABLE STEVE CRABB
MINISTER FOR CORRECTIONS, VICTORIA**

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am greatly honoured to have been invited to give the Closing Address for this Ninth Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators. I am extremely interested in the matters you have been deliberating throughout the week and I look forward to reading the report of your Conference.

From the reports I have received, the Conference has resulted in the frank and open discussion of a number of key issues confronting correctional administrators. A range of options have been identified to successfully resolve the challenges identified with each issue. I believe that for all delegates the time taken for this Conference has been productive.

Recently, I unveiled a new, integrated policy package for the building of a law-abiding society in the state of Victoria. Within this package I have spelt out Victoria's future approach to the criminal justice system. The package included new approaches to crime prevention and apprehension, the care and protection of victims of crime as well as changes to penalties and rehabilitation of prisoners. I would like to take this opportunity to speak about the key policy initiatives for corrections which derive from the Government's new integrated law and order policy package.

Prison Crowding

The first of these priorities is to control the difficult problem of prison crowding. Through the use of imprisonment as a sentence of last resort; courts are required at law to impose a sentence of imprisonment only in cases where the total deprivation of an offender's liberty is warranted. This has resulted in Victoria having the lowest imprisonment rate in Australia.

In the twenty years to 1987, there was not one new prison opened in Victoria. The legacy of the past has been ancient, inefficient and overcrowded prisons where work and training have been almost impossible to arrange and the weaker prisoners

brutalised and hardened. If the rights of prisoners are to be taken seriously, as your Conference has determined, then the physical conditions of prisons must reflect those rights. The relief of prison crowding will be achieved through the construction of new prisons facilities which offer safe, secure and humane conditions. Three new 250 bed prisons are presently under construction in Victoria. Conditions where prisoners can learn new vocational skills and participate in industry each day.

Home Detention

Victoria will shortly trial an innovative program of home detention in carefully controlled circumstances. Home detention is seen as an important means of facilitating the re-integration of offenders into the community and thereby increasing their chance of rehabilitation. The program will provide the capacity for prisoners to be employed during normal working hours and to be confined to their homes at other times. The program will only apply to prisoners who are assessed as very low risks and will apply for not more than the last six months of their sentences.

Young Offenders

To reduce the number of offenders flowing into our adult prisons the Government is looking at ways of dealing with young offenders which will divert them from the tread mill of crime and institutionalisation. This is to be achieved in two ways.

Firstly, through the operation of the "good neighbourhood" program. Such a program is to be introduced, based on the highly successful "Bonne maison" program that has dramatically reduced juvenile crime in France. The program which is based in local communities will emphasise activities for young people such as: evening and weekend activities; "adventure" programs - sailing - climbing; refuges for homeless youth; counselling services.

Secondly, new legislation will provide for closer supervision of young offenders in the community. As part of this supervision order, young offenders may receive training and be expected to perform community service activities. Supervision and youth attendance orders will in some ways be similar to community-based orders.

Community-based Corrections

An important means of ensuring the use of imprisonment as a sentence of last resort is to promote and maintain community-based corrections as an effective sentencing option. In Victoria, community-

based orders constitute an important sentencing alternative to imprisonment. In order for them to continue this role, we must: maintain the confidence of the courts and the community; ensure strict adherence by offenders to the conditions of their orders; manage an effective program of community work by offenders; and continue to develop order options appropriate to the needs of the community, the courts and offenders.

Prison Activities

The opening of the new prisons and the further development of prison industries will enable us to ensure that every prisoner can be employed or trained full time. A key policy initiative in prison training and employment is to extend our current prisoner work in re-forestation schemes, and include other soil conservation works so making some repayment to the community. But just as importantly, providing occupation and training for the prisoners themselves.

As well as providing meaningful community work, we are also currently developing vocationally oriented education and training programs in all prisons. The objective of these training programs is to give prisoners accredited vocational skills training and thereby increase their employment opportunities on release.

Staff Training

Legislation concerning the sentencing of prisoners and the management of the corrections system has been recently extensively reviewed and revised. A key to the successful implementation of new correctional policies, is that staff appreciate the purpose and philosophy underlying changes in legislation. The Office of Corrections in Victoria is devoting considerable resources to training staff in order to develop a unified, progressive, professional and disciplined organisation.

Provision of Specialised Services

There are a variety of prisoners who have special needs that cannot be adequately satisfied within the mainstream prison system. They include the mentally ill, intellectually disabled, Aboriginal prisoners, and those with protection requirements.

To assist in the provision of specialised services a more intensive prisoner reception procedure has been developed, special accommodation has been identified as well as support programs being targeted to meet the special needs of each group.

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Summary

While we have achieved much, the government recognises there is still much to be achieved in the area of adult corrections. I believe we have the policies, the management team and the staff commitment to ensure Victoria continues as a leader in corrections in Australia.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen I would like once again to thank you for your attendance and contribution to this Conference. May I wish you all a pleasant and safe journey home.

Thank you.



LIST OF DELEGATES

Australia

Mr Dennis Challinger
Assistant Director
Australian Institute of Criminology, Australian Capital Territory

Mr John Dawes
Executive Director
Department of Corrective Services, South Australia

Mr Rod Drew
A/Assistant Secretary
Probation, Parole and Juvenile Justice, Northern Territory

Mr Noel Day
A/Director-General
Department of Corrective Services, New South Wales

Dr Bob Fitzgerald
Assistant Director
Department of Corrective Services, Western Australia

Mr Nelson Glindemann
Deputy Comptroller-General of Prisons
Prisons Department, Queensland

Mr Peter Harmsworth
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Office of Corrections, Victoria

Mr Peter Patmore
Director
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Law Department, Tasmania

Mr Mark Robertson
Director
Probation and Parole
Department of Corrective Services, New South Wales

Brunei Darussalam

Mr Christopher Chin Nyuk Foon
Assistant Director of Prisons

Mr Abd Manan bin Haji Abd Rahman
Chief Officer
Prisons

Hong Kong

Mr I K Bhaget
Assistant Commissioner of Correctional Services

Mr Yip Kwai-lam
Superintendent of Correctional Services
Correctional Services Department

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Shri A K Basak
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Home Affairs

Shri D N Ahuja
Director-General
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State Government of Madhya Pradesh

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Mr Baharuddin Lopa
Director-General
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Mr Abdul Wahab
Chief
Sub-Directorate for the Treatment of Remandees
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Mr Kazuo Kawakami
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Ministry of Justice

Mr Takao Nakama
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Mr Nor Shahid
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Mr Mel Smith
Deputy Secretary for Justice

Papua New Guinea

Mr Priya Delgoda
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Mr Francis Gesa
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Correctional Services

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Mr Tee Tua Ba
Director of Prisons

Solomon Islands

Mr Solomon Manata
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Police and Justice

Mr Christopher Saungao
Controller of Prisons

Sri Lanka

Mr H G Dharmadasa
Commissioner of Prisons

Tonga

Mr George 'Akau'ola
Minister of Police and Prisons

Mr Soane M T Tone
Superintendent of Prisons
Ministry of Police and Prisons

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Mr Snit Rujinarong
Director-General
Department of Corrections

Mr Prasert Mekmanee
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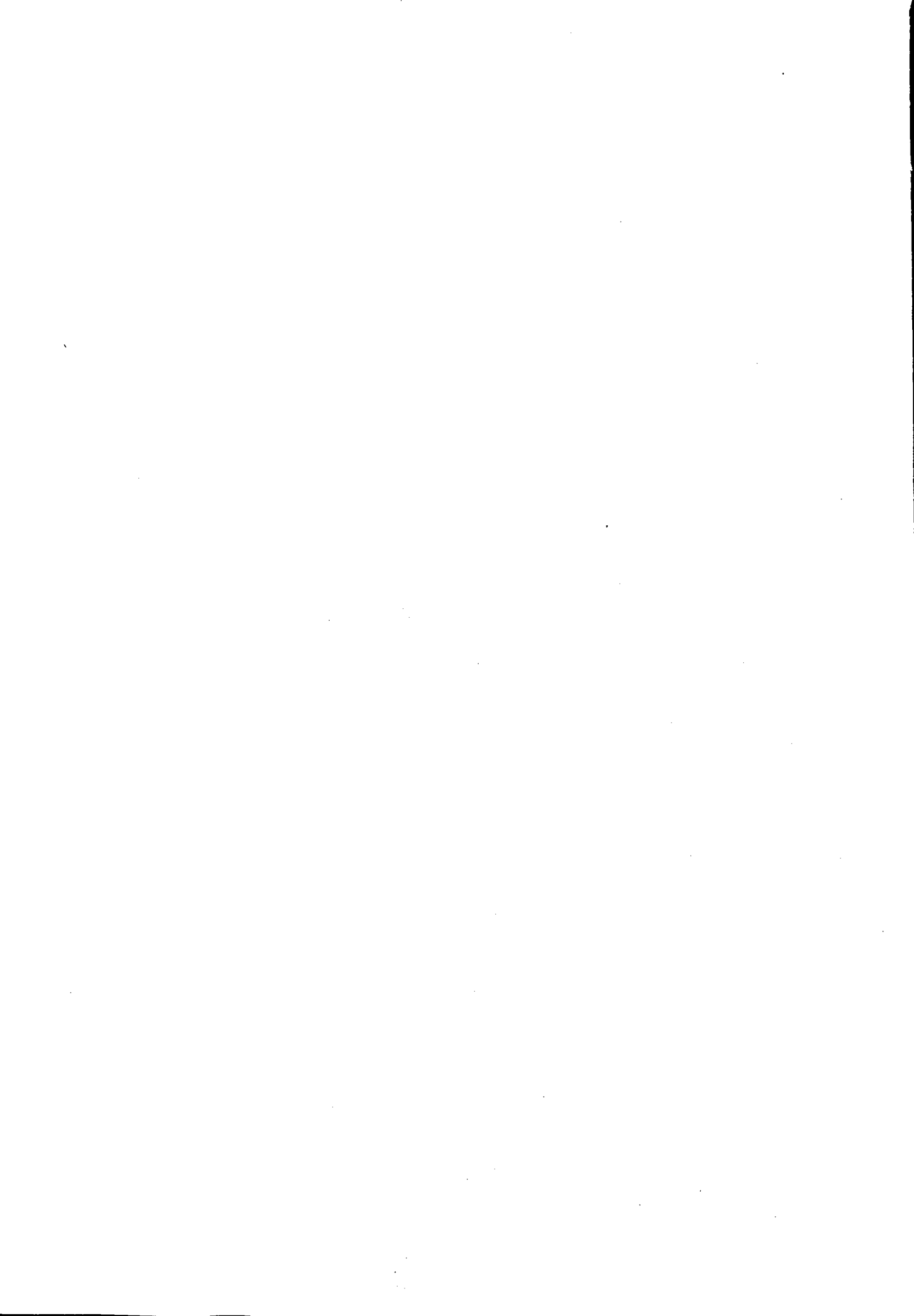
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