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A.A. Inspires Formation of The Seekers Prisoners' Rehabilitation Group

In the formation of a unique club, The Seekers, conceived and developed by inmates of San Quentin Prison on San Francisco Bay, Alcoholics Anonymous is the inspiration for a moving story.

The new club, as reported in the press, was originated by a naturally introspective man who, during his first weeks in prison, came to see himself as he really had been - living for himself alone. His spiritual awakening brought the determination to regain his self-respect through service to others.

All around him he saw how the young inmates teamed up with the former "big shots." To them these gangsters and killers were heroes. He knew what little chance the youngsters had under such influence. He found other inmates who shared his convictions. In working out their own lives to a better purpose they hoped to lead the young in the prison to do the same.

They observed the amazing accomplishments of the A.A. group in San Quentin, which has been thriving for three years. Men whose crimes were due to alcoholism were being rehabilitated right there before them. They saw some of these A.A.'s - those whose terms were completed - go out into the world changed men, buoyant with new hope and secure in the knowledge that "out there" they would find the cooperation and friendship of thousands of other A.A.s.

The founder of The Seekers and like-minded inmates decided that if they could get together in the same spirit as A.A., they too, could help themselves and others - and that, like the A.A.s in their work with alcoholics, only those who had been criminals knew how to make the appeal necessary for personality change and rehabilitation.

The members of the new club are dedicated to pay their debt to society by salvaging both themselves and all newcomers they can encourage to join their group - especially first offenders. The Seekers hold regular meetings, which begin with personal stories and are followed by questions and answers, general discussion and summing up.

Warden Clinton Duffy, who from the start has co-operated wholeheartedly with the San Quentin A.A.s, has given the new club his full approval.

San Quentin's is only one of many A.A. groups within prison walls in the U.S.A.

Peekskill A.A.s have been instrumental in forming a group in Walkill Prison, near Newburg, N.Y. Forty inmates attended the first meeting....The first anniversary of the A.A. group in New Jersey State Prison was celebrated in June. Warden John L. O'Hara says the group has grown from 15 to 103 during the year...Richard S., who had completed a 40-month term in Leavenworth (Kan.) penitentiary, again got into trouble and was on trial for passing forged checks.

Learning that while in prison Richard had sold \$100,000 in war bonds to fellow inmates with independent means, collected \$3,500 for the Red Cross, received a citation from Secretary Morgenthau for his war bond sales - and that he had lately joined A.A. - the judge, instead of imprisoning him again, put him on probation for five years, and cautioned him to stick close to A.A.