

APPROVED: May 11, 1983

MINUTES OF JOINT COMMITTEES ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS

A joint meeting of the House and Senate Committees on Federal and State Affairs was held in the Old Supreme Court Room, 313-S, State House, at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, February 7, 1983. Senator Edward F. Reilly, Chairman of the Senate Committee, and Representative Neal Whitaker, Chairman of the House Committee, chaired the joint meeting. All members of the Senate Committee were present. Staff present: Russell Mills, Legislative Research, and June Windscheffel, Secretary to the Committee. Senator Reilly welcomed those present and thanked them for their courtesies.

Senator Reilly stated that a copy of the Henderson Report and the Progress Management Report from the Kansas State Penitentiary were available and the subject of the called meeting. (Copies of these reports are a part of the records in the Office of Senator Reilly and the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs.) Senator Reilly presented remarks concerning the Kansas State Penitentiary. His remarks are a part of the record and labeled Attachment #1.

Senator Reilly introduced Gary Rayl, Director, Kansas State Penitentiary. He stated that Director Rayl was present to give the Management Progress Report response to the Henderson-Lovelace Reports. Director Rayl spoke to the summation of the Management Progress Report. He stated that he was happy to have a Governor who supports the program and the legislative bodies that are in favor of making the proposed changes. He also stated the importance of proper staff. He said that he has an excellent staff, without whom the suggested programs at KSP could not be carried out. He introduced the following staff: Bill Sturgeon, Training Officer; Kenny Lynch, Major in Charge of Security; Ed Barricks, Orientation; Larry Hicks, Charge of Unit Team; Troy Baker, Administrative Assistant; and Lt. Dennis Ragsdale, Disciplinary Coordinator.

Director Rayl stated that many people think shotguns and walls are what control prisons, but that in actuality the security comes from attitude. It comes from the legislators, the administration, the corrections officers and the inmates. He said that if you don't have a good program and the proper attitude that problems can be serious. He was very encouraged with the number of legislators who recently visited the penitentiary. He said that they want people to be aware of the problems at KSP, because it is through that communication that learning comes about and progress can be made.

Senator Reilly said that those who have gotten to know Director Rayl are impressed with his style of management, his leadership, his staff and the number of inmates he has been able to get to support the staff in turning the institution around. The crisis of a year ago has been stilled and those who are responsible should be commended.

Director Rayl opened up the meeting for questions. The subjects covered included: morale, the telephone system, shakedown, the organized SCAT team, procedure for training of personnel, disciplinary cases, types of crimes for which people are incarcerated, the prison farm, conjugal visits, mental illness, living arrangements within the prison and other matters. The Director said that the most critical problem at the prison is overcrowding. He also stated that more jobs are needed for the prisoners, even though many jobs have been implemented; and plans are constantly being considered to create more jobs. He said that their facilities for dealing with the mentally ill are also inadequate and this presents a constant problem.

The Director said that he tries to make himself visible throughout the institution and available if the prisoners have problems or causes. A bi-weekly TV show is held where the employees can offer suggestions through video tape. They have had many positive suggestions come through this. Director Rayl feels that conditions have improved immensely and that communication has been an important factor in bringing this about.

Senator Reilly expressed his appreciation to all for their hard work and interest being shown in attendance at this meeting. He posed the question as to what the legislature should be doing the next sixty days concerning any prison measures.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

February 4, 1983

TO: Senator Reilly
FROM: Kansas Legislative Research Department
RE: Suggested Remarks for Joint Hearing on Kansas
State Penitentiary

The fall and winter of 1981 was a period of severe turmoil and turbulence at Kansas State Penitentiary (KSP). A number of events combined during this time period which kept the institution in a state of tumult and disorder for several months. Staff morale was quite low while employee dissatisfaction with management procedures spread rapidly. A number of security staff threatened a walkout and several guards were terminated for failing to obey a direct order of their superior. On September 6, 1981, seven inmates successfully escaped from KSP, resulting in a week-long manhunt in both eastern Kansas and Missouri. On September 26, an inmate was stabbed to death by a fellow inmate. On October 11, a member of the security staff at KSP was stabbed to death by an inmate. On October 16, the Governor dismissed the director of KSP and a deputy director. During this period a number of legislators held a meeting with prison staff, as did the Governor and the Secretary of Corrections. Investigations concerning the incidences were conducted by the Department of Corrections, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, and the Attorney General. In December, two security analyses of KSP, commissioned by the Department of Corrections, were conducted by independent observers, Mr. J. D. Henderson and Mr. Tom Lovelace.

Upon the convening of the 1982 Legislature, three legislative committees became involved in examining the management, operations, and programs of both the Department of Corrections and Kansas State Penitentiary: the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs, the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs, and the Special Joint Committee to Study Plans for Prison Building Construction. These Committees held numerous hearings with the Secretary of Corrections, correctional staff, and other interested parties. Each of these three Committees submitted a final report containing various recommendations concerning management issues, prison operations, and construction plans. (Copies of these reports are available in the Kansas Legislative Research Department.)

The security analysis submitted by Mr. Henderson contained a wide range of recommendations concerning the operation of the Kansas State Penitentiary. Included in

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the Henderson report were general comments and recommendations concerning the following issues:

1. personnel;
2. security operations;
3. overcrowding and idleness;
4. communication, accessibility, and visibility of staff;
5. unit teams;
6. protective custody;
7. management of the correctional service;
8. training; and
9. management/employee relations.

The Henderson report contained over 20 specific recommendations for improving operational control and security at the institution. Mr. Henderson reached the conclusion that "...current conditions at the Kansas State Penitentiary in Lansing, Kansas reflect a complex combination of problems relating not only to inherent limitations in the physical plant, but basic communication problems, and significant procedural deficiencies."

In addition to the reports issued by the security consultants and the legislative committees, other reports were prepared by the Department of Health and Environment, the Division of Personnel Services, the Attorney General, KSP officers, unit teams, and the State Fire Marshal. Mr. Gary Rayl, Director of Kansas State Penitentiary, has assembled a Management Progress Report in response to these numerous recommendations and he will present this progress report to the Joint Committee.

JRM/sdp