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Patrick Thompson's Convictions for Murder of Soldiers Quashed

BBC News: Jailed for life for the murder of four British soldiers nearly 50 years agoMr Thompson, has had his convictions quashed by Northern Ireland's Court of Appeal. Senior judges ruled that Patrick Thompson's convictions were "unsafe" due to confession evidence used against him at his Crown Court trial. The four soldiers died in a landmine explosion in south Armagh in July 1975. Mr Thompson was handed life sentences of 30 years but was released from prison in March 1992. Beer keg bomb: Major Peter Willis, 37, of the Green Howards, Sergeant Robert Samuel McCarter, 33, of the Royal Engineers, and Ammunition Technical Officers Calvert Brown, 25, and Edward Garside, 34, of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, died in the explosion near Forkhill. They were part of a patrol investigating suspicious but ultimately decoy milk churns left near Ford's Cross. A 70lb bomb planted in a beer keg concealed in a hedge was detonated by command wire, instantly killing all four.

Mr Thompson was arrested driving a car which matched a description given by another soldier along with a circumstantial case based on his whereabouts around that time. He denied any role in the attack, but was found guilty of the murders and IRA membership. He claimed RUC officers subjected him to degrading and inhuman treatment in custody to obtain the alleged confessions. An initial appeal against conviction was unsuccessful but Mr Thompson, who is now in his 70s, mounted a new attempt to clear his name. The Criminal Case Review Commission (CCRC) referred his case for fresh judicial consideration due to the real possibility his convictions would be found to be unsafe. They cited "compelling evidence" which called into question the credibility of a senior RUC detective who questioned Mr Thompson during his arrest.

'Evidence Irredeemably Tainted' Defence counsel Frank O'Donoghue KC told the court the detective's reliability as a truthful witness was assessed as "substantially weakened" because he was heavily criticised in a later court case where RUC officers were found to have rewritten interview notes and lied under oath. He also claimed Mr Thompson was beaten by officers into making false admissions of involvement. "The confessions were apparently like 'it's a fair cop gov' where (the detective) comes in and says 'this is all a load of nonsense' and Mr Thompson immediately starts to make admissions," the barrister submitted. "It's highly unusual that someone would respond like that to a police prompt."

Mr O'Donoghue added that the detective had been "exposed as someone whose evidence could not be relied upon" in confession-only evidence cases relating to serious alleged terrorist criminality involving murder. He was prepared to tell the court untruths in a convincing manner so that experienced judges believed he was an impressive witness - that strikes at the very heart of the integrity of the criminal justice system, his evidence is irredeemably tainted." Dealing with the alleged ill-treatment Mr Thompson endured, the barrister referred to incidents of him being punched and kicked in the ribs. He was also forced to stand against a wall, made to do press-ups and subjected to verbal abuse, it was claimed. According to Mr Thompson's account, a plastic bag was put over his head for up to a minute and tied with a belt. He described feeling dizzy, panicking and gasping for breath. Urging the court to declare the convictions unsafe, Mr O'Donoghue said: "Without the confession evidence this case had to fall." Prosecution counsel highlighted the lack of medical evidence of any physical injuries to Mr Thompson. He also said the findings of wrongdoing against the detective eight years later do not automatically undermine the safety of Mr Thompson's convictions. Based on the combined evidence, he described the case against Mr Thompson as "overwhelming". Giving the judgement on Monday 22nd April, Lady Justice Dame Siobhan Keegan said: "We have carefully considered all of the evidence and documents in order to reach our final view. "It boils down to a very simple fact in that the detective inspector who took the confession was clearly not a man of truth or integrity." She added: "We are of the view that if the trial judge had been aware that the detective inspector had the potential to falsify a confession, as he was subsequently found to have done in another case eight years later, he may have been compelled to have ruled the confession inadmissible.

Judge throws Out Case Against UK Climate Activist Who Held Sign On Jurors' Rights

Trudi Warner was accused of contempt for holding placard reminding jurors of right to acquit based on conscience - *Sandra Laville, Guardian:* A high court judge has thrown out an attempt by the government's most senior law officer to prosecute a woman for holding a placard on jury rights outside a climate trial. Mr Justice Saini said there was no basis for a prosecution of Trudi Warner, 69, for criminal contempt for holding a placard outside the trial of climate activists that informed jurors of their right to acquit a defendant based on their conscience. The judge accused government lawyers of "mischaracterising" the evidence when they said Warner had acted in an intimidating and abusive manner, confronting potential jurors outside the court and following them, in a deliberate attempt to interfere with the administration of justice.

Warner, a retired social worker, was being pursued for contempt of court after a lone protest last year outside inner London crown court in which she held up a placard highlighting the right of jurors to acquit defendants on their conscience. She protested at the start of a trial of Insulate Britain protesters for a peaceful roadblock. But the attorney general decided to pursue Warner for contempt of court, and the solicitor general was in the high court last week to seek permission to charge her. In Monday's ruling, Saini threw out the government lawyers' application. He said: "The solicitor general's case does not disclose a reasonable basis for committal … the conduct did not amount to an act of contempt. "I refuse the solicitor general permission to proceed and I dismiss the claim."

He challenged the solicitor general's allegation that Warner had confronted, instructed, encouraged or incited potential jurors to ignore the judge's directions when they came to their verdict. Saini said Warner had not harassed, impeded or even spoken to any of those entering inner London crown court last year, and criticised the government lawyers. "It is fanciful to suggest that Ms Warner's behaviour falls into the category of contempt," he said. "The category is limited to threatening, intimidatory, abusive conduct or other forms of harassment. I reject the arguments made in the claimant's … argument that Ms Warner confronted jurors … these submissions significantly mischaracterise the evidence."

Warner's sign was in reference to a 1670 landmark case which cemented the independence of juries, known as "Bushel's case", in which a jury refused to find defendants guilty despite having been repeatedly instructed to do so by the judge. Warner's placard read: "Jurors, you have an absolute right to acquit a defendant according to your conscience." Warner, who waited for a year to find out if she would be prosecuted for contempt of court, said outside court she was feeling "very relieved". "I feel it is job done," she said. "What I was doing was drawing attention to the terrible repression of conscientious protectors, and in particular climate protesters, by the state. "If what I did will empower other defendants to use the power to acquit by juries, this will have been the fight of my life."

In his ruling, the judge said there was a well-established principle in law of jury equity; this was a de facto power to acquit a defendant regardless of directions from the judge. He said the principle in law had been tested in the highest courts in England and Wales, and existed in other countries such as Canada, New Zealand and the US. Warner stood outside inner London crown court last March for 30 minutes holding the placard as members of the public, lawyers and potential jurors filed into court. She held the sign on the first day of a trial for public nuisance of members of the climate campaign group Insulate Britain.

The judge in that trial, Silas Reid, referred her action to the attorney general to consider contempt of court. Last week, the solicitor general argued in the high court that Warner should be prosecuted for contempt for holding the sign. Aidan Eardley KC told the court a prosecution was needed "to maintain public confidence" in the independence of the jury system and that if Warner went unpunished, similar acts were "likely to propagate". He claimed Warner had confronted jurors outside court and her actions were an interference with the administration of justice.

Saini said in his ruling on Monday Warner had made no attempt compel those going into the court. "What is striking to me is how little Ms Warner tries to engage with people, to get their attention, or to persuade them of anything. She was … in essence, a human billboard." The decision was welcomed by supporters outside the high court. It came after the UN rapporteur on environmental defenders highlighted the repressive actions taken against climate campaigners in the UK. Michel Forst said he was alarmed at the restrictions being placed on defendants in climate trials, which include being prevented from mentioning the words climate change or fuel poverty, or the tradition of peaceful protests embodied in the US civil rights movement.

'Squalid' Segregation Unit at HMP Bedford to Close Following Legal Threat

Jon Robins, Justice Gap: The segregation unit at HMP Bedford is to close down following a threat of legal action over concerns about squalid conditions. The Howard League for Penal Reform last month sent a letter threatening to judicially review the secretary of state for justice if he continued to place people in the segregation unit at Bedford 'given the overwhelming evidence of abject living conditions there'. According to the group, the government's lawyers have now responded and, contrary to the prisons minister's previous communication in February, saying that the unit will close with 'immediate effect' and the opening of a new one is 'on track for Spring 2024'.

'Some of the accommodation in Bedford was the worst I have seen,' wrote the chief prisons inspector Charlie Taylor following inspections in October and November 2023. 'On E wing, the smell of mould in one cell was overpowering, with the walls damp to the touch, while the underground segregation unit was a disgrace. Here, problems with the drainage mean that on very wet days, raw sewage covered the floor and the cells were dark, damp and dilapidated.' Sandbags and wellington boots were stored on the unit 'to help staff stem the tide' and prisoners regularly had to be moved to other cells.

Conditions were so serious at the Victorian-era prison, that inspectors invoked the 'urgent notification' process in 2019. 'I am disappointed to report that at this inspection we found that standards had fallen badly: our four healthy prison tests rated the jail as poor for safety, respect and purposeful activity, and not sufficiently good in preparation for release,' wrote Taylor. Despite the concerns about the segregation unit, in sectors revealed over the last 12 months, 278 prisoners had been on the unit for an average of 11 days. Eleven had been held for more than 42 days, one for more than 126 days.

Christine McDonald: Inquest has Opened Into Self-Inflicted Death at Styal Prison

Previous deaths in Styal gave rise to a landmark review on women's prisons, The Corston Report 2007. Many of the recommendations have not been enacted and deaths continue.

Christine McDonald died a self-inflicted death at HMP Styal in Cheshire in March 2019, just days after a traumatic arrest which related to challenges with addiction. An inquest will now examine the circumstances. Christine's death is one of 26 at the prison since 2007, eleven of which were self-inflicted. This represents more deaths than in any other women's prison in England and Wales. Christine was 55 years old at the time of her death and had four children. She was kind, loving, and had a good sense of humour. She was someone who always put others before herself. She was loved and is missed immensely by her family.

Christine struggled with opiate addiction and had convictions for shoplifting related to her addiction. On 1 March 2019, Christine was arrested, alongside her daughter Kristy, for failing to attend court on 27 February 2019. The circumstances of this arrest had a significant impact on Christine. During the arrest her daughter Kristy fell from the third floor suffering serious injuries. Christine witnessed her daughter sustain serious injuries before she was arrested by police officers. That day Christine was sentenced to 12 weeks imprisonment for two offences of shoplifting small value items of shampoo, bubble bath, hair dye and cheese and one offence of failure to comply with a community requirement of a suspended sentence.

Upon arrival at the prison, her behaviour was described as being anxious, suffering from opiate withdrawal symptoms and being concerned for her daughter who had sustained serious injuries from the fall. Christine continued to suffer from withdrawal symptoms, had low mood and continued expressing concern for her daughter the following day on 2 March. Later that day, Christine was taken to Wythenshawe Hospital in Manchester following concerns raised during a healthcare assessment in the prison. She was subsequently returned to HMP Styal. That evening two prison officers found Christine hanging in her cell. She was found to have a pulse and was taken back to Wythenshawe hospital. Her family rushed to be by her side. On 3 March 2019 she was pronounced dead.

The inquest into her death will seek to explore the following issues: An overview of Christine's physical and mental health from her initial arrival at the prison until the moment she was found on 2 March 2019. Care received while in prison, including assessment and management of risks to herself and observations conducted prior and after being referred to the hospital's Emergency Department. Events of 1 March 2019 with a focus on the circumstances of her arrest and the impact this had on her state of mind.

Cheri McDonald, her daughter said: "I am a nurse in the NHS and appreciate the immense workload across all public sector services, however I have serious concerns about the level of care my mum received. This is both as a patient when physically unwell withdrawing and the steps the prison took to look after her given the massive stressing event of watching her daughter, my sister, sustain serious injuries. I would ask that there is a full investigation into all the circumstances surrounding the care and treatment received prior to and including events up to her death."

CCRC Successful Appeals Against Conviction 2019 to Date

Helen Morgan MP: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many of cases referred by the Criminal Cases Review Commission for appeal were successful in each year since 2019.

Laura Farris MP: The number and proportion of successful cases referred by the CCRC and heard byappeal courts each year since 2019/20 is: 2019/20 10 2020/21 30 2021/22 57 2022/23 17 2023/24 19 2024/25 (year to date) 2

M.B. v. the Netherlands - Violation's of Article 5 & 1

The applicant, Mr M.B., is a Syrian national who was born in 1997 and at the time of lodging his application was being held in immigration detention in Rotterdam (the Netherlands). The applicant entered the Netherlands in October 2015 and applied for asylum. He was arrested shortly afterwards on suspicion of participation in a terrorist organisation and placed in pre-trial detention. He was convicted to 10 months' detention by a first-instance Court. He was released in September 2016, but immediately placed in immigration detention pending the assessment of his asylum application. The case concerns the decision to order the applicant's immigration detention on the ground that he posed a threat to public order. Relying on Article 5 § 1 (right to liberty and security) of the European Convention on Human Rights, Mr M.B. alleges that this decision was unlawful and arbitrary. Violation of Article 5 § 1 Just satisfaction: non-pecuniary damage: 4,560 euros (EUR)

Growing Numbers of Women Struggling to Progress Through Their Sentence

Prison Reform Trust: Long-sentenced women, a small but increasing proportion of women in prison, are facing significant barriers to progressing through their sentence, a new briefing published today by the Prison Reform Trust has revealed. The briefing is the third in the 'Invisible Women' series and has been produced in collaboration with women who will serve at least eight years in prison. The briefing draws on the evidence of working groups in prison and written responses from women who are part of a wider 'Building Futures Network' of women with lived experience of long-term imprisonment.

Whilst the majority of women in prison are serving short sentences of less than 12 months, there is a small but increasing minority serving very long prison sentences. The number of women serving an indeterminate sentence has grown from 96 in 1991, to 381 in September 2023. This briefing highlights how the lack of a woman centred approach to long sentenced women within the prison estate has wide ranging consequences for their ability to progress through their sentence.

For women serving longer sentences, particularly those serving indeterminate sentences whose release is authorised by the Parole Board, effective arrangements for sentence progression and risk reduction are especially important. Because women serving these sentences are a minority, many of these processes are designed for those in the male estate. Often women are viewed through the same risk lens as their male counterparts, despite huge differences in their circumstances and experiences.

The briefing shows that issues including variable access Offender Behaviour Programmes between prisons; and a lack of tailored support from staff, impacted negatively on how women felt about their ability to progress through their sentence. Women experienced long periods of "nothing time" during which, despite their best efforts, the sentence felt purposeless and stagnant. One woman said: "For long termers, you have the bit at the beginning, the bit at the end, and the great depression in between." Another added: "It stops being about rehabilitation and just becomes incapacitation."

For women to progress through their sentence, they have to complete various Offender Behaviour Programmes (OBPs) based on their sentence plan. However, the briefing suggests that many of the women found these programmes difficult to access, with not all women's prisons running all relevant OBPs. Some of the women consulted also found these programmes, which are often designed with long-sentenced men in mind, to be pointless and, at times, insulting. One woman said: "It is important to get to the root of why someone committed a crime, but when you come in and get assessed, it feels like you're just there to tick boxes. It's basically saying "you've done this course, you're

cleared now", rather than actually dealing with the issue." Another added: "Some of the content of the courses is insulting – I do have a brain you know."

The report makes a number of recommendations to the prison service. They highlight the need to develop a gender-specific approach for women serving long prison sentences, with policies designed specifically for them, to enable them to progress through their sentence. This includes the development of gender specific Offender Behaviour Programmes which better address the multiple and complex needs which often contribute to women's offending.

Commenting, Emily Evison, co-author of the briefing said: "More women are spending longer in prison than ever before, but many still feel they are set up to fail in a system in which they are an afterthought. The women we spoke to wanted to engage and progress but felt that they faced constant barriers to doing so. The prison service must better recognise the specific needs of this group and ensure a woman-centred approach is in place in both policy and practice for those serving long sentences. By doing so we can better support those women away from crime and create safer communities."

Multiple Failures Contributed to Daniel Weighman's Death

A jury in the inquest into the death of Daniel Weighman has concluded that multiple failures by prison and healthcare staff contributed to his death at HMP Chelmsford. Daniel died on 6 January 2024, three days after he was found unresponsive in his cell at the prison, despite being subject to Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) processes. The Coroner will issue a Prevention of Future Deaths report to HMP Chelmsford, and to CRG, who provide healthcare at the prison. Daniel's family was represented by Cian Murphy instructed by Gimhani Eriyagolla and Alisha McSporran of Hodge Jones & Allen solicitors and supported by INQUEST.

Daniel, from Westcliff-On-Sea, Essex, was the third eldest of eight siblings and was a family-oriented son, father, and brother. He cared deeply for his mother and siblings and would regularly cook for them and look after his younger brothers and sisters. After leaving school, Daniel worked as a labourer and moved out of his family home in his early twenties. He regularly visited to look after and spend time with his mum. Daniel was on remand at HMP Chelmsford at the time of his death. His healthcare records included that he had a history of psychotic symptoms such as auditory hallucinations – for which he had previously received treatment. However, between his arrival in October 2022 and his death in January 2023 he was not seen by the mental health team – despite a referral.

On 1 January 2023 he reported that he would self-harm. Neither prison officers nor a paramedic who spoke to him opened an ACCT support plan. The jury concluded that the failure to open an ACCT plan on this day contributed to Daniel's death. On 3 January 2023 Daniel said that he was "hearing voices" and that he needed to be seen by the mental health team. Later in the afternoon he was seen with self-harm injuries. Although an ACCT plan was opened, the jury concluded that staff did not follow best practice procedures, and that observation levels were not appropriate, both of which contributed to Daniel's death. Two hours later he was found unresponsive in his cell and, despite optimal hospital care, he died on 6 January 2023.

The jury delivered a narrative conclusion, highlighting several failings which contributed to his death, including but not limited to: The failure of healthcare staff to assess Daniel's risks of self-harm/suicide in light of the information contained on SystmOne. Inadequate communications by healthcare staff of Daniel's potential level of risk. The lack of adequate understanding of healthcare staff and prison officers about their duties under the ACCT process. A serious

failure in appropriate ACCT training for healthcare and prison staff at all levels. Inappropriate observation levels when an ACCT was opened on 3 January 2023. The jury concluded that Daniel did not receive adequate support at HMP Chelmsford from prison and/or healthcare staff from 1st January 2023. Chloe Weighman, Daniel's sister, said: "Danny, at his core, was a kind and loving person, and while he made a few mistakes in his life, he never deserved this. HMP Chelmsford has taken Danny from us. If Danny was given the support he so desperately asked for, we would not be where we are today. He was repeatedly failed by the prison and healthcare service, who failed to carry out their basic responsibilities towards him, and we have paid the ultimate price for those failures."

Sentence Reduced by Court of Appeal Due to Time Spent in Foreign Prison

A man's sentence has been reduced by the Court of Appeal after time spent on remand in a foreign prison was not deducted. Feezan Hameed was arrested in France in 2015 and spent 18 days in custody awaiting extradition to the United Kingdom. He pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to defraud and conspiracy to convert and transfer criminal property in May 2016, and was sentenced to 11 years imprisonment in September 2016. The Criminal Cases Review Commission referred Mr Hameed's case to the Court of Appeal as our review found the judge failed to deduct the time he spent in prison in France from his sentence. The CCRC referral was on 23 June 2023, and the sentence was reduced by the Court of Appeal on 18 April 2024.

'No Passport' Conviction Quashed By Crown Court After CCRC Referral

A conviction for failure to have an immigration document at an asylum interview has been quashed after being sent back to court by the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC). The case involved Ms D, who entered the UK at Heathrow Airport in March 2021. She immediately claimed asylum but didn't have a passport with her. She told the UK Border Agency that she fled Iran in fear of political persecution. Ms D applied to the CCRC in July 2021, and it was referred to the Crown Court as it was decided she had a reasonable excuse for not having a passport with her when arriving at Heathrow airport. The Crown Court quashed the conviction on 19 April 2024, and it was referred by the CCRC on 5 March 2024.

EDM 670: Diversion Schemes for Drug-Related Offending

That this House endorses the recognition from Dame Carol Black and the Home Affairs Committee that improved use of diversion schemes, where police deal with low-level offending without the involvement of courts, can be an important tool in reducing drug-related crime; pays tribute to the pioneering work of Police-led Drug Diversion (PDD) schemes such as Durham's Checkpoint programme led by the late Ron Hogg, the West Midlands' Operation Turning Point and the Thames Valley Druglink scheme championed by former Chief Inspector Jason Kew; highlights the importance of community resolution to preclude the need for arrest and to facilitate access to education, treatment and support services; welcomes the work of Professor Alex Stevens of the University of Kent and Paul Quintom from the College of Policing in providing evaluation of PDD schemes and identification of best practice; believes this will establish effective national standards and a template to end the patchy postcode-lottery of provision; and calls on the Government to commit to consistent national roll-out of high-standard diversion schemes, as soon as practicable, to provide a cost-effective alternative to the current cycle of criminalisation and reoffending.

15 Year Old Girl - Deprivation of Liberty

1)This is an application by Birmingham City Council, the Local Authority ("LA"), for a deprivation of liberty ("DOLS") order in respect of AA, who is a 15 year old girl. I am not going to set out the full background or a comprehensive summary of what has happened with her, but I am giving this judgment so that it can be disclosed to the magistrates who are holding a sentencing hearing.

2) AA is a child with a history of extremely dysregulated behaviour and that manifests itself in very serious actions of self-harm and assaults on third parties. That history of assaults goes back to at least early 2022 and there are two incidents I draw particular attention to. On 22 November 2022 AA caused extensive damage, headbutted a staff member causing considerable injury, and then made threats to kill and stab another young person. At that stage she was being looked after by the LA in the community. There was a period with a number of self-harming incidents and her absconding from placements. She did have a period of relative stability in one of those placements, but that came to an abrupt end in early August 2023 when she was arrested after going missing from care and carried out a serious assault on a police officer, for which she has been charged.

3) Since 11 August 2023 she has been placed at HM YOI X. Since then there have continued to be incidents of self-harm and serious dysregulation including a number of really worrying incidents where she was found to be tying ligatures. There is a genuine and very serious risk of attempted suicide and serious self-harm.4) As I understand it, she is appearing before the Magistrates for sentencing in respect of two charges of assault and one escape from custody (the dock). AA has made it clear to the social workers and to her mother that she wishes to remain at HM YOI X and she will commit further assaults to get back there if she is not detained there tomorrow. As her mother says, when AA has issued such threats in the past, she has sadly acted upon them, and this is therefore not a case where we can say that she is simply threatening things to get her way and we don't need to worry about the threats themselves.

5) Having heard the social workers and her mother, I am not just deeply concerned, I am effectively confident that if she is released into the care of the LA tomorrow it is overwhelmingly likely she will very soon thereafter assault someone, whether a social worker, care worker or police officer. I have to consider not only her best interests under the Children Act 1989 but also my positive obligations under Articles 2 and 3 of the ECtHR, therefore the Human Rights Act 1998, for the State to act to protect people when there is a known risk of death or serious injury. Here, there is a known risk that if AA is released back to the care of the LA in the community, such an event may occur.

6) The likelihood is that AA will assault other people employed by the State in whatever capacity, and quite possibly third parties. Miss Clarke, the social worker who gave evidence, said that if AA is discharged into the LA's care, the assessed level of risk will be extremely high. Both social workers made clear to me that the LA simply cannot manage that risk in the community.

7) The LA has sought to find secure accommodation placements and have taken every possible step to do so. As the magistrates are aware, there is an extreme national shortage of such places. But also, and most concerningly, some of the secure units approached have said that AA is too high a risk and too violent for them. That shows beyond any possible doubt that releasing her into the care of the LA, where the only option is to place her in a house with staff and under a DOLS, is simply going to result in further injuries, whether to AA or a third party or both.

8) I would very strongly urge the magistrates to adjourn the matter before them and remand her for a further period in HM YOI X to give the LA time to try to find a secure accommodation unit or to take alternative legal strategies. I cannot order the magistrates to do anything, but I do repeat my concern about my and their positive obligations to take steps to protect third parties from known risks.

PAS Helps Vulnerable Woman Access Drug Rehabilitation Facility

We acted on behalf of Prisoner A, a vulnerable female prisoner who suffered acute mental ill-health as a result of her ongoing, chaotic, substance abuse issues. Then 53, Prisoner A had a long history of repeat offending, starting when she was 17 years old, and had herself been a victim of both physical and sexual violence. When she contacted PAS, Prisoner A had been recalled to prison once again, and was facing a Parole Board hearing to determine whether she could be released. Prisoner A had been recalled – for relapsing into drug misuse – only weeks after her previous release. Historically, upon discharge from prison, she had typically been housed either in approved premises alongside many other, active, substance abusers, or in similarly non-supportive accommodation. She had also been released homeless. This cycle, coupled with a lack of opportunity to address her issues whilst in prison (the sentences she had served being mainly short, where this is not offered), meant that she was often recalled for the relatively inoffensive infraction of substance abuse. PAS represented Prisoner A throughout her recall proceedings and recommended that she be released to a funded, residential rehabilitation centre in order to receive the support necessary to overcome her addictions. In the run up to the Parole Board hearing, it became clear that funding for this residential placement was available only for a limited period; indeed, the funding offer would expire in a matter of days. Ordinarily, the Parole Board has up to fourteen days to issue a decision after a hearing, but this would have meant the loss of the placement for Prisoner A. PAS corresponded with Prisoner A's community probation officer, the funding providers and the rehabilitation facility to impress upon them the necessity of securing the placement for her. We made submissions to the Parole Board, explaining the urgency of the matter, that their decision be delivered quickly. Following PAS' involvement, the Parole Board was prompt in its response and Prisoner A was successfully released to the residential rehabilitation facility, where she was able to access the support needed to tackle her long-standing substance abuse issues.

McGurk's Bar Bombing Merits New Inquests Says Attorney General

Finn Purdy, BBC News NI: Relatives of 15 people murdered in a bomb attack at McGurk's Bar have been told the case merits new inquests. They said the attorney general told them new inquests were "advisable" after new evidence was uncovered. The attack at McGurk's Bar in Belfast on 4 December 1971 was carried out by the the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The families of those killed have for a long time said that they suspect British armed forces had advanced knowledge of the attack. One man was convicted of all 15 murders in 1978. The attorney general's recommendation of new inquests has been prompted by the uncovering of new evidence concerning the location of Army observation posts in the vicinity of the bombing. From 1 May no further Troubles-era inquiries or court cases can be heard, under the terms of the Legacy Act. Attorney General Dame Brenda King has written to the family of Edward and Sarah Keenan, two of those who died in the bombing. Families told BBC News NI that Dame Brenda said she had "considered the submissions and documents provided" and "decided that it is advisable to order a new inquest into their deaths". "Investigation of the actions or inactions of the army in the period before the bombing occurred is incomplete," the letter stated. Dame Brenda wrote that it was "apparent from the copies of the military logs shared with the attorney that there were military observation posts near to the area where the Keenans met their deaths". "The attorney considers that an inquest would provide a forum in which the actions of the army prior to the bombing could be explored," the letter said. In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the IRA was blamed for the bombing. In 2011 the Police Ombudsman found there had been no collusion between the Royal Ulster Constabulary and loyalist paramilitaries, but concluded there was investigative bias towards blaming republicans.

Committing Crimes With the Authority of the Government

Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) : The Covert Human Intelligence Sources (Criminal Conduct) Act 2021 is an act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. The act makes provision for the use of undercover law enforcement agents and covert sources and the committing of crimes in the undertaking of their duty. Are crucial in preventing and safeguarding victims from many serious crimes including terrorism, drugs and firearms offences and child sexual exploitation. Participation in criminal conduct is an essential and inescapable feature of CHIS use, otherwise they will not be credible or gain the trust of those under investigation. This enables them to work their way into the heart of groups that would cause us harm, finding information and intelligence which other investigative measures may never detect. The judgment below was handed down remotely at 10.30 am on 26 April 2024 by circulation to the parties or their representatives by e-mail and by release to the National Archives.

Between: Rex Respondent - and - AIB Appellant (Application for Sentence Reduction for Role as Government Criminal) 1) The court ordered that these proceedings should be heard in camera otherwise the administration of justice would be frustrated. There are strong public interest reasons for not revealing the identity or the role of the appellant as an informer. We have handed down this partial judgment to comply with the requirements of open justice. We have not included material which may enable the appellant to be identified, including the names of the other two judges who heard the appeal. 2) The appellant was convicted or otherwise pleaded guilty to serious offences for which he was sentenced. His appeal against conviction was dismissed. 3) The appellant submits that when passing sentence the judge had insufficient regard to the material relating to his former role as a CHIS. 4) Realistically we think, counsel for the applicant does not argue that the total sentence of 8 years imprisonment would be classified as wrong in principle or manifestly excessive save for the impact of the 'text'. Equally realistically, counsel for the prosecution do not seek to suggest that the judge took the text into account in reaching this sentence. 5) R v Royle & ors [2023] EWCA Crim 1311 now provides authoritative guidance following review of all applicable previous authorities and structure of the Sentencing Guidelines, on "the principles applicable to the sentencing of those who provided information and assistance, to whom we shall for convenience refer collectively as "informers"." It was not available at the time of sentencing. 6) The rationale for reducing sentence to that which would otherwise have been imposed is pragmatic; see [9] – [15]. The rationale for making a reduction is the same whether the information relates to the offence for which the informant has been convicted "or some other criminal activity". A guilty plea is not an essential pre-requisite of the making of a reduction for information and assistance received. 7) At paragraph [31] Holroyde LJ, Vice President, affirmed that the "decision as to what reduction is appropriate requires a fact-specific assessment of all relevant circumstances". He identified the following factors which "may" be relevant as to the extent of the appropriate reduction in a particular case: a. the quality and quantity of the information provided, including whether it related to trivial or to serious offences (the risk to the informer generally being greater when the criminality concerned is more serious); b. the period of time over which the information was provided; c. whether it assisted the authorities to bring to justice persons who would not otherwise have been brought to justice, or to prevent or disrupt the commission of serious crime, or to recover property; d. the degree of assistance which was provided, including whether the informer gave, or was willing to give, evidence confirming the information he had provided; e. the degree of risk to which the informer has exposed himself and his family by providing the information or assistance; f. the nature and extent of the crime in which the informer has himself been involved, and the extent to which he has been prepared to admit the full extent of his

criminality; g. whether the informer has relied on the same provision of information and assistance when being sentence on a previous occasion, or when making an application to the Parole Board: in our view, an informer can generally only expect to receive credit once for past information or assistance, and for that reason the text should where applicable state whether particular information and assistance has been taken into account in imposing a previous sentence; h. whether the informer has been paid for the assistance he has provided, and if so, how much; but it is important to note that in T at [8] the court emphasised that a financial reward and a reduction in sentence are complementary means of showing offenders that it is worth their while to disclose the criminal activities of others: a financial reward, unless exceptionally generous, should therefore play only a small, if any, part in the sentencer's decision. 8) It appears to us that the judge was in error in determining that the text did not assist the appellant. The text is of recent date and confirms a significant period during which the appellant had provided "accurate and reliable information … for which he has been substantially rewarded [financially] on thirty-six separate occasions". He had not previously been provided with a "text" for the purpose of sentencing and had never given evidence to a crown court in relation to the intelligence or information provided during his period as authorised CHIS. During the relevant period he was subject to an acknowledged 'credible risk to life' warning. 9) In all circumstances, we consider that the appropriate reduction in the overall sentence is in the region of 40% and will result in a total sentence of 60 months. 10) To that extent the appeal against sentence succeeds.

Harvey Weinstein's 2020 Rape Conviction Overturned by New York Court

Graeme Baker, BBC News: Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein's 2020 rape conviction has been overturned by New York's top court, on the basis that he did not receive a fair trial. The Court of Appeals found that prosecutors were allowed to call witnesses whose accusations were not part of the charges against him. Its ruling said that meant he was tried on past behaviour and not solely on the crimes he was charged with. Weinstein, 72, will remain in prison for a separate conviction for rape. The court reached a 4-3 ruling on Thursday 25th April, stating that the trial "erroneously admitted testimony of uncharged, alleged prior sexual acts against persons other than the complainants of the underlying crimes." The decision also said the trial judge compounded the error by letting Weinstein be cross-examined in a way that portrayed him in a "highly prejudicial" light. "The remedy for these egregious errors is a new trial." One of the dissenting judges however said that with the decision, "this Court continues to thwart the steady gains survivors of sexual violence have fought for in our criminal justice system". Accusations against Weinstein began in 2017 and sparked the #MeToo movement, which exposed sexual abuse at the highest levels of the Hollywood film industry and beyond. He faced two trials: in New York, where he was jailed for 23 years in 2020 for raping two women; and in California, where he was last year sentenced to 16 years for raping a woman in a Beverly Hills hotel. The California conviction is not affected by the decision in New York

Weinstein currently remains in a prison in New York. He was previously extradited to LA to stand trial. It will now be up to Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, whose predecessor Cyrus Vance brought the case, to decide whether to retry Weinstein. Bragg's office is separately in the midst of a criminal hush-money trial against former president Donald Trump. "Today's decision is a major step back in holding those accountable for acts of sexual violence," said Douglas Wigdor, a lawyer who represented eight of Weinstein's accusers. "It will require the victims to endure yet another trial." Weinstein co-founded the Miramax film studio, whose hits included Shakespeare in Love and Pulp Fiction. His own eponymous film studio filed for bankruptcy in March 2018.

5 Individuals Acquited in Multi-Million Pound Fraud Case

It was alleged that JY had falsified his income and produced false payslips in an attempt to secure a personal loan from Natwest. He was charged with fraud as a part of a multi-million pound fraud involving as many as 42 individuals. He stood trial alongside 5 individuals charged with similar conduct. Through cross-examination of prosecution witnesses, the defence were able to establish that JY had in fact himself been the victim of more sophisticated fraudulent conspirators who had orchestrated the relevant fraudulent applications. JY and the five other defendants with whom he was standing trial were unanimously acquitted in under two hours.

Abuse of Terrorism Act 2000: Five-Figure Settlement Of Civil Claim Against MET

Doughty Street Chambers: On 17 April 2023 Ernest Moret, rights manager for French publishing house La Fabrique éditions, arrived in London by Eurostar to attend the London Bookfair at Olympia where he had over 30 appointments arranged with authors and publishers. On arrival at St Pancras Station, Mr Moret was stopped and examined by counter-terrorist police officers purportedly acting under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000, an exceptional counter-terrorism power which enables police at ports to examine individuals entering or leaving the UK, in order to determine whether they are terrorists, and without any grounds for suspicion. Officers can detain up to a maximum of 6 hours, search, seize devices, require cooperation (including passwords to devices) and take biometrics.

A person who is examined must give any information in his possession which the examining officer requests. It is an offence, punishable by up to 3 months' imprisonment or a fine, to fail to comply with this duty. However, a person may only be convicted where the exercise of the Schedule 7 power was lawful. Officers asked Mr Moret about demonstrations he had attended in France, and what he had been told by his solicitor. Having seized his iPhone and MacBook, officers told him that they intended to look at his photographs and media and required him to provide his PINs to both devices. Mr Moret refused. He was arrested on suspicion of wilfully obstructing a Schedule 7 examination. In interview, an officer asserted without any basis that Mr Moret if convicted for his refusal to disclose his PINs would never again be able to travel abroad. After a total of around 24 hours of detention Mr Moret was released. His solicitor Richard Parry made representations direct to the CPS, who ordered the police to stop investigating Mr Moret, and declined to prosecute.

The Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, Jonathan Hall KC, subsequently concluded that 'this examination should not have happened, and that additional safeguards are needed to ensure it is not repeated'. 'This was an investigation into public order for which counter-terrorism powers were never intended to be used. The rights of free expression and protest are too important in a democracy to allow individuals to be investigated for potential terrorism merely because they may have been involved in protests that have turned violent'. The Independent Reviewer found that police assertions in interview as to the consequences of criminal conviction had been 'exaggerated and overbearing'.

Mr Moret intimated a claim against the Metropolitan Police for compensation for misfeasance in public office and for false imprisonment. He has agreed to settle the proposed claim for a substantial five-figure sum negotiated by Richard Parry of Saunders Solicitors and Nick Stanage, working with Caroline Kamal of the Paris Bar. The figures have deepened concerns that police are using counter-terrorism powers to target political activists.