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**Better Management Needed  
For Tighter Security  
At Lorton Correctional Institutions**

B-118638

District of Columbia Government

***BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED STATES***

~~710692~~

094217

JUNE 21, 1974



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-118638

The Honorable Stanford E. Parris  
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Parris:

This is our report on better management needed for tighter security at Lorton correctional institutions. As you instructed, we did not obtain formal comments from the District Government. We have, however, discussed the matters with Department of Corrections officials.

Copies of the report are being sent to the Chairmen of committees and Members of Congress who have expressed an interest in the report; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and the Commissioner of the District of Columbia.

Information comparing the cost per day for inmates at Lorton and selected Federal facilities and data on the inmate welfare and the personnel enterprise funds is being sent to you separately.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "A. M. Kellen".

Acting Comptroller General  
of the United States

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2 173

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#### ABBREVIATIONS

ADP	automatic data processing
CLEP	College Level Entrance Program
FCC	Federal City College
GAO	General Accounting Office

COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S  
REPORT TO THE HONORABLE  
STANFORD E. PARRIS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BETTER MANAGEMENT NEEDED  
FOR TIGHTER SECURITY AT  
LORTON CORRECTIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS  
District of Columbia Government  
B-118638

D I G E S T

WHY THE REVIEW WAS MADE

Congressman Stanford E. Parris asked GAO to look at the problem of inmates escaping from the District of Columbia's five correctional institutions at Lorton, Virginia.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The population at Lorton was 2,040 at December 31, 1973.

Over 3 years ended June 30, 1973, 380 inmates escaped; 64 more escaped during the 6-months ended December 31, 1973.

About 30 percent of these escaped from the confines of the Lorton institutions; about 70 percent escaped while outside the institutions on "authorized" absences. (See p. 2.)

Some problems at Lorton GAO noted were:

- Rehabilitation leaves of absence were granted to persons ineligible for such leave or, if eligible, were granted for excessive periods.
- There was no system for finding out what inmates were doing while on leave or whether the leaves were assisting in rehabilitation.
- There were no uniform procedures regarding searches for contraband, tests for use of narcotics, and precautions against security violations by visitors to prisoners.

More information on each problem follows.

Problems in authorizing absences

Leave practices followed at Lorton seriously contributed to problems of escapes.

Legislation under which absences were approved has been construed by the District's legal office to allow rehabilitative leave to assist the prisoner in the transition from institutional life to freedom. Therefore, time remaining to serve should have been considered in approving the absences. (See p. 6.)

Some inmates with years left to serve before their probable release dates--some as many as 15 to 20 years--were granted leaves.

Some inmates were given continuous daily leaves routinely over several months although such absences were to be restricted to brief periods and were to be beyond 30 days only in highly unusual circumstances. (See pp. 9 to 11.)

Hundreds of inmates were released each week into the community to attend institutions of higher learning, work at paid employment, and participate in community activities, etc. However, the District had no system for finding out what inmates were doing while away from the institutions, nor did it know whether leaves were helping to rehabilitate inmates. (See p. 12.)

Some inmates were arrested for committing crimes during authorized absences.

### Internal security problems

Strengthening internal security policies and procedures is needed to help prevent inmate assaults and to help restrict ~~prisons~~ contraband--such as weapons and drugs--from getting to inmates.

Until pressure was brought by the local correctional officers' union, few thorough searches--shakedowns--of institutional facilities were made. Inmate lockers were not regularly inspected. When they were, contraband was found.

Although frequency of shakedowns has increased, a serious problem of contraband continues. Much contraband found in shakedowns has been or could be made into lethal weapons. (See p. 26.)

Although Department of Corrections policy required testing to determine whether inmates were using narcotics, such testing was not being done at two institutions although hundreds of inmates from these institutions were making weekly trips into the community.

Further, when test results indicated the use of narcotics, little or no disciplinary action was taken. (See pp. 35 to 36.)

Uniform procedures at all institutions were needed concerning

- identifying visitors
- inspecting handbags and purses, and
- searching inmates for contraband after meeting visitors.

Because visitors were not adequately identified, some inmates wearing civilian clothes escaped by simply walking out with visitors. (See pp. 24 and 25.)

Improvements in some physical facilities would also tighten security. (See pp. 22 to 24.)

### What went wrong?

GAO wanted to know what Department of Corrections officials were doing to overcome problems of escapes and contraband.

The major obstacle was that--except when there was overt demonstration of problems, such as escapes or trouble within the institutions--these types of problems seldom reached management's attention.

Many escapes were not being investigated to determine causes for security breakdowns. Thus, corrective measures could not be taken to prevent the same thing from happening again.

When shakedowns of inmate dormitories and institutional grounds were made, large quantities of contraband was consistently uncovered, but the Department didn't take action to cut off the source.

Management improvements over programs releasing inmates into the community and tighter security at Lorton are obviously needed. If the District had had uniform policies at Lorton and had good feedback--and acted on it--many inmate security problems could have been avoided.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

Some GAO recommendations are:

- Uniform and definitive guidelines for the institutions should be established for selecting inmates for rehabilitative leaves, giving due consideration to time remaining to serve before probable release. The policy of granting recurring leaves almost continuously should be evaluated. (See p. 21.)
- Each release program should be assessed regularly to insure that it is serving a bona fide rehabilitative purpose. Procedures should be established to monitor the whereabouts and performance of inmates participating in outside activities. (See p. 21.)
- To tighten perimeter security another fence should be constructed around medium security. The Department should also issue specific policies and procedures concerning the wearing of civilian clothes by inmates and for identifying visitors. (See p. 25.)
- To tighten security inside the correctional institutions, the Department should (1) determine the source of contraband which continually shows up in searches and take measures to prevent inmates from obtaining it, (2) assign officers full time to each dormitory, (3) improve the narcotics testing program, and (4) issue uniform policies and procedures for inspecting visitors' handbags and purses and searching inmates after visitors leave. (See p. 38.)

--To help prevent escapes, all escapes should be investigated and reports recommending corrective action sent to top management. (See p. 41.)

--The Office of Planning and Management--responsible for improving organization and operations of District agencies--should maintain a close working relationship with the Department to insure that effective corrective action is taken on management problems.

GAO also recommends that the District's internal auditors periodically look into Department operations. (See p. 5.)

#### AGENCY ACTIONS AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

GAO did not obtain formal comments from the District on its findings but did discuss them with Department of Corrections officials.

The Director and his staff generally agreed with GAO's findings and provided information on action taken or to be taken on them.

As a result of GAO's review, the Commissioner of the District of Columbia directed the Office of Planning and Management to assist the Department of Corrections. The Office's Assistant Director confirmed GAO's view that management improvements were needed and recommended actions to the Director, Department of Corrections, to correct deficiencies.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In a letter dated May 29, 1973, Congressman Stanford E. Parris asked us to review the District of Columbia, Department of Corrections, prison operations at Lorton, Virginia. At later meetings with him, it was agreed that our review would concern inmates escaping from Lorton and that our report would include information on the number of escapes for the past few years, the reasons for such escapes, security at Lorton, and the District's action or plans to improve security.

### ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

The Department of Corrections was created by Public Law 460, 79th Congress, approved June 27, 1946. Its purpose is to control, care for, and improve the behavior of persons committed to its custody in order to rehabilitate them and protect the community.

The Lorton facilities include maximum, medium, and minimum adult security facilities and two youth centers. The adult security facilities house male felons (e.g., those convicted of murder, burglary, and rape), according to the degree of supervision and control felt necessary by the Department. Minimum security also houses males convicted of misdemeanors and serves as a prerelease unit for inmates who will soon be released into community programs.

The two youth centers have custody over persons committed under the Federal Youth Corrections Act (18 U. S. C. 5005). This act provides for sentencing alternatives usually for short periods of incarceration with intensive training and treatment, for young offenders who in the court's opinion have not developed into professional criminals.

The Department reported that it cost \$18.5 million to operate the Lorton institutions in fiscal year 1973, and \$14.6 million was allotted for operating expenses in fiscal year 1974. The 1974 operating expenses do not include an undetermined amount for indirect costs, such as Departmental administration and depreciation. For fiscal year 1974, 1,100 positions were authorized for operating the Lorton facilities.

The inmate population increased over the past few years to a peak of 2,650 in August 1972 and declined to 2,040 as of December 31, 1973. The following table shows--for each Lorton facility--the average daily population for fiscal years 1971-73 and the population at December 31, 1973.



<u>Facility</u>	<u>Average daily population</u> <u>in FY</u>			<u>Actual</u> <u>populations</u> <u>12-31-73</u>
	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	
Maximum security	265	299	299	231
Medium security	1,184	1,442	1,353	1,059
Minimum security	224	255	232	220
Youth Center 1	362	359	339	326
Youth Center 2 (note a)	-	70	206	204
Total	<u>2,035</u>	<u>2,425</u>	<u>2,429</u>	<u>2,040</u>

a  
Opened in May 1972.

### ESCAPES

During fiscal years 1971-73, 380 inmates escaped; medium and minimum security had the most escapes--341. Although inmate populations declined after a peak in August 1972, the number of escapes did not decrease in fiscal year 1973. The following table shows the number of inmates who escaped in fiscal years 1971-73.

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>FY</u>		
		<u>1971</u> <u>inmates</u>	<u>1972</u> <u>inmates</u>	<u>1973</u> <u>inmates</u>
Maximum security	2	2	-	-
Medium security	171	41	58	72
Minimum security	170	56	68	46
Youth Center 1	21	5	8	8
Youth Center 2 (note a)	<u>16</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	<u>380</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>141</u>

a  
Opened in May 1972.

The Department reported that 64 others escaped from June 30 through December 31, 1973. In addition, the Department reported that about 850 inmates escaped from other Department facilities during the 3 years. The other facilities are the D. C. Jail, the Women's Detention Center, and community correctional centers (halfway houses). As of January 25, 1974, 206 inmates, including 50 who escaped from Lorton, were still at large. This report deals only with security at Lorton.

Lorton inmates escaped by (1) breaching the perimeter of the institutions (perimeter escapes), such as climbing over the fences or walls, (2) absconding from unarmed guards while on escorted trips outside the institutions, or (3) failing to return from authorized unescorted leaves for

such purposes as holidays and other leaves, paid employment in the community, and participation in various community activities. Inmates returning late from authorized absences also are legally considered escapees.

The following table summarizes the type of escapes during the 3 fiscal years ended June 30, 1973.

Perimeter escapes:	Institution					
	Total	Maximum security	Medium security	Minimum security	Youth Center 1	Youth Center 2 (note a)
1971	42	2	9	31	-	-
1972	26	-	7	19	-	-
1973	<u>46</u>	-	<u>29</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>
	<u>114</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>
Escorted trip escapes:						
1971	14	-	4	7	3	-
1972	29	-	23	4	1	1
1973	<u>34</u>	-	<u>29</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	-
	<u>77</u>	-	<u>56</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>
Authorized absence escapes:						
1971	48		28	18	2	
1972	80		28	45	7	
1973	<u>61</u>	-	<u>14</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>
	<u>189</u>	-	<u>70</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>
Total	<u>380</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>171</u>	<u>170</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>16</u>

a  
Opened in May 1972.

The table shows that 114 inmates (30 percent) escaped from the confines of the institutions (perimeter escapes) and the remaining 266 inmates (70 percent) escaped while outside the institutions. Regarding perimeter escapes, 56--almost half--of the inmates escaped from minimum security which does not have physical barriers, such as fences or walls. Generally, minimum security inmates have been judged by the Department to be trustworthy and therefore need little supervision. These perimeter escapes were merely walk-aways.

## CHAPTER 2

### BETTER MANAGEMENT WOULD TIGHTEN SECURITY

The problems discussed in chapters that follow, taken collectively, demonstrate major management failures. Management improvements over programs releasing inmates into the community and tighter security at Lorton are obviously needed. The District needs to develop (1) uniform departmental policies for the Lorton institutions to replace the patchwork of inconsistent and often ineffective security practices which has developed at each institution and (2) an effective monitoring system--which does not exist--to inform top management when Department policies are not being followed.

In developing an effective monitoring system, management should provide for periodic independent checks to insure that reported information is reliable. If the District had had uniform policies at Lorton and had good feedback and acted on it, many inmate security problems could have been avoided. Better administration should go a long way toward solving many of Lorton's security problems.

Some of the more pressing problems needing attention are:

- The Department had no system for finding out what the inmates were doing while on leave or whether the leaves were assisting in their rehabilitation, although hundreds of inmates were released each week into the community as a rehabilitative measure. About 70 percent of the escapes during the last 3 fiscal years were by inmates not returning from leaves--and some inmates on rehabilitative leave were arrested for committing crimes. (See p. 6.)
- Control over inmates within the institutions was weak--assaults by inmates on other inmates and correctional officers have been steadily increasing causing several deaths and serious injuries. Many assaults involve lethal weapons fashioned from institutional property, such as screwdrivers, pliers, scissors, and tableware. These items show up periodically--in bulk--during searches of the Lorton facilities, but the Department has not been able to stop the flow of contraband. (See p. 26.)
- Inmates are using narcotics. Narcotics show up frequently in inspections and when urine is tested. Use and possession of narcotics is not only illegal but could contribute to inmate behavior problems. Although the Department requires urine tests at all institutions, two institutions were not making the tests even though hundreds of their inmates were making unsupervised trips weekly into the community. The testing that was being done at minimum security was ineffective--inmates were not tested regularly, results of tests were received from the laboratory too late to be of much value, and results of many tests were never received. When tests showed inmates were using narcotics, the Department was

lax in disciplining them. Some of the inmates were at Lorton for committing narcotics-related crimes; not preventing them from using narcotics while in Government custody is counter to rehabilitative programs. (See p. 35.)

- Relatively small outlays for improving physical plant security features would help prevent perimeter escapes--another fence around medium security, roads around several institutions for patrolling the perimeters, and improved lighting inside and along the fence lines. (See p. 22.)

We discussed our observations with the Director and his top staff, who said they had taken action on some of our findings and promised action on others. Subsequently, the Commissioner of the District of Columbia Government directed the Office of Planning and Management to provide management assistance to the Department on the matters we brought to its attention. That Office is responsible for assisting in formulating and carrying out programs to improve the organization and operation of District agencies.

The Assistant Director for Organization and Management, Office of Planning and Management, in his February 1974 report confirmed our findings about the need for management improvements. He recommended several management improvements, including uniform policy guidance from the Department, visits and inspections of facilities by the Director and other appropriate officials to insure that policies are understood and implemented, and periodic staff meetings with key administrative and operational personnel to discuss policy and other matters.

The Office of Municipal Audit and Inspection is responsible for auditing and evaluating the programs and functions and controls of the various departments and agencies of the District Government. However, operational audits have not been made of the Department of Corrections.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

We recommend that the Office of Planning and Management maintain a close working relationship with the Department and follow up to insure that the Department takes effective corrective action on the serious management problems revealed by our--and its--reviews.

We recommend also that the Office of Municipal Audit and Inspections periodically review Department operations to help insure that the operations continue to be efficient and effective.

## CHAPTER 3

### MORE CONTROL NEEDED OVER

### INMATES ON AUTHORIZED ABSENCES

Policies and procedures for authorizing inmates to participate in activities outside Lorton institutions should be revised to help insure that only trustworthy and deserving inmates are selected. Also, a more effective system should be established to monitor the activities of inmates while they are in the community to minimize risk to the public and to ascertain if inmates benefit from release. Improvements along these lines should deter or prevent inmates from escaping while participating in outside activities. About 70 percent of the escapes in fiscal years 1971-73 were made while on authorized absence.

Inmates may be permitted to leave the institutions for extended periods for such purposes as working at paid employment, attending school, or participating in community activities. They may also be given more limited periods of absences for such purposes as (1) emergencies to visit a sick relative or to receive outside medical treatment, (2) home visits, and (3) holiday furloughs. Usually the absences for work, school, and community activities involve leaving the institutions daily for about 12 hours or more, such as from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Most of the leaves are given to inmates whom the Department has judged trustworthy and classified as minimum security risks. Department escorts do not accompany them. Inmates who are considered greater security risks may be authorized absences for a limited period, but they are accompanied by escorting officers.

In fiscal year 1972--according to Department figures--5,929 leaves were granted. These absences involved about 15,700 inmate-days. In fiscal year 1973 the reported leave totals increased to 8,783 and involved about 28,000 inmate-days. The term "inmate-day" means the product of the number of authorized absences times the number of days involved. For example, in fiscal year 1973, inmates from minimum security were authorized 960 individual leaves to attend college or to work; the average absence was 20 days each. Therefore, the total inmate-days equals 19,200. The average daily absence was 12 hours.

As shown on page 3, 189 inmates escaped while on leave in fiscal years 1971-73.

### CRITERIA FOR AUTHORIZING LEAVES

The Department and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice, have the same basic legal authority for granting leaves of absence. However, differences exist in the way the two agencies exercise such authority. The act of September 10, 1965, Public Law 89-176, amended 18 U.S.C. 4082 to facilitate the rehabilitation of persons

convicted of offenses against the United States. To fulfill this objective the act authorized the use of residential community treatment centers, emergency furloughs, and community employment or training.

The legislation was introduced at the request of the Attorney General in his capacity as head of the Department of Justice with jurisdiction over the Bureau of Prisons. In his letter to the Congress requesting the legislation, he said the emergency or rehabilitation leave provision was intended to give him limited discretion to extend the limits of a prisoner's confinement to meet various situations.

The Attorney General stated that:

"\* \* \* he may permit an inmate who has been granted parole to visit the local community to discuss his release plan with the probation officer who will be charged with his supervision. He may wish to authorize an especially qualified and trustworthy inmate to attend a class or a meeting in a nearby college or school, or to undertake short-term vocational training in an appropriate community center. It is anticipated that the Attorney General would use the procedure in most instances for sickbed, deathbed, or funeral visits. On such occasions at present, the inmate must be accompanied by a Department of Justice employee, with the entire expense borne by the inmate or his family, including transportation for both inmate and employee, and per diem and any overtime incurred for the employee.

"As with the authority to commit or transfer to community treatment centers, the authority to grant emergency or rehabilitation leave would not be extended to an inmate unless institution officials are convinced that he is highly trustworthy and that his temporary presence in the community without escort would not present a threat in any way."

The Attorney General delegated his authority to grant leaves of absence to the District of Columbia Government. The District's Department of Corrections cites the act as its authority to grant leaves to inmates in its custody.

The Bureau's policy for granting inmate leaves for such purposes as work and study release and other community activities provides that leaves not be authorized unless the inmates are generally within 6 months of their probable release dates. The Department, however, had not established any limit on the time to release as a condition for an inmate's eligibility for similar leaves. As a result, inmates at Lorton who had up to 25 years remaining before their probable release dates were granted leaves. Our examination of 173 leaves--most of them granted in 1973--from medium and minimum security showed that only 14 would have met the Bureau's criteria limiting the leaves to inmates with 6 months or less before probable release.

As a result of our inquiries, the District of Columbia Government Assistant Corporation Counsel, in a memorandum dated March 14, 1974, to the Director, Department of Corrections, evaluating the Department's legal authority for granting leaves to inmates, suggested that criteria for leaves consider how long an inmate has to serve before his probable release date. No specific period of time before release was, however, suggested. The Assistant Corporation Counsel stated:

"The departmental guidelines indicate that the ultimate goal sought to be achieved by the furlough program is to provide varied opportunities for rehabilitative training outside of the institution for those inmates who are trustworthy and who are at an appropriate stage of their preparation for the transition from institution to freedom. However, it is noted that the guidelines are silent with respect to any requirement that furlough eligibility be considered in light of the time remaining to be served by an inmate prior to his probable release date or eligibility for parole. Guidelines for furlough should include criteria that reflect consideration of the duration of sentence still to be served and the benefits that may accrue through grant of furlough to assist the inmate in his transition from custody status to final release. Such criteria should recognize that an inmate's needs may differ in preparation for transition when the probable date of release remains far in the future."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Thus, the individual inmate must be considered and evaluated prior to any grant of furlough privileges rather than by placing reliance merely upon established criteria; in each case a determination must be made that the inmate is suitable for the rehabilitative features of whatever program or activity is involved for which furlough is to be granted. \* \* \*"  
(Underscoring supplied.)

Of course, if the rationale for using leaves is to assist inmates in making the transition from institutional life to freedom it becomes less plausible the further an inmate is from probable release.

Leaves granted to inmates  
convicted of violent crimes

No statute prohibits granting leave to inmates convicted of violent crimes. However, the Department's policy (Operations Order No. 3, dated Nov. 7, 1972) provided that leaves not be authorized for offenders serving sentences for unusually violent crimes and serious or violent crimes against persons or those convicted of violence when armed, as defined in the D. C. Code (22 D. C. Code 3201). Among the crimes of violence listed in the D. C. Code are murder; rape; manslaughter; kidnaping; burglary; robbery; and assault with the intent to kill, rape; or rob.

The Department made exceptions to the policy by allowing inmates serving sentences for violent crimes leaves to participate in certain programs, such as the work training and Federal City College (FCC) programs, if the inmates had received favorable results on a psychiatric evaluation. Exceptions were also made for leaves granted at Youth Center 1. Similar instructions had not been issued on leaves to inmates for other purposes, such as self-help programs and holidays, even though inmates who had committed similar crimes were in these programs. By releasing such inmates in connection with self-help group programs or holidays, the Department violated its own regulations.

The lack of specific departmental guidance concerning when inmates are eligible for leaves resulted in the adoption of inconsistent eligibility criteria among the various Lorton institutions and, in our opinion, contributes to the escape problems.

### Medium security

Inmates assigned to medium security were given leaves primarily to participate in community "self-help" activities. Groups of inmates form organizations for self-help programs for such purposes as to provide wholesome guidance to community youths and to discourage community youths and adults from using narcotics. As of August 1, 1973, there were 31 active self-help groups with a membership of 578. Of the 46 inmates authorized self-help group leaves during August 5 through 8, 1973, only 2 had 6 months or less remaining before their probable release dates. Twelve had over 5 years left to release, of whom 8 inmates had from over 10 years to over 15 years. All the inmates with over 5 years to probable release had been convicted of violent crimes, such as murder, manslaughter, rape, armed robbery, and kidnaping.

Many of the inmates were on leave 12 hours (example, 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.) a day, 5 or 6 days a week continuously for several months.

The Department cited the emergency or rehabilitation leave provisions of 18 U.S.C. 4082 as its authority for granting leaves to inmates for self-help group activities. That section of the code, at the time of our review, stated that leaves might be granted to trustworthy prisoners to:

" \* \* \* (1) visit a specifically designated place or places for a period not to exceed thirty days and return to the same or another institution or facility. An extension of limits may be granted only to permit a visit to a dying relative, attendance at the funeral of a relative, the obtaining of medical services not otherwise available, the contacting of prospective employers, or for any other compelling reason consistent with the public interest \* \* \* ." (Underscoring supplied.)



On Dec. 28, 1973, Public Law 93-209 was enacted amending the above quoted language to provide:

"\* \* \*(1) visit a specifically designated place or places for a period not to exceed thirty days and return to the same or another institution or facility. An extension of limits may be granted to permit a visit to a dying relative, attendance at the funeral of a relative, the obtaining of medical services not otherwise available, the contacting of prospective employers, the establishment or reestablishment of family and community ties or for any other significant reason consistent with the public interest \* \* \*." (Underscoring supplied.)

An example of the Department's application of the leave provisions of 18 U.S.C. 4082 to self-help group activities follows.

Inmates formed a self-help group to work with youths in the community to "instruct and demonstrate the best methods of developing good living habits such as tidying up rooms and other living areas, mending and washing, good hygiene, and good table manners." Four of the five inmates in the group on leave during the week of August 5, 1973, had been convicted of violent crimes and had received long sentences. Three of the inmates had years left to serve before their probable release dates, as shown below.

<u>Crime</u>	<u>Sentence (years)</u>	<u>Years to probable release</u>
Manslaughter	10 to 33	15
Bank robbery	8 to 25	3
Rape	11 to 30	4-1/2

This group's program, along with those of other self-help groups, is a continuing program with an indeterminate ending date. These three inmates have received recurring furloughs week after week for many months. The record of furloughs from September 3 through November 11, 1973, showed that the three inmates cited above were released each week for 5 days for 12 hours each day for 10 weeks, or a total of 50 days. The periods of release cover, however, a much longer time.

A memorandum dated January 29, 1974, written by the Department's Assistant Director for Operations indicated that before September 1973 about 300 inmates per week were leaving medium security on these community programs but the programs had recently been cut back, resulting in a reduction to about 60 inmates per week leaving for community activities. The Department's Director told us the programs were being reduced because they could not be adequately monitored.

We believe that granting leaves on a recurring weekly basis (although perhaps no one leave period exceeds the statutory 30-day maximum) to inmates, including many whose probable release dates are years in the future, constitutes an injudicious exercise of discretion by

the Department. As a general proposition, the extensive use of recurring leaves to inmates undermines the purpose of the criminal sentencing procedures and may diminish the effect of rehabilitation leaves.

Inmates at medium security were also granted leaves for holidays such as Christmas and Easter. In fiscal years 1972 and 1973, about 550 and 400 holiday leaves, respectively, were granted. Department officials stated that, in selecting inmates for holiday leaves, they do not require that the inmate have a certain period remaining before release. We examined records of 43 inmates granted leaves in 1972 and 1973. Only one had 6 months or less remaining before his probable release. Twenty of the inmates had over 5 years to serve, of which 13 inmates had more than 10 years before their probable release dates. All had been convicted of violent crimes.

### Minimum security

Inmates at minimum security were granted extended leaves for such purposes as to (1) work, (2) attend post high school institutions, and (3) participate in work-study programs.

The Department had not established requirements concerning the time allowable until probable release date before the inmates would be eligible for leaves associated with most of the programs. In July 1973, however, the Department established a requirement that inmates participating in the offsite community work training program be within 14 months of their probable release dates, and in October 1973 it established a requirement that inmates attending FCC be within 2 years of their probable release dates. We were advised in October 1973 that the latter requirement does not apply to inmates attending other local institutions of higher learning but that guidelines for such other institutions were being drafted. As of April 1974 the guidelines had not been issued. No eligibility criteria had been issued concerning the other leave programs.

In reviewing authorizations for releasing inmates on the various types of leaves, we looked at those released on August 13, 1973. The following table shows the time the inmates had remaining to be served before probable release.

<u>Purpose of leave</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Time to probable release</u>			
		<u>Under 6 months</u>	<u>6 months to 3 years</u>	<u>3 years to 5 years</u>	<u>Over 5 years</u>
Work	37	2	25	1	9
Education	26	2	22	1	1
Work and study	21	7	9	1	4
Total	<u>84</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>14</u>

The table shows that most of the inmates in the education programs had short periods remaining to serve. On the other hand, a considerable number of inmates in the work and work-study programs had long

periods remaining to serve. For example, one inmate would not be eligible for release for 25 years and several inmates for 10 to 14 years. Concerning periods of daily absences, a group of about 20 inmates attending Washington Technical Institute and the Sharpe Health School work-study programs leave minimum security daily about 6 or 7 a.m. and return about 11 p.m.

### Youth centers

Inmates of the youth centers were sentenced under the Federal Youth Corrections Act (18 U.S.C. 5005), which permits the courts to hand down more lenient sentences to persons 18 to 26 years old, regardless of crime, than would be possible under other statutes. One section of this act under which most youth offenders are sentenced provides that the Department may conditionally release under supervision the offenders any time on or before the expiration of 4 years after date of conviction.

Upon arrival at the institution, the youth offenders are evaluated to, among other things, decide upon the period of confinement. They are given expected release dates. According to Lorton officials, the average confinement at Youth Center 1 for fiscal year 1973 was about 1 year; at Youth Center 2 it was 9 months.

During their confinement the youths are given leaves generally for short periods--weekends or 1 or 2 days.

Our test of leaves granted during the first quarter of fiscal year 1974 showed that the inmates generally had met the institutions' leave eligibility requirements and had only a few months remaining before probable release. However, the criteria for eligibility for such leaves varied between the centers. Youth Center 1 required that, to be eligible for leave, an inmate not have received more than one positive narcotics test within the previous 6 months. Youth Center 2 criteria, on the other hand, provided that the inmate must not have received a positive narcotics test during the previous 2 months. Youth Center 2 criteria also required inmates to have served at least one-third of the time to their expected release dates, but Youth Center 1 did not have such a requirement.

Department officials advised us in September 1973 that a committee had been established to standardize leave policies between the two youth centers. Furlough policies applicable to both centers were issued on February 6, 1974.

### INMATES RELEASED INTO COMMUNITY

The Department should improve its supervisory and administrative controls over inmates released into the community.

- There was a lack of checks on inmates authorized to be in the community. Therefore, the Department seldom knew if inmates were at authorized locations.

--The Department did not act promptly when inmates violated their leave conditions.

### Inmates attending FCC

In 1970 the Department instituted a program of releasing certain inmates daily from Lorton to attend classes at FCC. For the fall quarter, which began in October 1973, 26 inmates were scheduled to be bused into the District to attend FCC. They were authorized to leave the institution 6 days a week at 6:30 a. m. and return at 7:30 p. m. (13 hours daily, or 78 hours a week).

Inmates were also scheduled to participate in certain community service projects. Generally, of the 78 hours a week inmates were away from the institution, they were scheduled to spend about 13 hours in class and about 34 hours participating in community service projects. The schedules did not account for the remaining 32 hours of the week, but it is likely that the time would be used for travel to and from the institution, lunch periods, and other unscheduled time.

### Attendance

The Department did not regularly receive information from FCC showing the number of hours inmates attended classes and participated in community projects.

Department officials advised us that, to verify the inmates' attendance at FCC, they periodically visited FCC to check on the inmates' whereabouts. We were told that (1) starting about January 1973, they made visits on weekdays and on Saturdays and (2) written reports are made for any Saturday and holiday visits but on weekday visits written reports are made only when violations are noted.

We requested reports on these visits and received only three reports covering three Saturdays during August through September 1973 and another covering holiday activities in May 1973.

The four reports showed that inmates were not present at the scheduled activities. In one report, the Department official making the visit said he could not establish whether the inmates were present because "I did not have my roster." However, an inmate leader gave him the names of three missing inmates. The Department official monitoring the program decided not to take any action other than reprimanding the inmates involved.

One of the other reports stated that none of the 21 inmates released on Saturday, August 11, 1973, were at the scheduled morning activities that day. FCC changed the location of the scheduled activities, which included an athletic program followed by a class, but did not inform the Department official who made the visit. According to his report, inmates told him, however, that only about one-third of the

21 inmates attended the athletic program and many did not even know about the class. This official told us that no action was taken against the inmates who did not attend the scheduled activities. He said, that as a result of this attendance check, several other Saturday checks were made.

According to approved schedules for the fall quarter 1973, only about half the inmates had activities on Saturdays and they finished about noon. The other inmates had no scheduled activities on Saturdays but generally all the inmates were allowed to leave the institutions for the full day, returning about 7:30 p. m.

An agreement between the Department and FCC required the college to keep attendance records on the inmates enrolled including community assignments, and to submit quarterly evaluation reports on inmates' progress. However, the Director of the program at FCC said that only about 60 percent of the teachers reported attendance to him. Nevertheless the evaluation reports available for 19 inmates concerning the summer quarter of 1973 showed time and attendance for inmates as excellent (8), good (9), or fair (2). It seems that an inmate released to attend school would--unless he has recurring illnesses--be expected to have nothing less than "excellent" attendance.

Such attendance classifications do not reveal specific absences, and the Department official responsible for monitoring the inmate college program said he did not know what these classifications meant.

No reporting of attendance at community activities had been made by FCC for the fall quarter 1973. Also no record was kept of daily attendance of inmates participating in one of the community service programs. Furthermore, the Director of this program did not know which inmates were scheduled to participate in the program. Similarly, FCC did not check on or report the attendance of inmates scheduled for participation in the community program.

### Grades and schedules

Inmates attending FCC must earn a minimum of 12 credit hours each quarter and must also maintain at least a "C" average to remain in academic good standing at the college.

To monitor inmate attendance and progress in the FCC program and to know where the inmate students are scheduled to be throughout each day, FCC is required to provide the Department with each inmate's schedule of classes and community service activities each school quarter. Such schedules were not provided to the Department for the fall 1973 quarter which began October 1, 1973, until December 7, 1973-- a few days before the quarter ended.

The schedules showed that about 25 percent of the scheduled time was for academic work and the remaining 75 percent of the scheduled time was for community service activities. The schedules also showed that 5 of the 26 inmates were taking fewer hours than the required 12 credit hours.

The Department also did not know if inmates were successfully completing their courses at FCC and therefore achieving the program objectives of preparing inmates for new careers. A Department official told us that, except for six inmates' grades received in February 1973, grades of inmates have not been received from the college since the program began. He said also that his office considered requesting grades from the college's computer center but that the grades could not be furnished to the Department without permission from each inmate.

Department officials stated that they have had a series of problems with FCC concerning the Lorton college programs. In early December 1973 we met with District officials and expressed our concern with the lack of control over inmates attending FCC. They were planning to meet with FCC officials to discuss and resolve problems, including the lack of reports on grades and inmate attendance at FCC.

About a month later, before the meeting with FCC officials, three inmates who were scheduled to attend FCC were arrested for robbing a bank at Tappahannock, Virginia. They had been released from Lorton on the day of the robbery to attend FCC even though no classes were scheduled that day because of the quarter break. Supposedly they were participating in community activities that day.

On February 1, 1974, we discussed our findings with the Director and other Department officials. They acknowledged there were serious problems in monitoring and evaluating inmates' attendance and progress at FCC. They gave us additional data on verification of FCC attendance. This data showed that 12 other visits--in addition to the 4 visits for which reports were previously provided to us--were made to the college; however, for 8 of these visits, the date of the visit was not shown or any details of the visits or results.

Department officials said the inmates were involved in nonacademic or study activities on Saturdays even though such activities were not included in the inmates' schedules. However, we did not find any documentation setting forth the Saturday activities of the inmates.

The Director said that he wrote to the acting president of FCC on January 18, 1974, requesting a meeting to resolve these problems. Information subsequently obtained indicates that the Department and FCC were working on them.

Inmates attending other  
educational institutions

We did not review Department controls, if any, over inmates attending other local institutions of higher learning. But the one inmate attending one local university escaped in November 1973 and was apprehended in February 1974. He had been sentenced for murder and escape.

Another inmate attending another local university obtained Department approval to attend the university under questionable circumstances, and the Department had not monitored his activities while on release. In September 1973 the inmate was arrested twice for an alleged felony and a misdemeanor. He was then removed from the university program, and later he escaped from a Lorton institution. The following chronology describes the Department's handling of this case and illustrates the weak administration of programs for releasing inmates into the community.

An inmate was sentenced in 1968 to life imprisonment with a minimum of 12 years for kidnaping, housebreaking, robbery, and assault with a dangerous weapon. The inmate was permitted to leave minimum security daily for extended periods during 1973, primarily to attend classes at a university in the District. The inmate did not enroll in the scheduled courses for credit but merely audited them to prepare for a college entrance examination. He never took the examination, and most of the time he was on leave there was no direct supervision of his activities by either the Department or the university.

January 3, 1973 Letter from university professor requesting release of the inmate on the following dates:

1. January 5 through 12, including Saturday and Sunday, to prepare a program proposal estimated to cost \$80,000 for a D.C. city council member. (Inmate was released from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on these dates but the file indicated work had been completed earlier.)
2. February 12 through 14 to take College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests. (Inmate was released from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on these dates but inmate did not take tests.) A Department classification and parole officer noted on the leave request that the inmate would request permission to attend the university if he passed the CLEP tests. (The professor told us the inmate never took the test. In a memorandum to the administrator of minimum security, dated January 15, 1973, the chief classification and parole officer stated, "It appears to me that [inmate] works out his own time for being out in the community. He checks in to Professor

once a day or whenever he feels like it, the rest of the time no one knows where he is." He also said that the inmate made a telephone call to the administrator of minimum security using the professor's name, "\* \* \* to deceive and obtain community privileges for himself.")

- February 13, 1973 Request from university professor to release inmate daily, except Sundays, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. from February 8 through March 8, 1973, "for the purpose of developing a proposal concerning self-help program coordination at Lorton." (Inmate was released from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on these dates. This was the same project the file indicated had been completed earlier. See comments under January 3, 1973. The request also stated that inmate would receive tutoring in budget-program management from a university student. (The student told us that she was a sociology major and could not tutor inmate in budget-program management.) Furthermore, the request stated that the inmate's transportation would be handled by the professor's office and cited the names of three people who would assist in providing the transportation. (The professor said he did not know the people--the inmate provided the names. In a February 12, 1973, memorandum to the Lorton superintendent of adult services a classification and parole officer stated that the professor claims he cannot adequately supervise the inmate during visits to the university and he could not fulfill transportation commitment.)
- March 7, 1973 Request from professor to extend inmate's leave for the same purposes stated in his letter of February 13. Leave was extended from March 10 to April 6, 1973, and daily hours changed from 7a.m. to 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. (See above comments regarding propriety of purposes.)
- March 22, 1973 Report from professor on inmate's progress stated he was close to finalizing self-help proposal and was preparing for CLEP exam. (The professor told us that inmate drafted this statement for progress report.)
- May 16, 1973 Letter from professor showing inmate's schedule of daily activities, including class assignments at university. The class schedule included a humanities course Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. (No such course was listed in the university



catalog and the professor could not substantiate existence of course.) Also included were counseling and student activities on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (The professor said students don't meet on Saturdays and therefore he could not verify that assignment.)

July 27, 1973

Letter from professor updating inmate's scheduled activities. Humanities and counseling and student activities were again included. (See related comments above concerning propriety of purpose.) Letter also stated that inmate was working for Neighborhood Legal Services Program as a special process server and investigator for divorce and custody cases and was authorized to serve summonses and subpoenas in Washington, Maryland, and Virginia.

July 30, 1973

Request from professor requesting inmate's release on each Sunday during August 1973 to visit "Smithsonian Institution's National Art and Portrait Gallery" from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. to obtain information on arts and humanities of western civilization to prepare for CLEP tests. The request stated that the university did not offer courses dealing with these subjects in the summer. (Inmate never took CLEP test although released several times for this purpose.)

September 5, 1973

Letter from professor showing inmate's class schedule for fall semester September 5 through February 9, 1974. Cultural arts course provided for continuation of the arts and humanities study at Smithsonian on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Student activities were again scheduled on Saturdays. A history class was scheduled for Monday through Friday. (The university's published schedule of classes did not include this history class and the class was not held.)

This inmate's attendance at the university was seldom taken, and his whereabouts was generally not known by either the university or department. Almost every day the inmate was 10 to 30 minutes late returning to the institution--many days he was 1 to several hours late. He was disciplined for lateness several times but it did no good--the very next day he was late again.

In September 1973 the inmate was arrested twice while on leave to attend the university--once for unlawful possession of firearms in an apartment he was allegedly renting and the other time for driving his late model luxury car without a valid permit.

The inmate escaped in January 1974 from minimum security and was apprehended 4 days later by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and subsequently placed in maximum security.

## Paid employment program

Early in 1973 the Department initiated a program of releasing inmates from minimum security to work at paid employment in the Washington area. On October 17, 1973, 57 were participating in the program.

Our test showed that (1) sometimes some of the inmates either did not report for work or left the jobsite early without returning promptly to the institution and (2) the Department was not taking disciplinary action in some cases of unauthorized absences.

To verify an inmate's attendance at work, procedures of the Department called for a regular comparison of the total hours actually worked--as shown on the inmates' wage statements--with the total hours they were scheduled to work. Any shortage was to be investigated by a job counselor and accounted for by the inmates. The procedures also called for job counselors to make biweekly visits to the worksites to verify attendance and discuss job performance with employers. Employers were not required to report inmate absences to the Department.

Although these procedures provided some control over an inmate's job attendance, such control often came about only after a considerable delay. Several days usually elapsed between the end of the pay period and the date the Department received inmate wage statements. Also the statements could cover a past 5- to 10-day period on work release. For example, an inmate absent from work, say April 1, might not be found out until April 18 if April 1 was the first day of a 2-week pay period and there was a 3-day lag in receipt of the pay statement.

We examined in detail the attendance of 3 of the 57 inmates participating in the work release program in October 1973. Our discussions with the job foremen and examination of attendance records for the first 2 weeks in October showed that on certain days all three inmates left the job early without permission and on another day they did not work 4 hours because of rain. In addition, two inmates did not report for work at all on some other days. During these absences the inmates' whereabouts were unknown to the Department.

Each unauthorized absence from work violated the conditions of release and subjected the inmate to disciplinary action which could result in removal from the offsite employment program. In addition, the U.S. Code (18 U.S.C. 4082 (d)) states that absences are punishable as an escape.

Two of the three inmates were removed from the work release program--but one not until 9 days after the Department knew about the absence. No disciplinary action was taken against the third inmate.

The Department's job counselors who had visited these jobsites, to verify inmates' attendance and job performance, had apparently not done their job well. Their verification primarily involved talking to the foreman and/or inmates. The employer's attendance records were not examined. According to the report of one counselor's visits, when he observed one of the inmates was missing, he accepted the word of a coworker that the missing inmate "was on the flat-bed truck that just left." We found, however, that the inmate had not reported for work that day and therefore should have been reported as an escapee.

In the three cases we reviewed, the inmates were authorized to leave the institution at 6 a.m. and return at 8 p.m. The employer said the inmates' daily work-hours were from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This scheduling of release and return permitted the inmates 1 hour of travel time to the jobsite but 4-1/2 hours of traveltime back to the institution.

Department officials told us that the inmates arranged their transportation to and from the job, subject to verification by the Department. An official at minimum security said 4-1/2 hours of traveltime to return appeared excessive and that 2 hours would be more reasonable. However the Department had not issued any instructions to tighten up this practice.

Department officials indicated in a meeting on February 1, 1974, that inmates would be required to report to one of the Department's correctional facilities in the District whenever disruptions in their work schedules occurred.

### Self-help group programs

Since 1969 the Department has been granting leaves to inmates to participate in self-help group programs in the community, but the Department had not established procedures for regularly investigating or receiving reports on the activities and attendance of inmate participants. It, therefore, did not know how the hundreds of inmates who were released each week, presumably to participate in these programs, were actually spending their time away from the institution. Equally important, the Department did not know whether the programs were, in fact, serving their purpose--contributing to inmates' rehabilitation.

### CONCLUSIONS

The Department needs to significantly improve its control over inmate release programs.

Tightening the administration of the release programs would enhance their rehabilitative value by more realistically preparing the inmate for return to society. Careful selection of inmates and better surveillance of their outside activities would make such programs more acceptable to people in whose community the inmates are released. A corollary benefit may be reduced escapes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

We recommend that the Department:

- Establish uniform and definitive guidelines for all institutions for selecting inmates for rehabilitation leaves of absence, giving due consideration to the time remaining to serve before probable release. Such leaves should, depending on the reason for release, be for periods no longer than necessary to carryout the leaves' purpose. The policy of granting recurring leaves almost continuously should be evaluated.
- Assess each release program regularly to insure that it is serving a bona fide rehabilitative purpose.
- Establish uniform procedures for monitoring the whereabouts and performance of inmates participating in outside activities.
- Effectively discipline inmates who violate the terms and conditions of release.

## CHAPTER 4

### PROBLEMS CONTRIBUTING TO ESCAPES

Improving physical plant features and establishing and enforcing uniform internal operating policies and procedures at Lorton concerning the wearing of civilian clothing and identifying visitors would result in better control of inmates and help prevent escapes.

#### PHYSICAL PLANT SECURITY

Perimeter security could be improved by adding another fence around medium security, constructing roads around several institutions, and renovating the lighting system within the institutions and along the fence lines.

##### Perimeter fences

Maximum security is enclosed by a 25-foot-high masonry wall, whereas medium security and the two youth centers are enclosed by either 11- or 12-foot-high metal fences. Guard towers are located at intervals along the walls or fence lines and are manned 24 hours a day. Minimum security does not have towers or fences because its inmates have been judged by the Department to be minimum security risks.

The fencing surrounding medium security differs greatly from fencing surrounding the youth centers. The youth centers are enclosed by two 12-foot-high fences 18 feet apart, whereas medium security is enclosed by only one 11-foot-high fence. In fiscal year 1973 inmates escaped 11 times by breaking the perimeter of medium security, and 5 of these involved 17 inmates who broke through the single fence. In contrast, only one of the four escapes from the youth centers in fiscal year 1973 involved inmates breaking the fence lines.

Investigation reports were prepared by the Department on only three of the five escapes cited above from medium security, and the reports indicated that a double fence might have prevented those escapes. For example, one escape involved four inmates who crashed a truck into the one fence. They probably would not have escaped if there had been a double fence because the truck would have had difficulty in crashing through both fences.

The American Correctional Association, a recognized authority in the correctional field, recommends that a medium security institution normally have a double fence, the inner fence 12 to 14 feet high and the outer fence 8 to 12 feet high.

##### Perimeter roads

At the time of our fieldwork, no perimeter roads were around the institutions, except Youth Center 2; however, according to the District's 1972 budget request, in 1969 the District of Columbia Mayor's Task Force

recommended that, to improve security and reduce escapes at Lorton, a motorized perimeter patrol be established at medium security, maximum security, and the Youth Center. 1/

The District requested funds for perimeter roads and, in fiscal year 1972, the Congress authorized \$70,000 to design perimeter roads at maximum security, medium security, and Youth Center 1. An official of the District's Department of General Services (responsible for construction) advised us that, because of plans to renovate and construct additional facilities at Lorton, design work did not begin until about October 1973 and that by December 1973 about \$12,000 had been spent on the perimeter roads design.

The District did not request funds from the Congress for constructing perimeter roads in fiscal years 1973-75. According to a Department official, construction of perimeter roads is included in the Department's master plan for renovating and constructing new facilities at Lorton. At the time of our review, City Council had not approved the plan.

### Lighting

It appears officers in the towers would have difficulty seeing inmates trying to escape because there are many dark spots along the fence. Guards apparently did not observe 15 inmates escaping at night from medium security and the youth centers in fiscal year 1973. Improved lighting may have prevented some or all of these escapes.

In fiscal year 1972 the District received \$10,000 for a preliminary survey to develop plans for improving the perimeter and interior lighting at the Lorton institutions. An official of the District's Department of General Services told us that the \$10,000 had been spent for an engineering study of the lighting at Lorton. Although the study, completed in April 1973, recommended improved lighting, the District had not requested funds for constructing a new lighting system in its budget request for fiscal year 1975.

The problem of inadequate institutional lighting has been a major concern of the local union of the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents the Lorton correctional officers. In October 1972 the District of Government, in agreement with the union, stated that immediate action would be taken to improve security lighting within the institutions and along the perimeter. The District, however, did not take the agreed-upon action, and in August 1973 the union again requested improved lighting at Lorton. The District Government then agreed again to seek congressional approval to reprogram about \$1.4 million of existing funds to improve the security lighting at Lorton.

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1/ Youth Center 2 was not in existence at this time.

An official in the District's budget office said the office would request reprogramming of funds for the total lighting project from the Congress after City Council approved the Department's plan for renovating existing facilities and constructing new facilities.

District officials said that, because of union grievances, emergency action was being taken to improve the lighting inside medium security. About \$85,000, reprogramed from other Lorton projects, will be used for this purpose. Work started in December 1973.

### INMATES WEARING CIVILIAN CLOTHING

Although inmates at Lorton are issued institutional clothing, they are allowed to wear civilian clothing. For example, medium and minimum security inmates may wear colored shirts and sweaters with the institutional trousers, which are blue denim and therefore undistinguishable from civilian clothes. During visiting hours inmates may wear such civilian attire, and in fiscal year 1973 four inmates escaped on three occasions from medium security by walking out with visitors.

At Youth Center 1, inmates are allowed to wear civilian clothes after 3:30 p.m., except that the uniform must be worn during visiting hours in the evening. At Youth Center 2 civilian sweaters can be worn except during visiting hours.

Bureau of Prisons officials said their policy requires that inmates wear uniforms at all times. However, the Bureau made exceptions to permit male inmates to wear civilian clothes at three minimum security institutions. We were told that most of the inmates were within a year of being released. According to the Bureau, civilian clothing is prohibited primarily because it is considered a security risk.

The Department allows the administrator of each institution to prescribe policy on the wearing of civilian clothing by inmates. There are undoubtedly sound arguments pro and con as to the rehabilitative efficacy of a policy to allow inmates to wear civilian clothing while incarcerated. Such a policy may be more appropriate at the Lorton minimum security institution where the inmates are considered good security risks and who are generally closer to their probable release dates. However, it appears that inmates wearing civilian clothes particularly during visiting hours adds to security problems. Those who escaped in 1973 from the medium security by walking out with visitors would probably have been stopped if they had been required to wear distinctive clothing. In addition, distinctive clothing could assist police in identifying and apprehending inmates during the critical period shortly after escapes.

### IDENTIFYING VISITORS

After inmates escaped by walking out with visitors, as happened several times in fiscal year 1973, medium security instituted a procedure whereby all visitors entering the institution have one hand marked with

a special ink readable only under an ultraviolet light. All persons hands are checked before they may leave.

At the time of our review, this procedure was not in effect at the youth centers. Officials here advised us that machines had been obtained and would be put into use soon. An official at minimum security said this procedure is not needed at that institution to control or identify visitors.

Although minimum security inmates have more freedom than inmates at the other institutions, it would be appropriate to establish procedures to discourage inmates from easily escaping, such as by walking out with visitors. Inmates here do not have complete freedom to walk away any time they choose. They are under surveillance, are restricted to certain areas of the institution, and must remain in the dormitories at night. Procedures for positive identification of visitors would appear particularly desirable at minimum security if the inmates are allowed to continue wearing civilian clothes. Conversely, such procedures would not entirely eliminate the added security problem caused by inmates wearing civilian clothing at all times at the other Lorton institutions. (See p. 24.)

### CONCLUSIONS

The Department indicated that action would be taken to improve the lighting and perimeter roads at Lorton upon City Council approval of the construction renovation program. However, the Department had not taken action to erect another fence around medium security. Security could be tightened and escapes reduced if medium security were enclosed by another security fence.

Security would be tightened also by procedures positively identifying visitors and if inmates at Lorton wore distinctive institutional clothing. The Department should consider restricting the wearing of civilian clothing to such times as only while on authorized absences. Specific policies should be established on these matters for all institutions.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

We recommend that the Department (1) include in its construction renovation program for Lorton a provision for constructing another fence around medium security and (2) issue specific policies and procedures for all Lorton institutions covering the wearing of civilian clothes by inmates and procedures for identifying visitors.



## CHAPTER 5

### OTHER SECURITY PROBLEMS

Security inside correctional institutions is accomplished, to a large extent, by the day-to-day procedures designed to maintain inmate discipline to insure control and custody of inmates. Internal security is necessary to prevent inmate assaults against, and intimidations of, other inmates and correctional personnel and to restrict contraband from getting into the institutions. During fiscal year 1971 there were 42 reported assaults by Lorton inmates on other inmates and correctional officers. In fiscal years 1972 and 1973, such assaults increased to 74 and 134, respectively. Weapons in the possession of inmates are involved in most assaults.

Internal security procedures varied among the institutions because there was no uniform Department policy concerning certain security measures, and some institutions either ignored certain Department policies or failed to establish procedures to carry them out.

### MAJOR SHAKEDOWNS AND INSPECTIONS

A major shakedown is a search made usually by correctional officers of institutional grounds and buildings, including work areas, cell blocks, and other inmate housing units, for contraband, such as drugs, tools, and weapons. Department policy requires that searches to uncover contraband be made periodically at the discretion of each institution. Until October 1972 shakedowns were uncommon at Lorton. At that time, because the local correctional officers' union had complained about the absence of massive shakedowns, the Department agreed to schedule shakedowns to remove weapons and contraband. It also agreed to develop plans for regular periodic spot checking of housing units and work areas.

Apparently the union was not satisfied with the Department's efforts, because in August 1973 the union again complained about the need for more complete shakedowns. The Department again agreed to develop a positive plan for shakedowns and to accelerate their scheduling and performance.

The union protested about security again when a correctional officer was found murdered at medium security in November 1973.

#### Medium security

Records of shakedowns at medium security before October 1972 were not available. According to an official, few shakedowns had been made. Since October 1972, apparently as a result of the agreement between the Department and the union, shakedowns increased. These shakedowns, however, were generally limited to a few selected housing units except for one complete shakedown made in December 1973.

Tools were one of the major contraband items found during shakedowns at medium security, including hammers, pipe wrenches, screwdrivers, files, a hatchet, and an ax.

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Department regulations require that institution managers establish procedures for control of tools and equipment and emphasize that such controls are necessary for adequate security.

In September 1973 the superintendent of the facility established definitive guidelines for the control of tools and other implements which are considered dangerous to inmates and institutional personnel. These guidelines provide that a complete inventory be taken of all tools and that each tool be marked to identify the unit responsible for its control. An inventory of tools is required to be made at the beginning and end of each work shift, and any missing tools are to be reported to the captain's office. The Assistant Administrator for Operations of the facility advised us that prior control procedures, such as those issued by the Engineering Division, were apparently not followed and that the superintendent's order was issued to emphasize the need for adequate controls over tools and to pinpoint responsibility for control breakdowns when tools are found in the possession of inmates.

The guidelines for controlling tools, however, did not resolve the problem of inmates' obtaining tools. Shakedown at several dormitories about 5 months after the guidelines were issued uncovered many institutional tools, including wrenches, pliers, screwdrivers, hammers, shears, and files. Some of these had been fashioned into sharp weapons. Other items confiscated appeared to be institutional property, such as 19 pieces of silverware, a straight razor, office supplies, 50 feet of hose, and 63 window drapes found in one dormitory.

Such contraband as the above indicates lax supervision of inmates and poor control and accountability of institutional property. Determining the source of the contraband and preventing inmates from taking and harboring items that could threaten the safety of inmates and correctional personnel should be emphasized.

#### Minimum security

All institutional buildings and grounds were searched for contraband in October 1972; improvised weapons; miscellaneous tools; an assortment of bats and pipes; and knives, forks, and spoons from the kitchen were uncovered. A limited shakedown of only the housing units was made in June 1973 to find a straight razor missing from the barber shop. The Senior Captain said these two shakedowns were the only ones made during the 3 fiscal years ended June 1973. In January 1974 the institution started making more frequent dormitory shakedowns.

#### Youth centers

Two major shakedowns were made at Youth Center 1 in the three fiscal years ended June 1973. A shakedown at Youth Center 1, made in October 1972, included all inmate housing units and administrative and program space. The shakedown report stated that a considerable amount

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of lethal hardware, such as hammers, pipes, and scissors, was found. Also found were numerous steel table knives and screwdrivers. The other shakedown, made in May 1973, included only one of the four housing units. Youth center officials considered the latter shakedown unsuccessful because the inmates knew about it in advance. Consequently, very little contraband was found.

Another shakedown was made in September 1973, after we started our review at the youth center. The shakedown report stated that:

"Some of the many items found and confiscated are as follows:

- 25 knives
- 6 screwdrivers
- 1 chain (fashioned as club)
- 6 files
- 2 hacksaw blades
- 11 scissors
- 4 homemade spears
- 1 straight razor
- 51 pieces of pipe (various lengths)
- 7 syringes
- 2 packs marijuana
- 3 homemade blackjacks
- 4 scrappers with blades
- 1 handcuff key
- 1 microphone

Approximately 80 other items which were fashioned as weapons which included broken brooms, broom handles, glass, and various lengths of table legs were also confiscated."

The center's Assistant Administrator for Operations said a superintendent's order to establish specific guidelines and regulations concerning the control of tools within the institution was drafted in September 1973 and has been in effect since then. He said also that before September the Center followed tool control procedures issued by the Engineering Division.

The Center's draft guidelines require the marking of all tools and maintenance equipment that could be used for escapes or converted to weapons and provide for maintaining a complete inventory of all such items. The Assistant Administrator for Operations at Youth Center 1 advised us that the new regulations should reduce the amount of contraband in the possession of inmates.

Another major shakedown was made in mid-February 1974, because inmates had broken into the canteen. The shakedown uncovered, in addition to canteen items, many contraband items, including screwdrivers, hammers, and homemade knives.

Youth Center 2 was opened in May 1972 and a shakedown of institutional buildings was made in October 1972. Youth Center officials did not consider this shakedown successful, however, because inmates knew about it in advance.

The Senior Captain at the Youth Center advised us in early September 1973 that no shakedowns had been made since October 1972 but that one was needed and would be made as soon as the Department approved overtime for correctional officers to make the shakedown. A shakedown was then made later in September 1973. Among the many items found were knives, hammers, hacksaws, and a pick. A memorandum on the shakedown from the Assistant Administrator for Operations at the Center stated that:

"Included among the various types of contraband confiscated were many crudely fashioned, but very dangerous weapons which make for very unsafe conditions for residents and staffs if it is allowed to accumulate.

"Finding of such a large amount of contraband indicates a continuing need for frequent shakedowns, and it is my recommendation that 32 man hours per month be authorized for shakedown purposes only. If such authorization is granted, Youth Center II could be maintained sufficiently clean of contraband to make it a relatively safe place for residents to live and for staff to work, and would at the same time demonstrate a definite concern on the part of the Departmental Administration for the safety of both residents and staff, plus have a positive effect on the morale of all concerned including residents."

The Senior Captain told us that since September 1973, shakedowns, of selecting housing units, were being made about every two weeks.

The Senior Captain at Youth Center 2 said missing or stolen tools from such units as engineering and the vocational school were not being reported, though required by established procedures, to his office, which is responsible for trying to locate the missing items. We observed many items, such as hammers and hacksaws, which had been confiscated by correctional officers but which, according to the Senior Captain, had not been reported missing by the unit responsible for their control.

On October 15, 1973, the Senior Captain told the official in charge of engineering of the need to identify and report all missing tools. The Administrator at the Youth Center said action would be taken to have the vocational school adhere to the Center's tool control procedures.

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In February 1974 Department officials told us that contraband was also confiscated in regular searches, in addition to major shakedowns, of institutional buildings. The Department Director said the number of

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major shakedowns depended on availability of funds to pay correctional officers the necessary overtime to make the shakedowns.

### Inspection of lockers

Another means of minimizing contraband is to periodically inspect inmate lockers. For example, at Bureau of Prisons facilities, correctional officers assigned to inmate housing units carry master keys and have direct access to inmate lockers, which can be inspected anytime by the officer on duty.

From our discussions with Lorton officials, inspection practices appeared to vary among the institutions and inmate lockers were seldom inspected.

Correctional officers at medium security do not carry keys to the inmate lockers because there are many different locks on the lockers and no one master key fits all locks. Keys to fit all lockers would require the officer to carry 50 or more keys of varying sizes and shapes. This was not practicable and, therefore, inmate lockers were very seldom inspected.

According to a medium security official, officers hesitate to inspect lockers because inmates may claim that something has been stolen. To limit such complaints, inspections are made only when a high-ranking officer is present and only when there is reason to believe that a particular inmate's locker contains contraband.

Minimum security had no formal requirements to regularly inspect inmate lockers. The Senior Captain said a master key is available for almost all lockers. He said several lockers are to be randomly inspected each day. But the officer in charge of inspecting the housing units said that daily inspections are not made but all lockers are inspected at least once a month. The Administrator of the institution said he would issue an order concerning this matter. We were told later that the inspections would be made weekly.

Officers assigned to the housing units at Youth Center 1 carry master keys permitting access to each room. (Youth Center 1 housing units have individual rooms but no lockers.) We were told that the officer on duty during the day inspects a few rooms each day but there are no procedures concerning inspection of inmates' rooms. On September 28, 1973, the Administrator of the Center, as a result of numerous weapons found during a shakedown on September 7, 1973, directed the Assistant Administrator for Operations to initiate procedures whereby officers will, in performing their daily duties, conduct random periodic inspections of rooms in housing units and work areas.

At Youth Center 2 we were advised that master keys are available for most lockers but that the officers assigned to the housing units do not carry keys while on duty. Consequently, inmate lockers are seldom



inspected. An official at Youth Center 2 said officers had not been instructed to inspect lockers and, if they tried to, they would be harassed by inmates.

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The Chief Security Officer said the various types of locks and keys created a problem for officers to inspect lockers and the ideal situation would be to have a standard lock that would permit immediate access by correctional officers. The Chief Security Officer told us, however, that because of lack of funds action is not being taken to install standard locks at medium security and Youth Center 2. He said the problem would be resolved when all the dormitories at medium security are renovated and if, as proposed in the Lorton construction and renovation program, Youth Center 2 is converted to a minimum security facility. The renovation of all dormitories at medium security may take another 3 years, he said.

#### SUPERVISION OF INMATE HOUSING UNITS

Control of inmates is accomplished, to a large extent, by the degree of supervision from correctional officers. There is no continuous supervision of inmate housing units, however, during the evening and night (4 p.m. to 8 a.m.) at medium security. Most assaults by inmates are at medium security and occur inside the dormitories during these times, and therefore we confined our inquiries regarding the assignment of officers to dormitories at medium security. Correctional officers were not stationed inside the dormitories at all times. Officers usually must supervise inmates in one or more dormitories or other work areas during the evening and night tour of duty, and therefore inmate activities at each dormitory were not continuously supervised.

In contrast, at the three Bureau facilities we visited, correctional officers are assigned inside each housing unit during the evening and night.

Correctional consultants who had many years of experience and had previously served as wardens at certain Bureau facilities helped us in a previous review on manpower requirements at Lorton. They concluded that, because of the lack of enough correctional officers, there was inadequate supervision of inmates inside medium security at night.

In fiscal year 1974, the Department was authorized, by the Congress, 80 additional correctional officers for medium security. As of March 1974, only one position had been filled. The Department in its fiscal year 1975 budget request stated that two men would be assigned to dormitories 24 hours a day.

Assaults also occur inside the dormitories at the other Lorton facilities. Officials at these institutions said they needed additional officers to provide continuous supervision.

## TESTING INMATES FOR NARCOTICS USE

Department regulations require urine tests at all institutions to determine whether inmates are using narcotics. But medium security and Youth Center 2 were not making the tests, even though hundreds of their inmates were making weekly trips into the community.

About December 1972 testing for narcotics was discontinued at medium security, apparently without department approval.

A memorandum written in March 1973 to the Associate Superintendent for Programs at medium security expressed concern about the lack of narcotics testing, especially since some inmates have direct community contact. However, no reply was received to the memorandum, and apparently the Office of Program Coordination--which is responsible for departmental coordination of narcotics testing at all institutions--did not follow up. We were subsequently told that on October 19, 1973, the Assistant Administrator for Operations of medium security, as a result of our inquiries, directed institutional personnel to resume narcotics testing.

An official of the Office of Program Coordination was not aware that Youth Center 2 was not testing for narcotics when we discussed it with him in October 1973, and over a month later the Chief of the Office said he had not taken any action to have the Center test inmates for use of narcotics. We were told that no narcotics tests have been made at Youth Center 2 since September 1972.

Although narcotics testing was being done at minimum security, the testing program was experiencing problems which undermined its effectiveness. Controls had not been established to insure that inmates were tested regularly and that test results were being received promptly from the laboratory. Results of many tests were not received. Also procedures permit inmates to obtain advance notice of tests.

The average daily inmate population at minimum security for October 1973 was about 280, and an average of about 145 inmates (more than half) left this facility each weekday to participate in community programs. Officials told us that they try to test inmates regularly released daily at least once a week upon their return. Tests are generally made twice a week. Test records for 12 inmates showed that laboratory results were received 3 to 25 days after the tests--an average of about 10 days.

Minimum security had not established procedures to effectively control inmate testing. Summary records for each inmate were not kept showing when and how often an inmate was tested and whether each inmate was tested at least once each week.

We reviewed test records for inmates leaving minimum security during 4 weeks in October 1973. Since some inmates did not leave regularly, we included only those inmates released at least three times

each week. Of the 180 inmates so released, only 17 were tested at least once during each week they were away. A total of 241 tests were made, but, if each inmate had received the required weekly test, about 600 tests would have been made.

The Department was also lax in disciplining inmates who received positive test results.

We reviewed the records for 12 inmates to determine the number of positive results and to evaluate the Departments' actions when such positive results are received. Test records for the 12 inmates showed that 8 inmates had 2 or more positive test results in fiscal year 1973 and 2 inmates had 4 positives in fiscal year 1973. For 21 positive results, the Department took no disciplinary action at all on 10, suspended action on 4 others, and only reprimanded and warned the inmates for 7 other positive results. For two other positive results, one inmate was suspended for only 1 day from his work release program, and the other was removed from the FCC program for 6 days when a test showed evidence of morphine use. About a month earlier this latter inmate had received a positive test result indicating the use of cocaine, morphine, and methadone.

The Department's Director said disciplinary action was usually not taken unless an inmate received at least three positive results to make certain the inmate was using drugs. We believe that inmates should be disciplined when the first positive test result is received, unless it is conclusively determined that the finding was in error.

The Department did not receive the results on about 30 percent of the tests on the above 12 inmates. According to officials at minimum security, they did not compare records of tests taken with records of test results to determine whether all results were received--they reviewed them only to identify positive findings. Unless all tests are accounted for, there is no assurance that all inmates with positive tests are reported to the institution. Officials at the facility said action has been taken to insure that all test results would be accounted for in the future.

Testing for narcotics is made in the evenings when inmates return. Not all returning inmates are tested each day. The supervisor on duty during the evening determines when tests are to be made the next day and the number and names of those to be tested. He notifies an inmate clerk which inmates are to be tested so that labels can be prepared in advance. The clerk, who resides at minimum security, thus has prior knowledge of test plans. To insure that inmates do not know in advance of the time and names of those to be tested, test plans should not be disclosed until the day the tests are to be taken.

## VISITORS

Visitors are allowed into the institutions in designated areas to visit with inmates several days each week. Department policy provides that each institution establish controls and regulations concerning security over visitors. Consequently, the procedures varied among institutions.

### Inspection of visitors' handbags and purses

Since January 1973 a matron has been responsible for inspecting visitors' handbags at medium security. The contents are inspected and such items as foodstuff and prescription drugs are held aside and returned to the visitors upon leaving. In contrast, visitors are not allowed to take handbags into the youth centers. This procedure became effective at Youth Center 1 in May 1973 and at Youth Center 2 in September 1973. Change purses, however, are permitted to be taken into the youth centers without inspection of contents.

At minimum security visitors may take handbags and purses into the institution without inspection. Because handbags and purses are not inspected, contraband could easily be brought in as evidenced by the empty liquor bottles found in the visiting area after visiting hours.

### Searching inmates after visiting

At medium security and youth centers, inmates are stripped and searched after visiting hours before they leave the visiting area. At minimum security, however, inmates are only frisked after visiting hours unless contraband is suspected and then they are stripped and searched.

According to the administrator inmates are not stripped and searched after visiting because strip searching requires too much time, minimum security is an open institution, and contraband could be obtained in other ways. However, all inmates returning to the institution from unescorted authorized absences are stripped and searched.

### CONCLUSIONS

Although shakedowns appeared to have increased, the Department had not taken effective measures to prevent inmates from obtaining contraband. Shakedowns have uncovered many items of institutional property in the inmates' dormitories, such as tools, silverware, and office and maintenance supplies. Many of these had been or could be made into lethal weapons. Some inmates have been stabbed to death with such weapons. Since July 1971 through April 1974, 12 inmates were stabbed to death by other inmates. The most recent death of an inmate due to multiple stab wounds was in late March 1974.

To minimize or avoid serious assaults on inmates and correctional personnel, the Department should identify and correct procedural weaknesses that permit such large quantities of contraband. Since much of the contraband seems to be institutional property, more effective property controls should be established and surveillance should be provided to protect the lives of people at Lorton.

To tighten security, the Department should require standard locks for inmate lockers and officers should be directed to regularly inspect

such lockers. Also to tighten security within medium security and to reduce assaults inside the dormitories, correctional officers should be assigned around the clock to each dormitory, as soon as possible, to provide continuous supervision of inmates.

The administration of the narcotics testing program needs improvement. Many inmates from medium security and minimum security are released into the community each day, including inmates who had been convicted for selling and possessing narcotics. Furthermore, shakedowns indicate that narcotics are being used inside the institutions. In a shakedown at medium security in September 1973, where narcotics testing was not being performed, 27 packs of marihuana were found in an inmate's locker.

The Office of Program Coordination should exercise more direct supervision over the narcotics testing programs. The Office should closely monitor the testing procedures at the institutions to insure compliance with departmental policy and should correct the other deficiencies regarding narcotics testing.

The Department should develop uniform operating policies and procedures applicable to all institutions concerning such matters as inspection of visitors' handbags and purses and searching of inmates for contraband after visits from outsiders.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

We recommend that the Department:

- Make a thorough investigation to determine the source of contraband which continually shows up in shakedowns and inspections.
- Tighten controls over all institutional property to prevent inmates from stealing it.
- Put standard locks on inmate lockers and direct officers to regularly inspect lockers.
- Assign officers full time to each dormitory.
- Improve the narcotics testing program by insuring that (1) all institutions test inmates regularly, (2) all test results are received and recorded promptly, (3) inmates receiving positive tests are effectively disciplined and treated, and (4) inmates do not obtain advance knowledge of test plans.
- Issue uniform policies and procedures on the inspection of visitors' handbags and purses and the searching of inmates after visiting.

## CHAPTER 6

### MORE AND BETTER DATA NEEDED ON ESCAPES

Department management did not have sufficient, reliable, and timely information to assist in preventing escapes and in promptly notifying authorities when escapes occurred because:

- Not all escapes were investigated to determine how they occurred.
- The reported number of escapes and the identity of institutions from which they occurred were inaccurate.

### NOT ALL ESCAPES INVESTIGATED

Department instructions require perimeter and escort trip escapes to be investigated and a report made. The report is to include details of the escapes, whether any employee was negligent, and recommendations for preventing future escapes.

In fiscal year 1973, 80 inmates escaped--on 51 different occasions--from Lorton institutions or from custody while on escorted trips. Twenty were perimeter escapes and 31 were escorted trip escapes. However, investigations and reports were made on only 8 of the 51 escapes.

Department officials said investigative reports are generally not made of escapes from minimum security because the escapes are simply "walk-aways" since the facility is not surrounded by a fence. The Assistant Director for Operations said that investigations of escapes from escorted trips are made only when there is reason to believe that the escorting officer may have been negligent or there was a clear violation of Department policy. An example would be unauthorized deviations from trip plans. In fiscal year 1973 only 2 of the 31 escapes from escorted trips were investigated.

Although Department officials assured us that the investigations and reports were made on all perimeter escapes in fiscal year 1973 from maximum and medium security and from the youth centers, the Department could furnish us with investigation reports on only 6 of the 20 perimeter escapes in that year.

Department records showed that 61 inmates absconded in fiscal year 1973 while on leave; however, Department officials told us that investigations are generally not made of such escapes.

We did not examine whether disciplinary action was taken against either employees or escapees.

## INACCURATE INFORMATION ON ESCAPES

The two devices which the Department had for recording escapes-- statistics from the individual institutions prepared for the Chief Security Officer and printouts from its automatic data processing (ADP) system-- were not accurate. We expended considerable time in adjusting the available escape data to arrive at the actual number of escapes during fiscal years 1971-73.

Escape information prepared by the Lorton institutions showed that 363 inmates escaped in fiscal years 1971-73; an ADP list, however, showed 387 escapes. We determined that the number of escapes during this period was probably 380.

Although we were advised that the ADP data is the official departmental statistics, an official in the office of the Assistant Director for Operations said that the ADP data is not used because it contained errors. The office relies on escape statistics prepared by the Lorton institutions.

We noted that the escape statistics prepared by the Lorton institutions were also inaccurate. The institutions did not include all escapes, and conflicting data existed as to the facility from which the escapes occurred.

Procedures followed in reporting inmates returning late from furlough contributed to the inaccuracies. A Department order provides that inmates on temporary leaves of absence who cannot be contacted or located within an hour after their scheduled time of return will be considered escapees. The Chief Security Officer told us that Lorton institutions may often extend the "grace period" and allow additional time before reporting the inmate as an escapee or may not report the escape at all.

We noted that four inmates who returned more than 1 hour late (5 to 24 hours) were listed as escapees on the ADP printout. But no escape reports were prepared, and they were not shown as escapees in the statistics prepared by the institutions. The Chief Security Officer said there is no simple way to determine how many more inmates may have returned late but were not reported as escapees. He agreed that the institutions should adhere rigidly to the time period prescribed by the Department.

In describing the problems in reporting and accounting for escapes, the Administrator, ADP in a February 4, 1974, memorandum stated that:

--The old system did not specifically establish reporting responsibilities by the institutions--e.g., there were no clear guidelines as to reporting flow; institutional record offices developed separate systems, which in most cases were not standardized; and the definition of escape was not clear. (Underscoring supplied.)

- Problems had occurred in the past due to manual files, non-purged files, and inmate maintenance of these files.
- Statistical data on escapes has been significantly improved. The results evolved from redefining procedures and responsibilities and reestablishing guidelines.
- The ADP unit has been designated the official source of escape data and a closer working relationship has been established between offices which report and record escapes.
- The goal of total accuracy has not been achieved but the present situation is a marked improvement and probably reflects a 90-percent degree of accuracy.

### CONCLUSIONS

All escapes should be investigated and reports prepared. Such reports would give management facts surrounding the escapes and could form the basis for corrective action to prevent future escapes. A Bureau official said all escapes from their institutions are investigated, including escapes from authorized absences, and reports are filed with the Bureau's Central Office.

The Department should improve its procedures in accounting for and reporting all escapes. If the ADP unit within the Department compiles the official statistics, every effort should be made to see that the source data it receives is complete and the final product correct.

All institutions should uniformly record all incidences of inmates returning late from furlough. This is necessary for prompt reporting of escapes to appropriate authorities and for identifying inmates who abuse leave privileges.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

We recommend that the Department require all institutions to:

- Investigate all escapes and report results with recommendations to top management. Such investigations, in addition to identifying gaps in physical security allowing perimeter escapes, should also delve into causes for escapes from escorted trips and leaves of absence. The Department should then correct identified problems.
- Uniformly and promptly report as escapees all inmates returning late from leaves in excess of a fixed time interval and such escapes should be accurately shown in Department statistics.



## CHAPTER 7

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

Our review included:

- Reviewing District records, policies, and procedures and interviewing officials responsible for managing, administering, and operating the Department.
- Visiting the facilities at Lorton and interviewing staff responsible for the day-to-day activities.
- Visiting several facilities operated by the Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice, and discussing certain operating policies and procedures with its officials.

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