

## **CORRECTIONAL LEADERSHIP: A RETURN TO THE BASICS**

by

Dan Richard Beto  
Chair, Governing Board  
Texas Regional Center for Policing Innovation  
Sam Houston State University  
Huntsville, Texas

On October 12-18, 1870, the National Congress on Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline was held in Cincinnati, Ohio. Rutherford B. Hayes, then Governor of Ohio and who would later be elected President of the United States, served as president of this national meeting, the forerunner of the American Correctional Association. That meeting served as the birth of corrections in America as a profession.

During the congress a number of papers were presented on such topics as prison discipline, sentencing, institutional conditions, dietary standards, the use of volunteers, the role of religion in prisons, prison education, society's responsibility for the causes of crime, convict clothing, juvenile facilities, visiting procedures, training for officers of prisons and reformatories, the special needs of juveniles, programs for offenders, pardons, and criminal statistics. At the conclusion of the congress the delegates adopted a "Declaration of Principles" relating to the operation of prisons and reformatories and the treatment of offenders (Wines, 1871; see Appendix for a list of the 37 principles adopted).

Unfortunately, the topics discussed and the resolutions passed more than 136 years ago are still being discussed today. Other than for more sophisticated delivery systems, the correctional issues of today are not that much different than those identified in 1870. In an opinion piece that appeared in the *Houston Chronicle* on May 10, 1987, Sam Houston State University Distinguished Professor George J. Beto, who served as Director of the Texas Department of Corrections for ten years, wrote:

A review of the literature on corrections reveals little that is new today. Those portions of the literature periodically devoted to corrections dating back to 1901 could well have been dated 1986. There is an inevitable and stultifying sameness involved in the care and custody of society's deviants. Apparent innovations are hailed in this hour and rejected in the next (Beto, 1987).

While the correctional literature of today is, as my late father suggests, similar to that found a century ago, and while the dialogue of criminal justice practitioners continues to revolve around the same subjects year after year – although not as in depth or intellectually stimulating – we have, nevertheless, witnessed a significant change in American corrections.

## **America's Challenges: Changes in the Correctional Landscape**

It is my sense that the corrections profession in the United States – and when I use the term corrections I am referring to both institutional and community corrections – is facing several challenges.

### ***The Leadership Void***

For the one hundred years following that meeting in Cincinnati, the corrections profession was blessed with leaders who skillfully crafted correctional policy with vision and courage. Unfortunately, commencing in the late-1960s or early-1970s and continuing through the remainder of the century, America witnessed a change in the character of correctional leadership. With deaths, retirements, and departures caused by the vagaries of politics, many of the giants of the corrections profession's first one hundred years have been replaced by competent but unimaginative managers, who are more interested in doing things right, rather than doing the right thing (DiIulio, 1987; Pozzi, 1999; Burns, 1979). Put another way, they are more interested in doing what is required of them – meeting minimum standards imposed by government regulatory agencies – rather than excelling in what they do. For many of them, corrections has become merely a job, rather than their life's work for which they have considerable passion (Morris, 1971). And with these changes, the correctional leader of the early to mid-1900s became an endangered species (Beto, 2001).

### ***The Lack of a Thoughtful and Courageous Response to the Crime Problem***

While we continue to talk about the same or similar topics as our predecessors once did, the dialogue is focused more on discussions about operational issues and service delivery systems than about critical policy issues and the challenges we must confront.

A perfect example of this is found in my home state of Texas, where during the 1980s we embarked on a massive prison construction program, resulting in 70 new prisons coming on line between 1990 and 1997, increasing the number of prison facilities from 39 to 105. During that same period of time our offender population increased by 186.9%, from 48,320 to 138,641. We successfully built ourselves out of a prison overcrowding crisis. And having done that, our politicians and correctional leaders sat back and complacently watched as our prisons filled up again. They did not seriously engage in discussions about how we might better address the crime problem through sentencing reform, by developing alternative programs and strategies, by engendering support for a revised correctional policy, or by investing more funds in basic probation and parole services. And as the Texas Legislature is about to reconvene in January 2007, one of the issues to be considered, and will likely pass, is the allocation of funds to build three new prisons.

It does not take intelligence to build prisons – constructing prisons is a simplistic, yet expensive response to the crime problem. It does, however, require a collective

intelligence, thoughtful consideration, compromise, and courage to develop alternatives to incarceration and to craft rational correctional policies, and that is something we in Texas have been less than successful in doing. Unfortunately, we are not alone, as many other states are struggling with the same or similar problems.

### ***The Privatization of Corrections***

Throughout the United States we have witnessed, in varying degrees, the privatization of correctional services. One only need attend the annual conferences of the American Correctional Association, the American Jail Association, or the American Probation and Parole Association to see the significant influence the private sector exerts on corrections in America.

While there is a place for the private sector in corrections, I fear that many correctional administrators, unduly influenced by decisions made in corporate boardrooms and in the back halls of statehouses, have embraced privatization as an avenue to avoid conflict with politicians or as an opportunity to reduce or eliminate many of their responsibilities.

### ***The Personnel Crisis***

At present, throughout the United States prisons, probation and parole offices, and other social service agencies have vacancies because they cannot attract qualified candidates for employment. In Texas alone our prison system has over 2,500 vacancies for correctional officers.

In addition, compounding our personnel problem is the change in the demographics of our state and that found in a number of others, where people being sent to prison or placed on probation speak only Spanish. This population is not being adequately served because our criminal justice system has been less than successful in attracting Spanish speaking employees.

And finally, we have not done a particularly good job of succession planning by identifying, developing, and nurturing potential leaders to assume greater responsibility.

### ***The Reintegration Issue***

Approximately 650,000 prisoners are released from American prisons each year, most of who were released on parole, and more than 12 million offenders cycle through local jails annually (Solomon, et al., 2006). And each year – for the past five years – more than 200,000 offenders were returned to prison as parole violators (Harrison and Beck, 2006).

As the data reflects, many offenders released on parole are ill-equipped to deal with the complexities of urban life. They experience difficulty in finding suitable employment, managing limited financial resources, arranging for transportation,

maneuvering the social service system, avoiding persons with criminal records, and reestablishing themselves as a member of a family. Compounding the challenge of starting a new life is that many of them are saddled with questionable value systems, and as such they find it difficult to refrain from engaging in behaviors that cause their entry to the criminal justice system.

The issue of prisoner reentry, while appreciated as important by criminal justice practitioners and academics, has, until recently, received woefully inadequate attention by policymakers. One of the leaders in the prisoner reentry movement is Jeremy Travis, former Director of the National Institute of Justice and now President of John Jay College in New York, who, along with Professor Joan Petersilia of the University of California at Irvine, the Urban Institute, Community Resources for Justice, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services of the U. S. Department of Justice, and a number of advocacy groups are drawing attention to this serious problem. In addition, several governmental agencies that have not interacted previously with the criminal justice system are becoming involved in the process.

Those involved are attempting – recalling the words of Myrl Alexander, a former Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons – to “blur the lines between the institution and the community.” They have taken up the challenge to “ease the inmate’s transition from the most unnatural society known to man – prison society – to the free world” (Beto, 1971).

### **A Prescription for the Future of Corrections**

How can we reverse the trend we have witnessed in American corrections – where there is a lack of meaningful leadership and an absence of intellectually stimulating dialogue about criminal justice policy – that has sufficient support? This question has no empirical answer, but a body of knowledge does exist to provide a suggested prescription to remedy the problems identified herein.

#### ***Revisiting the Initial Principles***

First, from a practitioner perspective, it would be wise for the American Correctional Association, the largest correctional organization in North America, to convene a special “congress of corrections” to reexamine the initial Declaration of Principles adopted in 1870 to determine responses to the following questions:

- Are these principles still relevant today?
- Do current correctional practices measure up to the expectations of these principles?
- How might we improve on these principles?
- How might we improve on existing correctional policy?
- What would assist us in improving on the delivery of correctional services?
- What must we do to improve our profession?

In convening this special congress, it would be prudent for the American Correctional Association to reach out to several other professional organizations for the purpose of enriching the discussion, generating a consensus on issues, crafting rational correctional policy, and developing a common vision for the future. More specifically, the American Correctional Association should, at a minimum, invite representatives from the National Association of Probation Executives, American Bar Association, American Probation and Parole Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the American Jail Association to participate in this congress. In addition, members of academia from the major criminal justice programs in North America should be invited to participate.

### ***Replicating the Efforts of the Johnson Administration***

In 1965 American President Lyndon B. Johnson created the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, commonly referred to as the President's Crime Commission, to examine all facets of the criminal justice process, including the police, prosecution, courts, sentencing, corrections, organized crime, drug and alcohol abuse, control of firearms, science and technology, and research. In 1967, the Commission produced a comprehensive report on the criminal justice system containing a number of thoughtful recommendations, some that were implemented, other that were not.

It has now been close to 40 years since that Commission was created and issued its report. In my view it is time for the federal government to revisit the crime problem by creating a similar Commission to study the criminal justice systems of the United States – their structures, laws, policies, and practices – and to make recommendations on how they might be improved. To ensure the success of any initiative involving significant changes to existing systems, the full support of the federal government is essential.

### ***Reaching Out Beyond Our Borders***

We Americans tend to think we have most of the answers when it comes to responding to society's problems. Unfortunately, we don't, and in many cases we not only do not have the answers, we don't have a full understanding of the relevant questions. We have much to learn from our correctional colleagues in Europe, Asia, and other parts of the world.

As our world grows smaller, as we witness an increase in the transnational crime problem, and as we begin to share common crime and justice issues, corrections professionals in America need to reach out to other countries to exchange information, to discuss common concerns, to create meaningful coalitions, and, ultimately, to learn from the countries of our ancestors.

### ***A Focus on the Fundamentals***

In the title of this paper I suggest a “return to the basics” and in several of the prescriptive remedies I recommend revisiting the past for guidance into the future. But the term a “return to the basics” also means providing a focus on the very basic fundamental principles in administering a confinement facility.

A number of years ago the now departed corrections scholar John Conrad made the statement that “prisons ought to be lawful, safe, industrious, and hopeful.” In expanding on that deceptively simple but powerful statement, Conrad further defined his four elements of a successful administered prison (Beto, 2001):

Lawful: “The lawful prison is one in which it is the first goal of policy to prevent unlawful actions and conduct by staff and prisoners.”

Safe: “The safe prison is one in which enlightened architecture, and the training and supervision of staff for the maintenance of personal safety, combine to achieve personal security for both prisoners and staff.”

Industrious: “The industrious prison keeps all prisoners occupied at full-time constructive work, in training, prison industry, or maintenance of the facility.”

Hopeful: “In the hopeful prison appropriate educational, training, and medical services will be provided so that each prisoner can reasonably expect that his or her condition will be better than before incarceration.”

In addition to “educational, training, and medical services” identified by Conrad as elements of a hopeful prison, I would add “meaningful religious programs” as another essential element of a hopeful prison.

If we give thoughtful consideration to Conrad’s vision, almost everything that occurs or should occur inside a prison may be assigned to one of his four elements.

In 1990 my father and I visited a number of adult and juvenile correctional facilities in Japan, and during that trip we were favorably impressed with what we observed. In one of the prisons we visited my father conveyed to the director that one could judge the quality of the administration of confinement facility by five “absences.” He believed that if there was an absence of unnecessary noise, an absence of clutter or trash, an absence of odor, an absence of idleness, and an absence of violence, then the prison’s administration was focusing on quality of life issues and had embraced Conrad’s vision of creating a “lawful, safe, industrious, and hopeful” facility.

### ***Cultivating Correctional Leaders***

Perhaps the most difficult challenge facing the American criminal justice system is developing leaders to successfully move the profession through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

A good perspective on correctional administration comes from John J. DiIulio, Jr., who, in his seminal work *Governing Prisons*, suggests that "...order, amenity, and service are three ends of good prison government." In identifying the type of person required to achieve these ends, DiIulio writes (1987: 242):

First, successful prison directors and institutional managers are not here today, gone tomorrow. They are in the office long enough to learn the job, make plans, and implement them. Second, they are highly "hands-on" and pro-active. They pay close attention to the details and do not wait for problems to arise but attempt to anticipate them. While they trust their subordinates and do their share of paperwork, they keep themselves focused on the prisons and what is actually happening inside of them. At the same time, they recognize the need for outside support. In short, they are strangers neither to the cellblocks nor to the aisles of the state legislature. Third, they act consciously to project an image of themselves that is appealing to a wide range of people both inside and outside of the organization. Fourth, they are dedicated and fiercely loyal to the department and see themselves as keepers engaged in a noble and challenging (if mostly thankless) profession.

As John DiIulio (1987) and others suggest (Beto and Brown, 1999; Jacobs and Olitsky, 2004), we need to have a renewed emphasis and a sustained effort in identifying and cultivating potential leaders to assume responsibility for crafting correctional policy and administering our criminal justice systems. And the type of people we need to assume leadership roles must be ethical, value-driven, courageous, decisive, and who possess and communicate a clear and constant vision for the agency and its personnel.

Possible solutions to the leadership crisis are: 1) improved recruitment and retention of correctional administrators; 2) the removal of correctional administration from the political arena; 3) greater cooperation between higher education and correctional systems, not only in terms of advancing research that informs policy, but identifying, mentoring, and advising promising students for careers in institutional and community corrections; and 4) creating non-traditional training and development programs that focus more on policy development, management skills, and influencing the organizational culture.

Perhaps the most promising and urgent of these four suggested solutions, and the one with the greatest possible return, lies in the identification, recruitment, and retention of visionary and courageous correctional leaders. In selecting administrators to lead correctional systems, the hiring authority should be careful to avoid the "competency trap" – that is, hiring people who have done a good job in the past of maintaining an organization – and instead they should seek out individuals who can transform the organization and who can lead the organization to the next level.

I am reminded of a quote from John P. Kotter (2006), one of America's foremost leadership experts, who wrote:

Producing change is about 80 percent leadership – establishing direction, aligning, motivating, and inspiring people – and about 20 percent management – planning, budgeting, organizing, and problem solving. In most change efforts, those percentages are reversed. We continue to produce great managers; we need to develop great leaders.

If we hope to improve the criminal justice system, then that is where we need to focus our energies – developing great correctional leaders.

### **Conclusion**

The corrections profession in the United States is facing many challenges, but these challenges also present an equal number of opportunities. And those opportunities, if taken, will result in an improved justice system for which we all may be proud.

### **References**

Beto, Dan Richard. "Random Thoughts on the Future of Corrections," *Crime and Justice International*, January/February, 2004.

Beto, Dan Richard, and Melvin Brown, Jr. "An Accidental Penologist's Views on Correctional Leadership," *Corrections Management Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Winter, 1999.

Beto, Dan Richard, Ronald P. Corbett, Jr., and John J. DiIulio, Jr. "Getting Serious about Probation and the Crime Problem," *Corrections Management Quarterly*, Spring, 2000.

Beto, George J. "Probing Prison Problems," *Lutheran Witness*, March, 1968.

Beto, George J. "President's Address: Centennial Congress of Correction," *Proceedings of the One Hundredth Annual Congress of Correction*. College Park, Maryland: American Correctional Association, 1971.

Beto, George J. "Prison Administration and the Eighth Amendment," *Texas Journal of Corrections*, November, 2001.

Burns, James MacGregor. *Leadership*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1979.

DiIulio, John J., Jr. *Governing Prisons: A Comparative Study of Correctional Management*. New York: The Free Press, 1987.

Glaze, Lauren E., and Seri Palla. *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2004*. Washington, D. C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, November 2005.

Harrison, Paige M, and Allen J. Beck. *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2005*. Washington, D. C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, May 2006.

Jacobs, James B., and Elana Olitsky. "Leadership and Correctional Reform," *Pace Law Review*, Vol. 24, No. 477, 2004.

John P. Kotter. "Transformation," *Leadership Excellence*, January 2006.

Morris, Norval. "A Snail's Pace of Prison Reform," *Proceedings of the One Hundredth Annual Congress of Correction*. College Park: American Correctional Association, 1971.



Pozzi, Rocco A. "The Leadership Void in Community Corrections," *Corrections Management Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Winter, 1999.

President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1967.

Solomon, Amy L., Tobi Palmer, Alvin Atkinson, Joanne Davidson, and Lynn Harvey. *Prisoner Reentry: Addressing the Challenges in Weed and Seed Communities (Research Report)*. Washington, D. C.: The Urban Institute, September, 2006.

Wines, E. C. *Transactions of the National Congress on Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline held at Cincinnati, Ohio, October 12-18, 1870*. Albany, New York: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1871. [reprinted by the American Correctional Association on the occasion of its Centennial Anniversary, October 1970].

## **Appendix**

### **Declaration of Principles Adopted and Promulgated by the National Congress on Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline**

I. Crime is an intentional violation of duties imposed by law, which inflicts an injury on others. Criminals are persons convicted of crime by competent courts. Punishment is suffering inflicted on the criminal for the wrong done by him, with a special view to secure his reformation.

II. The treatment of criminals by society is for the protection of society. But since such treatment is directed to the criminal rather than to the crime, its great object should be his moral regeneration. Hence, the supreme aim of prison discipline is the reformation of criminals, not the infliction of vindictive suffering.

III. The progressive classification of prisoners, based on character and work on some well-adjusted mark system, should be established in all prisons above the common jail.

IV. Since hope is a more potent agent than fear, it should be made an ever-present force in the minds of prisoners, by a well devised and skillfully-applied system of rewards for good conduct, industry and attention to learning. Rewards, more than punishments, are essential to every good prison system.

V. The prisoner's destiny should be placed, measurably, in his own hands; he must be put into circumstances where he will be able, through his own exertions, to continually better his own condition. A regulated self-interest must be brought into play, and made constantly operative.

VI. The two master forces opposed to the reform of the prison systems of our several states are political appointments, and a consequent instability in administration. Until both are eliminated, the needed reforms are impossible.

VII. Special training, as well as high qualities of head and heart, is required to make a good prison or reformatory officer. Then only will the administration of public punishment become scientific, uniform and successful, when it is raised to the dignity of a profession, and men are specially trained for it, as they are for other pursuits.

VIII. Peremptory sentences ought to be replaced by those of indeterminate length. Sentences limited only by satisfactory proof of reformation should be substituted for those measured by mere lapse of time.

IX. Of all reformatory agencies, religion is first in importance, because most potent in its action upon the human heart and life.

X. Education is a vital force in the reformation of fallen men and women. Its tendency is to quicken the intellect, inspire self-respect, excite to higher aims, and afford a healthful substitute for low and vicious amusement. Education is, therefore, a matter of primary importance in prisons, and should be carried to the utmost extent consistent with the other purposes of such institutions.

XI. In order to the reformation of imprisoned criminals, there must be not only a sincere desire and intention to that end, but a serious conviction, in the minds of prison officers, that they are capable of being reformed, since no man can heartily maintain a discipline at war with his inward beliefs; no man can earnestly strive to accomplish what in his heart he despairs of accomplishing.

XII. A system of prison discipline, to be truly reformatory, must gain the will of the convict. He is to be amended; but how is this possible with his mind in a state of hostility? No system can hope to succeed, which does not secure this harmony of wills, so that the prisoner shall choose for himself what his officer chooses for him. But, to this end, the officer must really choose the good of the prisoner, and the prisoner must remain in his choice long enough for virtue to become a habit. This consent of wills is an essential condition of reformation.

XIII. The interest of society and the interest of the convicted criminal are really identical, and they should be made practically so. At present there is a combat between crime and law. Each sets the other at defiance, and, as a rule, there is little kindly feeling, and few friendly acts, on either side. It would be otherwise if criminals, on conviction, instead of being cast off, were rather made the objects of a generous parental care; that is, if they were trained to virtue, and not merely sentenced to suffering.

XIV. The prisoner's self-respect should be cultivated to the utmost, and every effort made to give back to him his manhood. There is no greater mistake in the whole compass of penal discipline, than the studied imposition of degradation as a part of punishment. Such imposition destroys every better impulse and aspiration. It crushes the weak, irritates the strong, and indisposes all to submission and reform. It is trampling where we ought to raise, and is therefore as unchristian in principle as it is unwise in policy.

XV. In prison administration, moral forces should be relied upon, with as little admixture of physical force as possible, and organized persuasion be made to take the place of coercive restraint, the object being to make upright and industrious freemen, rather than orderly and obedient prisoners. Brute force may make good prisoners; moral training alone will make good citizens. To the latter of these ends, the living soul must be won; to the former, only the inert and obedient body.

XVI. Industrial training should have both a higher development and a greater breadth than has heretofore been, or is now, commonly given to it in our prisons. Work is no less an auxiliary to virtue, than it is a means of support. Steady, active, honorable labor is the basis of all reformatory discipline. It not only aids reformation, but is

essential to it. It was a maxim with Howard, “make men diligent, and they will be honest” – a maxim which this congress regards as eminently sound and practical.

XVII. While industrial labor in prisons is of the highest importance and utility to the convict, and by no means injurious to the laborer outside, we regard the contract system of prison labor, as now commonly practiced in our country, as prejudicial alike to discipline, finance and the reformation of the prisoner, and sometimes injurious to the interest of the free laborer.

XVIII. The most valuable parts of the Irish prison system – the more strictly penal stage of separate imprisonment, the reformatory stage of progressive classification, and the probationary stage of natural training – are believed to be as applicable to one country as another – to the United States as to Ireland.

XIX. Prisons, as well as prisoners, should be classified or graded so that there shall be prisons for the untried, for the incorrigible and for other degrees of depraved character, as well as separate establishments for women, and for criminals of the younger class.

XX. It is the judgment of this congress, that repeated short sentences for minor criminals are worse than useless; that, in fact, they rather stimulate than repress transgression. Reformation is a work of time; and a benevolent regard to the good of the criminal himself, as well as to the protection of society, requires that his sentence be long enough for reformatory processes to take effect.

XXI. Preventive institutions, such as truant homes, industrial schools, etc., for the reception and treatment of children not yet criminal, but in danger of becoming so, constitute the true field of promise, in which to labor for the repression of crime.

XXII. More systematic and comprehensive methods should be adopted to save discharged prisoners, by providing them with work and encouraging them to redeem their character and regain their lost position in society. The state has not discharged its whole duty to the criminal when it has punished him, not even when it has reformed him. Having raised him up, it has the further duty to aid in holding him up. And to this end it is desirable that state societies be formed, which shall cooperate with each other in this work.

XXIII. The successful prosecution of crime requires the combined action of capital and labor, just as other crafts do. There are two well defined classes engaged in criminal operations, who may be called the capitalists and the operatives. It is worthy of inquiry, whether a more effective warfare may not be carried on against crime, by striking at the capitalists as a class, than at the operatives one by one. Certainly, this double warfare should be vigorously pushed, since from it the best results, as regards repressive justice, may be reasonably hoped for.

XXIV. Since personal liberty is the rightful inheritance of every human being, it is the sentiment of this congress that the state which has deprived an innocent citizen of this right, and subjected him to penal restraint, should, on unquestionable proof of its mistake, make reasonable indemnification for such wrongful imprisonment.

XXV. Criminal lunacy is a question of vital interest to society; and facts show that our laws regarding insanity, in its relation to crime, need revision, in order to bring them to a more complete conformity to the demands of reason, justice and humanity; so that, when insanity is pleaded in bar of conviction, the investigation may be conducted with greater knowledge, dignity, and fairness; criminal responsibility be more

satisfactorily determined; the punishment of the sane criminal be made more sure, and the restraint of the insane be rendered at once more certain and more humane.

XXVI. While this congress would not shield the convicted criminal from the just responsibility of his misdeeds, it arraigns society itself in no slight degree accountable for the invasion of its rights and the warfare upon its interests, practiced by the criminal class. Does society take all the steps which it easily might, to change, or at least to improve, the circumstances in our social state that leads to crime; or, when crime has been committed, to cure the proclivity to it, generated by these circumstances? It cannot be pretended. Let society, then, lay the case earnestly to its conscience, and strive to mend in both particulars. Offenses, we are told by a high authority, must come; but a special woe is denounced against those through whom they come. Let us take heed that that woe fall not upon our heads.

XXVII. The exercise of executive clemency in the pardon of criminals is a practical question of grave importance, and of great delicacy and difficulty. It is believed that the annual average of executive pardons from the prisons of the whole country reaches ten percent of their population. The effect of the too free use of the pardoning power is to detract from the certainty of punishment for crimes, and to divert the mind of prisoners from the means supplied for their improvement. Pardons should issue for one or more of the following reasons, viz.: to release the innocent, to correct mistakes made in imposing the sentence, to relieve such suffering from ill-health as requires release from imprisonment, and to facilitate or reward the real reformation of the prisoner. The exercise of this power should be by the executive, and should be guarded by careful examination as to the character of the prisoner and his conduct in prison. Furthermore, it is the opinion of this congress that governors of states should give to their respective legislatures the reason, in each case, for their exercise of their pardoning power.

XXVIII. The proper duration of imprisonment for a violation of the laws of society is one of the most perplexing questions in criminal jurisprudence. The present extraordinary inequality of sentences for the same or similar crimes is a source of constant irritation among prisoners, and the discipline of our prisons suffers in consequence. The evil is one for which some remedy should be devised.

XXIX. Prison statistics, gathered from a wide field and skillfully digested, are essential to an exhibition of the true character and working of our prison systems. The collection, collation and reduction to tabulated forms of such statistics can best be effected through a national prison discipline society, with competent working committees in every state, or by the establishment of a national prison bureau, similar to the recently instituted national bureau of education.

XXX. Prison architecture is a matter of grave importance. Prisons of every class should be substantial structures, affording gratification by their design and material to a pure taste, but not costly or highly ornate. We are of the opinion that those of moderate size are best, as regards both industrial and reformatory ends.

XXXI. The construction, organization, and management of all prisons should be by the state, and they should form a graduated series of reformatory establishments, being arranged with a view to the industrial employment, intellectual education and moral training of the inmates.

XXXII. As a general rule, the maintenance of penal institutions, above the county jail, should be from the earnings of their inmates, and without cost to the state;

nevertheless, the true standard of merit in their management is the rapidity and thoroughness of reformatory effect accomplished thereby.

XXXIII. A right application of the principles of sanitary science in the construction and arrangement of prisons is a point of vital importance. The apparatus for heating and ventilation should be the best that is known; sunlight, air and water should be afforded according to the abundance with which nature has provided them; the rations and clothing should be plain but wholesome, comfortable, and in sufficient but not extravagant quantity; the bedsteads, bed and bedding, including sheets and pillow cases, not costly but decent, and kept clean, well aired and free of vermin; the hospital accommodations, medical stores and surgical instruments should be all that humanity requires and science can supply; and all needed means for personal cleanliness should be without stint.

XXXIV. The principle of the responsibility of parents for the full or partial support of their criminal children in reformatory institutions has been extensively applied for in Europe, and its practical working has been attended with the best results. It is worthy of inquiry whether this principle may not be advantageously introduced into the management of our American reformatory institutions.

XXXV. It is our conviction that one of the most effective agencies in the repression of crime would be the enactment of laws by which the education of all the children of the state should be made obligatory. Better to force education upon the people than to force them into prison to suffer for crimes, of which the neglect of education and consequent ignorance have been the occasion, if not the cause.

XXXVI. As a principle that crowns all, and is essential to all, it is our conviction that no prison system can be perfect, or even successful to the most desirable degree, without some central authority to sit at the helm, guiding, controlling, unifying and vitalizing the whole. We ardently hope yet to see all the departments of our preventative, reformatory and penal institutions in each state molded into one harmonious and effective system; its parts mutually answering to and supporting each other; and the whole animated by the same spirit, aiming at the same objects, and subject to the same control; yet without loss of the advantages of voluntary aid and effort, wherever they are attainable.

XXXVII. This congress is of the opinion that, both in the official administration of such a system, and in the voluntary cooperation of citizens therein, the agency of women may be employed with excellent effect.