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Bail Reform

A survey of bail reform projects and recent developments in bail legislation throughout the country will be conducted this summer by the Vera Institute. Questionnaires are being sent to State Legislative reference bureaus to inquire about bail legislation; to local District Attorneys, Departments of Probation, and Prosecutors' Offices to inquire about recently established bail practices; to judges and attorneys in local bar associations who have expressed an interest in bail reform to inquire about bail projects being planned; and to local Police Departments to inquire about the use of summonses in lieu of arrest.

A comprehensive list of bail legislation, bail projects and bail-reform interest groups will be compiled for distribution.

Manhattan Bowery Project

A joint meeting of the Manhattan Bowery Corporation and the Committee on Alcoholism of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council was held at the Men's Shelter June 21. Special guests at the meeting included Mayor John V. Lindsay, Archbishop Terrence J. Cooke, Burke Marshall, Presiding Justice Bernard Botwin and Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary. Dr. Morgan and members of the staff presented a report on project operations and proposed expansion of services.

One of the services being planned is after-care for patients following their five-day stay in the infirmary. Antabuse and other medications will be dispensed, group sessions will be held, and staff members will be available for consultation.

Manhattan Court Employment Project

As of June 28, 1968, 192 participants have been accepted into the Manhattan Court Employment Project.

New job opportunities for participants in the Court Employment Project have been provided by the New York Daily News and the Chase Manhattan Bank.

In the last two months, three participants have been employed by the Daily News as composing room helpers and mail clerks. In addition, the paper has offered to help participants become newsstand owners. The Daily News will supply the newsstand and papers and will teach merchandising to the prospective dealer-owners.

At the invitation of Mr. James Loverude, Vice President of Chase Manhattan Bank and a member of the Court Employment Committee of the C.J.C.C., representatives of the project spoke to 70 Chase Manhattan loan officers about the project and its aims. Mr. Loverude then sent a memorandum to all branches of the bank urging that interested employers be referred to the Court Employment Project.

Community Patrol Corps

Membership of the Community Patrol Corps Committee of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council has been expanded to increase representation from the Harlem community. The Committee has met several times in the past few weeks to discuss the draft proposal for establishment of a Harlem Community Patrol Corps. The proposal is now being revised for presentation to the Mayor.

Court Delay and Sentencing Committee of the C.J.C.C.

Vera will operate two pilot projects, The Calendar Control Project, and the Sentencing Project, in the Bronx for two months this summer.

The Calendar Control Project is designed to alleviate congestion in the Bronx Criminal Court by identifying cases on the calendar which will not be ready for disposition at the scheduled time of trial, and arranging adjournments for those cases without the necessity of a court appearance by the relevant parties. It is hoped that the following benefits will result: (1) the calendar for each day would be reduced, giving the judge more time to devote to each case; (2) the judge would be relieved of the ministerial task of arranging adjourned dates; (3) police officers and witnesses would not be required to appear in cases only to have them adjourned, thus eliminating a major source of aggravation and increasing the likelihood of subsequent appearances; and (4) attorneys would be allowed to secure adjournments without a court appearance, thus saving them many hours in court.

In addition, the Calendar Control Project would provide an opportunity for all attorneys to conduct plea negotiations with the District Attorneys prior to court appearances. This would preclude the current practice of conducting negotiations in hurried whispers before the bench and would serve the following ends: (1) the elimination of court time spent in plea discussions during which time the judge is a passive observer; (2) the provision of increased time and better atmosphere for working out dispositions; (3) the opportunity to advise police officers and complainants not to appear in court when a disposition has been agreed upon; and (4) the opportunity to adjourn a case without court appearance when additional consultation is necessary before disposition.

The Sentencing Project is designed to furnish short-form pre-sentence reports to the Bronx Criminal Court for cases in which the Office of Probation is not required to do a full pre-sentence investigation and report. The goals of the project are: (1) to develop and test a practical method of providing the sentencing judge with relevant information in many misdemeanor cases in which the judge now often knows very little about the defendant's background; (2) to determine if such information affects sentencing patterns; (3) to develop ways in which community organizations can provide useful services to defendants.

Hospitalized Prisoners Study

The Police Liaison Office of Vera, in cooperation with the Department of Correction, the Department of Hospitals, the Corporation Counsel, the Criminal Court and the District Attorney's Office, is conducting a study in the guarding of hospitalized prisoners.

The function of guarding hospitalized prisoners belongs to the Department of Correction, but due to manpower shortages in that department, the Police Department now retains custody of these prisoners until the time of trial. This practice is estimated to cost the Police Department over 20,000 man-days per year.

The possibility of conducting ROR investigations of defendants in hospitals is now being studied. If the Court could grant release on recognizance or low money bail to hospitalized defendants who qualify, both the rights of the defendants would be preserved and considerable police man-hours would be saved.

New Employees

Robert Goldfeld joined the Manhattan Bowery Project in June as Administrative Director. As of July 1, Rosemary Masters will become the project's Research Director. Other new employees at the Bowery Project include: John Jones, Medical Aide; Mike Brockhues, Street Patrol; and Leigh Barnett, Receptionist.

Suzanne Ritter has recently joined the staff of the Court Employment Project as a secretary.

Summer Employees

A number of Urban Corps members have been assigned to Vera through the Police Liaison Office. They are listed here with their project assignments: Warren Marcus and John Mikals: Summons Project; John LaFemina and David Stern: Bail Jump Study; Harry Simmons and Samuel Mayerfield: Interrogation Study; Medora VonEvans: Calendar Control Project; Peter Prodis, Carol Shapiro, Allen Poper, Tom Restiano, and Elaine Patrick: Manhattan Bowery Project; Samuel Cooper, Suzanne Lynn, and Herbert Bundens: Court Employment Project.

Through the office of the Mayor and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, three Legal Interns have been given research assignments at Vera. The Interns are George Shenk, Jim Bensfield, and Dave Stewart.

In addition, several persons have been hired for summer work on special projects. Their assignments are as follows: Simmie Freeman: Bail Reform Study; Pamela Winnick: Information Booth Assistant; John Ballantine: Corrections and Rehabilitation; Jeffrey Petrucelly: Sentencing Project; Strongin Donnelly (volunteer), John Shils, Nan Aron, Deborah Huntington, and Abigail Ginzberg: Court Employment Project; Theo Jacobs and Carol Mates: Manhattan Bowery Project; Bertha Walker and John Vogel: Calendar Control Project; Alvin Joshua, Ken Hector, Michael Novick, Laurel Mamet, Jay Small, Carlo Gariffo, and Everett Hogan: Bail Jump Study; Lannie Rappaport: Bronx Bail Jump Study.