

Man, 54, Dies After Arrest At House In Wortley

A man died as West Yorkshire Police officers made an arrest at a house in Leeds. Nazim Din, 54, collapsed at his home at Grasmere Court, Wortley, at 19:00 BST on Wednesday 28/06/13 as a 34-year-old man from the same address was arrested. He was taken to hospital but later died. The arrested man also suffered a "medical episode" but is now in custody, police said. The force said his arrest, on suspicion of criminal damage, was "pre-planned". West Yorkshire Police said it was "cooperating fully" with an Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) investigation.

Mr Dim's family reading the statement Nazim Dim's family described him as a "loving husband and doting father" A family statement said: "As a family we are devastated by the death of Nazim Din. "He was a family man, a loving husband and a doting father of five children who he leaves behind."

Report on an Unannounced Inspection of HMYOI Cookham Wood

Inspection, 7-17 May 2013 by HMCIP, report compiled July 2013, published 05/09/13

Cookham Wood holds just over 130 young people in an ageing facility dating from the 1970s. Inspectors had some concerns: - use of force remained high, reflecting levels of violence, but in many incidents it was used minimally and overall supervision was good; - despite the tragic death of a young person in 2012, some arrangements to prevent suicide and self-harm were lacklustre and needed improvement; - separation was managed through the Phoenix unit where young people were reasonably well supported but some young people spent too long separated with a limited regime. - quality of food was not appreciated by young people, with some justification, and arrangements for how it was served required improvement

UK 'Addiction Capital of Europe'

Alcohol and drug abuse costs the UK £21 billion and £15 billion respectively, and the crisis of increasing addiction is fuelling the breakdown of society, according to the think-tank The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ). The CSJ says the UK has become a hub for websites peddling "legal highs" or "club drugs" such as Salvia or Green Rolex, which are ordered online and distributed around the country by postmen and couriers who unwittingly become drugs mules. People can also buy class A drugs such as heroin and crack cocaine from mail order websites. The CSJ criticised the government for what it calls an "inadequate response to heroin addiction", saying that more than 40,000 drug addicts in England have been stranded on the substitute methadone, which is used to wean addicts off heroin. The report also highlighted the spiralling rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions in England, which it says have doubled in a decade

Hostages: Jamie Green, Dan Payne, Zoran Dresic, Scott Birtwistle, Jon Beere, Chedwyn Evans, Darren Waterhouse, David Norris, Brendan McConville, John Paul Wooton, John Keelan, Mohammed Niaz Khan, Abid Ashiq Hussain, Sharaz Yaqub, David Ferguson, Anthony Parsons, James Cullinene, Stephen Marsh, Graham Coutts, Royston Moore, Duane King, Leon Chapman, Tony Marshall, Anthony Jackson, David Kent, Norman Grant, Ricardo Morrison, Alex Silva, Terry Smith, Hyrone Hart, Glen Cameron, Warren Slaney, Melvyn 'Adie' McLellan, Lyndon Coles, Robert Bradley, Sam Hallam, John Twomey, Thomas G. Bourke, David E. Ferguson, Lee Mockble, George Romero Coleman, Neil Hurley, Jaslyn Ricardo Smith, James Dowsett, Kevan Thakrar, Miran Thakrar, Jordan Towers, Patrick Docherty, Brendan Dixon, Paul Bush, Frank Wilkinson, Alex Black, Nicholas Rose, Kevin Nunn, Peter Carine, Paul Higginson, Thomas Petch, Vincent and Sean Bradish, John Allen, Jeremy Bamber, Kevin Lane, Michael Brown, Robert Knapp, William Kenealy, Glyn Razzell, Willie Gage, Kate Keaveney, Michael Stone, Michael Attwooll, John Roden, Nick Tucker, Karl Watson, Terry Allen, Richard Southern, Jamil Chowdhary, Jake Mawhinney, Peter Hannigan, Ihsan Ulhaque, Richard Roy Allan, Sam Cole, Carl Kenute Gowe, Eddie Hampton, Tony Hyland, Ray Gilbert, Ishtiaq Ahmed.

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MOJUK: Newsletter 'Inside Out' No 441 (05/09/2013)

Justice for Patrick Docherty

On Tuesday March 1st 2005 at Kilmarnock High Court, Patrick Docherty and Brendan Dixon were convicted after a 5 week trial of the murder of Margaret Irvine. Both men were given life sentences for the crime, although there was no evidence to show that they were involved. A 3rd accused, Steven Colin Miller, received a 'Not Proven' verdict.

There was no physical or forensic evidence linking any of the accused to the crime. While the police did recover DNA and footprints from the crime scene, the DNA was of an unknown male and the footprints were too large to belong to any of the accused.

The murder took place on the 28th September 2003. Margaret Irvine, a 91 year old lady from Galston, was last seen alive at 7:30am by a home help. When another home help carer arrived at 4:50pm, she found Mrs Irvine gagged and her hands tied behind her back. The cause of death was reported as asphyxia, due to her choking on the duster that had been placed in her mouth.

The original suspect in the case was the 3rd accused, Steven Colin Miller, had met Brendan Dixon in HMP Kilmarnock. Brendan Dixon was in for smashing his girlfriends' windows and Steven Colin Miller was in for non payment of a fine. During this period of imprisonment, Steven Colin Miller was assaulted by another prisoner who believed, that it was Miller who had murdered Mrs Irvine. Brendan Dixon told Steven Colin Miller that, in fact the police were trying to 'pin' the murder of Mrs Irvine on Patrick Docherty and himself.

Steven Colin Miller had already been interviewed several times by the police regarding the murder of Mrs Irvine. At no time had he mentioned that he had seen Docherty or Dixon in the area where Mrs Irvine lived. On his release from HMP Kilmarnock, he made another police statement, this time suggesting that he had seen both Docherty and Dixon in the deceased driveway. Following this statement and this 'new information' both Docherty and Dixon were charged with the murder of Mrs Irvine.

10 months later, Colin Miller was also charged with the murder after the Crown had decided that, Mr Miller couldn't have seen both Docherty and Dixon on the driveway from the place where he said he was standing. Ironically, a witness (a neighbour) later told the court that the only person seen at the deceased address that day was in fact Steven Colin Miller!

Mr Miller was seen in the driveway at 6:00am and again at 7:00am. Both Docherty and Dixon both gave alibi's stating that neither of them were anywhere near the area of Galston on the day of the murder. Despite this and other evidence, both Patrick Docherty and Brendan Dixon were convicted. Docherty was given a life sentence with a minimum tariff of 25 years plus an additional 1 year for contempt of court for saying to the jury 'hope that you can sleep at night cause you have just swore my life away for nothing'. Brendan Dixon also received a life sentence with a minimum tariff of 25 years plus an additional 5 years concurrent for 'defeating the ends of justice'.

Patrick Docherty lost his appeal against conviction in 2010 and refused to appeal sentence because as he said at the time 'the sentence is irrelevant as I did not do the crime'. Brendan Dixon's appeal was continued until April 2012 and was then refused.

Patrick Docherty took his case to SCCRC (Scottish Criminal Case Review Commission)

and following a 13 month review of all the issues raised in the 2005 court case decided on the 5th August 2013 that 'Mr Docherty may have suffered a Miscarriage of Justice'. The SCCRC have now referred Patrick Docherty's case back to the Appeal Court in Edinburgh.

After hearing the news that the SCCRC were sending his case back to the Appeal Court, Patrick said 'My wife and my family have not had justice, and will keep fighting for as long as it takes to get justice'. Patrick Docherty: 17841, HMP Shotts, Cantrell Road, Shotts, ML7 4LE

Media Mischief on Reporting of Dale Cregan

On the 26th August the Guardian reported that Dale Cregan, 'is refusing food at HMP Full Sutton, near York, reportedly in an attempt to get transferred to Strangeways prison in Manchester, to be near his family.' This was completely false, Dale has been in HMP Manchester since his arrest conviction and sentence. He is on 'Hunger Strike' in protest at being held in segregation in HMP Manchester, instead of being in the general population in the prison; at the moment he is in Health Care unit, where his condition is believed to be serious.

Police Officer Found Guilty of Assault on Prisoner

MailOnline 27/08/13

A Metropolitan Police officer was today (27/08/13) found guilty of punching a suspect in the face after he spat in the officer's mouth. Pc Rohan Scarlett, 47, launched the assault on Andrew Uba as he put him in a police van while transferring him from Islington police station to custody in Lewisham, east London. The burly 6ft 1in officer struggled with walking reluctant Uba to the van on February 20 and was helped by a colleague, he said. But as he put Uba inside the van, without warning, Uba spat at close distance in his face, Scarlett told Highbury Corner Magistrates' Court. Scarlett, a former nightclub doorman and security guard, said he did not want to be assaulted again and hit Uba to 'distract him' from spitting a second time. Scarlett, who denied common assault, wiped his face of the spit, opened the van door then intentionally 'launched' himself at Uba, punching him twice, magistrates heard. Delivering the verdict, chair of the bench Sue Rose said: 'We do not accept that the defendant honestly believed that he needed to use force to defend himself in these circumstances.'

'Specialist Intervention' at Strangeways Prison - August 2013

Unable to break my resolve and provoke me into any violent reaction after three and a half years at HMP Woodhill's notorious Close Supervision Centre (CSC), I was transferred to the Specialist Intervention Unit (SIU) at HMP Manchester on 13 June 2013.

Initially, people would be forgiven for thinking that finally getting off the CSC was a good thing, but when it is discovered that the move was due to Woodhill staff 'needing respite', having burned themselves out with their daily actions of brutality, the move is immediately seen in a different light.

Since my arrival here, things have gone from bad to worse. The unit itself is simply six cells which used to form part of the segregation unit, walled off with a temporary partition. It holds a maximum of four prisoners in conditions which could accurately be described as a tomb, with no natural light or ventilation reaching its depths. The temporary partition is being rebuilt further back to expand capacity to eight cells for six prisoners, and the old wall is being knocked down, meaning that the sound of drills and sledgehammers is a regular occurrence.

The structural environment is one thing, but the atmosphere of oppression takes things to a darker level. The unit is operated by segregation staff who carry that same mentality through both sides of the divide – 'prisoners should get nothing and shut up'. No senior manager

Doncaster, where 729 prisoners were affected, and Birmingham where 670 shared.

The worst-affected prison in England and Wales was said to be HMP Wandsworth, where on a typical day 835 prisoners shared a cell designed for one person, which the charity also pointed out contain an open toilet. The figures show HMP Altcourse in Liverpool and London's HMP Pentonville each had 659 inmates on average sharing cells designed for one person, while prisons in Preston, Manchester, Nottingham, Durham, and Elmley in Kent were also highlighted.

Frances Crook, Howard League chief executive, said the "real state" of overcrowding was "far worse than anyone imagined". She said: "It should come as little surprise that such crowded conditions leave staff hugely overstretched, especially as more are being laid off. This means there are little to no opportunities for prisoners to work, learn or take courses to turn them away from crime. If the Ministry of Justice is serious about reducing reoffending it must tackle overcrowding now. Successive governments have peddled the lie that you can build your way out of a prisons overcrowding problem. While public services are being cut, ministers should look at more effective and affordable solutions. They need to address the fact the prison population has doubled in just 20 years and move people on to community sentences."

Figures published by the Ministry of Justice show that jails held an average of just over 85,000 prisoners between April 2012 and March this year. Ministers said all prisons were run within "safe population levels". Prisons Minister Jeremy Wright said older prisons were being replaced with newer accommodation that was cheaper to run and the government was tackling reoffending. He added: "Let's be clear what overcrowding in prison actually means. Typically it means having to share a cell rather than have one to yourself. Prisoners are treated humanely but prison is not somewhere that anyone should be comfortable about going back to. All prisons have safe population levels and have capacity to take those sent there by the courts."

But the Howard League said: "Official government prison population announcements mask the full extent of overcrowding because they do not state how many cells are holding more prisoners than they are designed to."

Sexual Activity With Detainee: Officer Jailed

Police Oracle, 03/09/13

A former Dedicated Detention Officer who served with the Metropolitan Police is starting a two-year custodial term after "engaging in sexual conduct" with a detainee while on duty. Southwark Crown Court was told how Kyle Adams was arrested after the victim reported the matter to the custody sergeant at Bethnal Green Police Station on October 3 last year – the defendant was confronted and arrested hours later. The court heard how the 24-year-old police staff member was suspended two days later. He was charged on April 11 and pleaded guilty to misconduct in a public office when he appeared at a court hearing in July this year. Adams will serve half of his sentence on licence. He has now resigned from force.

Mum Busted For Breastfeeding On Moped

Police Oracle, 03/09/13

A mum in a hurry boobed in central China when she breastfed her young son while they sped through traffic on a moped. Witnesses say the tot - aged about 18 months - was crying as the bike weaved through busy roads in Yuzhou, Henan province. "So she suddenly lifted up her T-shirt, whipped out her breast and started to feed him on the move," said one startled driver. But the impromptu meals on wheels earned the mother a ticking off from local police. "She was risking her life, her son's life and the lives of all the other road users," said a police spokesman. "We told her that if she carried on we would confiscate her bike," they added.

Admissions Made During Terrorism Stops Should Not Be Evidence At Trial

By - Jack Sommers - Police Oracle, 30th August 2013

Admissions made by suspects who are held under counter-terrorism powers at ports should not be admissible as evidence in subsequent trials, the High Court has suggested. While judges rejected an appeal against the conviction of Sylvie Beghal following a stop under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act, they said the law could be revised so that admissions made in interviews immediately afterwards are inadmissible in any criminal trial.

Ms Beghal was stopped by Leicestershire Constabulary officers at East Midlands Airport in January 2011. She was returning from France after visiting her husband, who had been imprisoned there for terrorism offences. She was asked about her family and financial circumstances during the interview with officers but refused to answer most of the questions. She was released and later pleaded guilty to a charge of failing to comply with her duty under Schedule 7.

Though the court rejected her appeal against the conviction, the judges pointed out Schedule 7 questioning is conducted without a formal caution, under compulsion and, in this case of Ms Beghal, without a lawyer present. Lord Justice Gross said: "It is one thing to conclude that the Schedule 7 powers of examination neither engage nor violate a defendant's rights, it is another to conclude that there is no room for improvement. We would urge those concerned to consider a legislative amendment, introducing a statutory bar to the introduction of Schedule 7 admissions in a subsequent criminal trial."

The judges noted that Section 78 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act made it unlikely a court would admit a Schedule 7 interview as evidence. But Lord Justice Gross continued: "The terms of any such legislation would require careful reflection, having regard to the legitimate amendment of all parties but, given the sensitivities to which the powers give rise, there would be at least apparent attraction in clarifying legislation putting the matter beyond doubt."

Ex Prisons Boss, Sir Martin Narey, Says No One Cared About Suicides

The former director general of the Prison Service, Sir Martin Narey, has spoken of his frustration in trying to make reforms to stop suicides in jails – claiming "nobody gave a toss". Sir Martin, who later became chief executive of the children's charity Barnardo's and is now the Government's adoption adviser, told The Independent of his devastation at the death of 19-year-old Zahid Mubarek at the hands of his racist psychopath cellmate Robert Stewart in Feltham Prison in March 2000. "It was a catastrophe," said Sir Martin, who later offered his resignation over the murder and is widely respected for his time in charge. "It captured a little bit of what sort of a place Feltham was," he added. "Do you know, 594 people killed themselves on my watch; 19 of them were children. And nobody gave a toss." Sir Martin said the Prison Officers Association "resisted any balance in terms of making things better for the young people" there. But the body's former chairman, Andy Darken, said Sir Martin was "entirely wrong".

'One-In-Four' Prison Inmates In Overcrowded Cells *BBC News, 2 September 2013*

Close to a quarter of all prisoners in England and Wales were kept in overcrowded cells in the year to April, a prison reform charity has said. The Howard League for Penal Reform said figures it obtained via a Freedom of Information request showed about 19,140 inmates on average were made to share a cell designed for one person. A further 777 were made to sleep three to a cell in rooms designed for two. Other prisons which saw several inmates in a single cell included HMP

or governor ever wanders this far to oversee the treatment of the unit's victims, too afraid of what they might find. The Independent Monitoring Board appears to either not know of the existence of the SIU, or not want to know. Aware of all this, segregation officers are free to dish out their version of what prison should be like.

I have lost over a stone and a half since this place became my home. The food portions are tiny and the food hardly eatable. As for purchasing my own food to supplement my diet, with the £4 that I am allowed to spend per week of my own money, and needing to make phone calls, that is not feasible. Anyone who knows about the cost of prisoners' phone calls will be aware of how little talk time £4 buys you, but when landline numbers are barred from my PIN, so only more expensive mobiles can be dialled, it works out to 20 minutes for £4. But that's ok. I can survive with my regular visits, right? If you class two 30 minute visits per month in closed conditions behind a glass screen as enough, then you must be working for Her Majesty's Prison Service!

So, letter writing it is then. If only my mail actually reached me in a reasonable time or even at all, one letter having taken over 40 days and others are being stolen by the prison. Even my legal mail isn't safe – as well as also being stolen, they have begun to demand that all legal mail is read prior to being issued by them, or I cannot receive it.

So what else can I do to avoid all this abuse? In my cell I have nothing but a few legal papers and mail; the rest of my property has not been allowed. No TV, radio, kettle, hair clippers, nail clippers, religious items or books. That means no hot water or means to keep my hair or nails trimmed. The only 'facilities' I do have are a bed, table to eat from, sink and toilet, which are all within touching distance of each other.

I do get to leave my cell, when they feel like letting me out, but not before being made to stand at the back wall and following a ridiculous set of 'protocols'. I am then searched and 'escorted' to wherever I may be going, which is a very limited number of places. I have a maximum of one hour in the exercise yard when they let me, which is taken in isolation from other prisoners. I then get a maximum of 30 minutes to use the phone and shower under cold water, again when they let me. I have been refused food, as further unofficial punishment but the guy next door to me has been living off bread and water for months so I guess that's accepted practice here.

My solicitor has written to the prison, as have some of my friends and family, but either no response or a pathetic one has been returned. I have submitted complaints but the Acting Governor Hannah Lane has refused to acknowledge or intervene, showing that she is either colluding and actively involved in my treatment, or that she is a useless failure pretending to be in charge. Either way, she is responsible. She cannot continue to ignore the calls from outside the prison walls to get me out of this hell-hole, and copies of all letters to her are being sent to MPs to pressure her further. The more letters received the more pressure she will face, which is why I call on the support of all decent human beings to help me. Please write to your MP to complain about my treatment and demand I be returned to a normal unit where I can be treated with at least some level of humanity and compassion.

As most people who know me are aware, I suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and going through such traumatic experience on a daily basis only exacerbates my condition, so at the least, putting me here in the first place was an act of deliberate disability discrimination by those in charge. Please help. Otherwise, I will be left with nothing but the company of my fellow victims of the Specialist Intervention Unit, if only we weren't banned from speaking to one another, under threat of punishment...

Kevan Thakrar A4907AE: SIU – HMP Manchester, Southall Street, Manchester M60 9AH

UN Expert Calls On US to Ban Prolonged, Indefinite Solitary Detention

As inmates in California detention centres approach their fifth consecutive week on hunger strike against cruel, inhuman and degrading prison conditions, a United Nations right expert today urged the Government of the United States to abolish the use of prolonged or indefinite solitary confinement. There are approximately 80,000 prisoners in the United States who are subjected to solitary confinement; nearly 12,000 are in isolation in the state of California.

“Even if solitary confinement is applied for short periods of time, it often causes mental and physical suffering or humiliation, amounting to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,” UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Juan E. Méndez said in a news release, “and if the resulting pain or sufferings are severe, solitary confinement even amounts to torture. I urge the US Government to adopt concrete measures to eliminate the use of prolonged or indefinite solitary confinement under all circumstances,” Mr. Méndez said. He added that the US should absolutely ban solitary confinement of any duration for juveniles, persons with psychosocial or other disabilities or health conditions, pregnant women, women with infants and breastfeeding mothers as well as those serving a life sentence and prisoners on death row.

Since 8 July, thousands of prisoners detained in nine different prisons have gone on hunger strike to peacefully protest prison conditions. They are demanding a change in the state’s excessive use of solitary confinement as a disciplinary measure, and the subjugation of prisoners to solitary confinement for prolonged periods of time by authorities under the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

In California’s maximum security prison in Pelican Bay, more than 400 prisoners have been held in solitary confinement for over a decade, and the average time a prisoner spends in solitary confinement is 7.5 years. Often that time is spent in an 8-foot-by-12 foot cell lacking minimum ventilation and natural light. The prisoners remain in their cells for 22 to 23 hours per day, with one hour of exercise alone in a cement lot.

In the context of reported reprisals against inmates on hunger strike and a District Judge’s approval of Californian authorities’ request to engage to force-feed prisoners under certain circumstances, the UN Special Rapporteur also reminded the authorities that “it is not acceptable to use threats of forced feeding or other types of physical or psychological coercion against individuals who have opted for the extreme recourse of a hunger strike.”

In March, Mr. Méndez called on the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to investigate the practise of solitary confinement and its harmful effects in the Americas and urged stronger regulation of its use. In a 2011 global report to the UN General Assembly, Mr. Méndez called solitary confinement a “harsh measure which is contrary to rehabilitation, the aim of the penitentiary system.” Independent experts or special rapporteurs are appointed by the Human Rights Council to examine and report back, in an unpaid capacity, on specific human rights themes. Source UN News Centre

Armed Suspect Gets More Than He Bargained for in Shop Robbery

More than 1.5 million people have watched CCTV footage of the raid which was posted on the video sharing website. It shows two robbers pull up on a motorbike, the passenger gets off and walks into the shop - where he apparently showed a gun to the shopkeeper. There is a pause for a few moments, while the driver waits outside for his partner in crime to return. But, in a surprise twist, the robber is suddenly thrown through the shop window - scaring his partner into riding off without him. The robber, who had clearly picked on the wrong victim, brushed himself down and made good his escape, his liberty - if not his dignity - intact.

Blair Brothers 'Threatened To Torch Police Station'

Twin brothers who allegedly doused the front office of a West Midlands Police station in petrol and threatened to set the building on fire are to face crown court in the coming months. During a recent court appearance, Birmingham magistrates heard claims that Robert and Joseph Blair – both 49 – had emptied a canister of fuel in the reception area of Bournville police station. The two unemployed brothers have been charged with criminal damage with intent to endanger life. It is alleged that the offence took place in the early hours of August 22. Robert Blair, of Benley Court in Weoley Castle, and Joseph Blair, whose address was given as Baldwin Road, Kings Norton, were both remanded in custody. Both twins are now due to appear before Birmingham Crown Court on December

Hertfordshire Police Apologise For Not Believing ‘Enslaved’ Maid

Paul Peachey, Independent, 29/08/13

A police force has apologised and paid compensation to an enslaved maid after officers failed to believe her story and sent her back to her wealthy middle-class abusers. Hertfordshire police admitted that it had failed to protect the 40-year-old woman despite her pleas for help – and even used one of her slave masters to act as an interpreter when she tried to tell how she had suffered years of abuse while passed around three families.

When police declined to help and returned her to the family, the victim was attacked and told she would be buried in the back garden of the wealthy couple’s multimillion pound home for spoiling their name. Three people were finally convicted in April after the case was investigated by another force after years of horrific abuse at three different homes that saw her beaten and raped.

Optician Shashi Obhrai forced the woman, who cannot be named for legal reasons, to work for 17 hours a day, seven days a week and then threatened her at knifepoint after she went to the police. Her husband Balam, an IT consultant, was initially charged but did not stand trial for health reasons.

However, the victim’s accusations were ignored and her case was only taken seriously after two charities passed on the details to Scotland Yard’s specialist trafficking unit, which helped to secure a conviction. The woman, who cannot be named for legal reason, received the apology last week. “I am writing to convey my sincere apologies for Hertfordshire Constabulary’s failures in relation to your allegations of forced domestic labour made in 2008,” the force said in the letter obtained by the rights charity Liberty.

Theresa May Rejects Domestic Violence Inquiry Despite Regular Deaths

Home Secretary Theresa May has rejected demands for a public inquiry into the police’s handling of cases of domestic violence, which kills two women every week. Mrs May wants a review by inspectors into how police respond to reports of such violence, but she said that a public inquiry would take too long. “There are still too many women up and down the country who suffer from domestic abuse,” Mrs May told the BBC. “It’s better to be using the tools we have at the moment to make these changes rather than introducing a long, lengthy public inquiry.”

The family of Maria Stubbings, murdered by her former partner after repeated failings by police to protect her, has led demands for a public inquiry. Ms Stubbings, 50, was killed in 2008 by Marc Chivers, who had previously served time in Germany for killing another woman.

The domestic violence charity Refuge welcomed Mrs May’s plans for an inspection but said more needed to be done. “Refuge strongly believes that a public inquiry is needed to establish what is going wrong and why so many abused women are still losing their lives,” said chief executive Sandra Horley.

Paul Peachey, Independent, 29/08/13

Fraud Alleged In Serco Prisoner Escort Contracts *Cahal Milmo, Independent, 28/08/13*

Serco, one of Britain's largest companies, is to be investigated for fraud after the Government and the services giant called in police to examine irregularities in records kept for its £285m prisoner escorting contract. Justice Secretary Chris Grayling announced that the company has agreed to repay past profits from its £40m-a-year contract and forgo all future earnings after an investigation suggested records relating to the delivery of prisoners to courts had been falsified by members of its staff. Mr Grayling said the review by Ministry of Justice (MoJ) officials had not found evidence that knowledge of the alleged malpractice reached the boardroom of the company, which last year had revenues of £4.8bn, but warned Serco that it faces being frozen out of all future public contracts.

Serco is one of two companies, along with G4S, which are also being investigated for allegedly over-charging the taxpayer in the "low tens of millions" to monitor non-existent electronic tags on prisoners, some of which had been assigned to dead detainees. The Prisoner Escort and Custodial Services (PECS) contract is one of a gamut of public sector deals held in Britain by Serco, which earns hundreds of millions of pounds a year for providing services ranging from border controls to managing London's cycle hire scheme.

The MoJ said an audit of Serco's contract for transporting prisoners between court and jails in London and East Anglia had found "evidence of potentially fraudulent behaviour" by employees. The alleged fraud concerns the recording of prisoners having been delivered to courts when they had not - a key measure of performance for the contract. An audit is understood to have produced evidence that the figures may have been manipulated to enhance performance and earnings. Mr Grayling said: "It has become very clear there has been a culture within parts of Serco that has been totally unacceptable, and actions which need to be investigated by the police. We have not seen evidence of systemic malpractice up to board level, but we have been clear with the company - unless it undertakes a rapid process of major change... then it will not win public contracts in the future."

Chris Hyman, Chief Executive of Serco Group plc, said: "The Justice Secretary is right to expect the highest standards of performance from Serco. I am deeply saddened and appalled at the mis-reporting of data by a small number of employees on the contract. This is a very serious matter for the customer and for us. We will not tolerate any wrongdoing and that is why we have referred this matter to the Police. It is also why I have immediately initiated a programme of change and corporate renewal. The overwhelming majority of our people work hard every day to deliver important public services and will share my deep concern about this matter."

Rikers Island Prison Cheese Sandwich Row Sparks Riot

A riot involving 60 inmates of New York's notorious Rikers Island prison was started by an argument - over a grilled cheese sandwich. Members of the Dominican Trinitarians were said to be upset when their rivals refused to let them cook the snack on a kitchen hot plate. In footage of the bloody brawl, prisoners could be seen throwing chairs and duelling with mop sticks. The confrontation was so violent stunned officers wearing riot gear could only stand and watch. Boiling water was reportedly thrown and eleven inmates were injured in the fight, some with serious stab wounds, according to the New York Daily News. The confrontation only ended when both sides agreed to stop after 45 minutes. Correction Officers Benevolent Association president Norman Seabrook said: "We don't have the staff to break it up. "The officers certainly can't go in there with just three officers against 60 inmates." A prison spokesperson said: "There is every indication that this situation could have been handled differently and that this incident went on for far too long."

'Who Polices The Police?'

Written by Ken Fero, August 21, 2013

Nearly a year ago, an inquest jury at Southwark Coroner's Court gave a damning verdict about the death of Sean Rigg in Brixton Police Station back on 21 August 2008. The jury of ordinary citizens were highly critical stating that the police failures to respond to initial 999 calls were 'unacceptable and inappropriate' and that the 'level of force used on Sean Rigg whilst he was restrained was unsuitable'. In fact it had emerged during the inquest that Sean had been restrained in the prone position for at least eight minutes and that this had contributed to his death. The jury in its narrative verdict described the police actions on that day as 'questionable' and 'inadequate'. The jury vindicated the family's belief that the police restraint and neglect had caused Sean's death.

The very manner of the death, exposed by the CCTV footage of the custody 'cage' which showed the last desperate minutes of Sean's life, was shocking. The impact of the jury verdict, and the disturbing evidence that had emerged, has since led to a series of inquiries. Criminal charges against some of the officers 'are being considered'. For a brief period, at the time, the name of Sean Rigg became widely known, just as the names of Azelle Rodney and Jimmy Mubenga are current today. Will there be more inquiries leading to more recommendations? Is there a pattern here that we should be aware of? Let's look at some figures. Since the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) went into operation over eight years ago they have investigated 827 such deaths. The number of successful prosecutions of police officers for these deaths is 0. Yes, not a single successful prosecution by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) who must base their case on the evidence gathered by the IPCC.

It's no wonder that the families are forced to start justice campaigns when faced with these odds. I have been asked many times why I decided to make a film about Sean Rigg. The answer is simple - it was impossible not to. I have a history of making films with a collective called Migrant Media and all of those films follow the struggles of families and communities against injustice and human rights abuses. In 2001, we released a feature documentary called 'Injustice' that looked at the deaths of a number of young black men in police custody. The film became very controversial when police officers attempted to suppress it, claiming it was libellous and eventually, after a long battle, the film made an international breakthrough when CNN picked up the story. Injustice went onto a cinema release, won many festival prizes and helped to force a reform of the investigation process into custody deaths. Since then we have been filming a follow up to Injustice, which is due for completion next year. But the Rigg case demanded a film of its own, purely because of the resilient campaign that Sean's family undertook for justice. After spending some time investigating the IPCC it became clear to us that the organisation has utterly failed in its duty in the Rigg case. The question is why?

Without going into great detail, the IPCC investigation was shoddy to say the least. Incompetence, or perhaps complicity, led to fatal errors in the investigation, too numerous to mention. The initial involvement of the IPCC was to put out a press statement - later retracted after complaints from the family - that Sean had died in Kings College Hospital and had only passed through the police station. In August last year, four years after Sean's death, this attempt at deflection ended in public humiliation for the IPCC when the jury took the unprecedented step of striking out the hospital name from the record. Instead they marked down the place of death as 'Brixton Police Station' - that was clear to anybody who saw the CCTV footage of Sean's life ebbing away as he lay on the custody cage floor with the boots of police officers surrounding him. The damning inquest verdict was only possible because of analysis of endless hours of CCTV footage by Sean's siblings Wayne, Samantha and Marcia. The

inquest exposed the actions, and ensuing lies, of the police officers involved in this horrific case because of the tenaciousness of the Riggs and their legal team, led by barrister Leslie Thomas and solicitor Daniel Machover. During the inquest it emerged that police officers had openly lied in court and, in March this year, two police officers and one retired police officer were arrested on suspicion of perjury and of perverting the course of justice. The three are out on bail and time will tell if they will be charged and put on trial. Whether there will be any further charges to officers in relation to Sean's brutal death also remains to be seen, but, if it had been left in the hands of the IPCC, this case would have been closed long ago.

Who Polices The Police? raises deep questions about the proximity between the IPCC and the police but it also offers some answers. When people watch the film they are shocked at how poor the IPCC investigation into Sean's death was, but sadly this is very typical. The IPCC was formed after the PCA (Police Complaints Authority) had been thoroughly discredited because of a lack of independence in its investigating of police misconduct and wrongdoing. The Rigg case is one of many others we have filmed since 2003. In its early days the IPCC indicated that there were to be some improvements but these were minimal and the situation today is that the IPCC is untenable. The answer as to whether it is worth saving and how it should function rests in the hands of the Rigg family and the families of many hundreds of others that have died since the IPCC was created. My perspective on what is needed is that, whatever its name and whoever staffs it, the organisation must be able to undertake robust and rigorous investigations. After all, in these cases, we are dealing with the most serious abuses of power by police officers, and they need to be dealt with in a proper manner. Officers that commit serious crimes need to receive serious punishment, including going to jail. This is a minimum requirement for the bereaved and will also bring about a reduction in custody deaths. There can be no more effective deterrent than a prison cell to a police officer that uses violence instead of using his brain. The current 'get out of jail' card that officers carry in their pocket needs to be taken out of the equation.

Over the five years since Sean's death, and while we were making the film, the family of Sean Rigg became investigators because the IPCC failed to do the job. It cannot be right when members of the public are forced to undertake the role that state bodies like the IPCC is tasked to do. The families of those that die in police custody simply want a proper investigation in the way that we all would if somebody we knew died. But because the police are implicated, involved and – in some cases – responsible for these deaths, the rules change, collusion seeps in and evidence is tainted. It's clear that there are many people in the community that could do a more thorough job than the existing IPCC commissioners and investigators.

There has been a very sustained period of criticism of the IPCC from its handling of the investigation into the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes in 2005 to the more recent shooting of Mark Duggan. Currently there are a number of reviews, internal and external, of the IPCC partly brought on by the Rigg inquest which exposed what amounts to criminal negligence in its handling of the Rigg investigation. The new IPCC head, Anne Owers, has gone on the offensive, but it's unclear to what purpose. Evidence is being gathered and many individuals and lobbying groups are making submissions. In May of this year Dr Silvia Casale led a review of the IPCC investigation into Sean's death and made seventeen recommendations. The most glaring criticism of all being the simple fact that the IPCC had utterly failed to carry out a robust and independent investigation – in other words, to do its duty. The IPCC has entered a period of chronic public and political scrutiny brought on by its own unforgivable

Abused Foster Teen Who Hung Himself “Wanted to be White”

Independent report reveals tragic life of suicide teenager: Sexually-Abused as a child and shunned by the education system, a teenage foster boy was driven to take his own life. Alex Kelly, 15, was found on the floor of his cell at Cookham Wood Youth Offending Institution, Kent, with trainer laces tied around his neck, after hanging himself, on January 24 2012. Pronounced dead the following day, Kelly was serving a ten month sentence for theft and burglary from a vehicle.

A recent review by the independent Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children's Board has unveiled the tragic circumstances surrounding Kelly's – also known as Child F - life in the lead up to his death. As with any death in custody, the circumstances are tragic, but the story behind Kelly's upbringing is particularly saddening. Kelly grew up alongside his three siblings in the East end of London, before they were all taken into the care of social services due to neglect and emotional abuse. According to Kelly's own recollections, his living environment was both unsafe and chaotic, underlined by the raping he received by a member of his family over a period of time. Fostered to a white family in Rochester, Kent, Kelly had to adjust to life in a predominately white neighbourhood. The son of an African, Kelly viewed himself as a white boy, but in his new hometown he was identified and treated like a young black boy. This confusion spiralled into disruptive behaviour in school before he was eventually excluded aged just 14, pushing him to a life of crime including theft and assault.

Among the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children's Board's report findings it was shown that Kelly's allocated social worker was too inexperienced. In particular, the report highlights a lack of monitoring of Kelly's behaviour as well as a lack of skills for dealing with children who have been sexually abused. In Kelly's case, he was also exposed to a variety of other stressors and difficult circumstances, therefore demanding a supervisor of substantial experience and knowledge in dealing with such a vulnerable child.

As recent research into the impact of sexual abuse on child by the American Psychological Association has shown, “typically, children who experience the most serious types of abuse involving family members and high degrees of physical force – exhibit behaviour problems ranging from separation anxiety to posttraumatic stress disorder.”

Entering youth custody in October 2011, Kelly quickly began to withdraw, self-harming and threatening to kill himself. His state was so serious that prison officers would check on his well-being five times each hour. Speaking about the prevalence of self-harm in youth institutions, Sean Duggan, Chief Executive at the Centre for Mental Health, said: “Children with difficult family circumstances, who have seen domestic violence, been excluded from school, or who have spent time in care tend to ‘cluster’ in young offender institutions. It's these children who are much more likely to self-harm.” He added: “That too many of the most vulnerable young people are still being given custodial sentences instead of the care and treatment that they need.”

In an interview with East London Advertiser, the Tower Hamlets Education, Social Care and Wellbeing's interim director Anne Canning said “We apologise unreservedly for the mistakes that were made in his care and support.” She added: “He wanted to be white, but he couldn't understand why he was put in care. He was confused and distressed – he had a right to be, with his early life experience.” Following Kelly's death, Canning says that the council has made a series of changes to prevent similar incidences occurring in the future: “We are now working more closely and more regularly with the partner agencies, which have a responsibility for looked-after-children who are placed outside the borough, to monitor the effectiveness of their work. We have also launched an improved system of making sure that complex cases are monitored by a senior member of staff.”

Written by Jermaine Haughton for The Voice

Soft Skills and Barriers to Employment *Andy Bain/David Pritchard - Works for Freedom*

In recent years there has been growing discussion centred on the need to work more effectively with those who have been sanctioned by the criminal justice system. Invariably the loudest voices call for job-placements or re-training to enable people to take on roles where there is a skills shortage. Yet, just as simply, it may also require offering opportunities to gain or improve an often far more important and yet frequently neglected 'soft skills' set.

Soft skills (defined variously as 'skills, abilities and traits that pertain to personality, attitude and behaviour rather than to formal or technical knowledge'; Moss & Tilly). are never more important to employability than for those individuals from a hard-to-reach background. These individuals often have low levels of education, little or no employment history, are disproportionately from ethnic minorities, and/or have a history of involvement with the criminal justice system. Yet, Nickson et al., make the point that in terms of entry level employment it is often the soft skills that make the difference, rather than the usual requirement for qualifications and previous experience. Yet whilst there are many organisations across the sectors who are working with hard-to-reach clients who are unable or do not qualify to undertake accredited learning, it is something which is frequently missed from the funding stream.

Those sanctioned by the criminal justice system comprise an important and interesting group for discussions of employment, as this group exhibits the multiple deficits of both soft and hard skills variously reported by academic, NGOs, and ministerial departments. Indeed, it has been variously reported that a large proportion of those leaving custody have very low educational standards. Rhodes has added to this suggesting that sustainable employment can help reduce the chances of returning to custody. However, National Audit Office figures estimated that only 10 per cent of those leaving custody were in employment during the 13 weeks following release. And yet the revolution offered is still directed toward gainful employment and accredited learning. Directing funding in this way often neglects the argument that it also requires engagement with a system from which the individual is regularly excluded at an early age.

Concerns have recently been voiced by Chris Grayling who suggests that in order to aid the journey toward change, the individual needs to be supported and empowered to motivate the right future choices, as much as being punished for past behaviours. However, it would not be appropriate to seek a quick fix, and nor can it be achieved. Instead what is needed is a strategy for change, one which includes employment as an end goal, but which sets targets to achieve recognisable change in the skills level for the individual. Those who have been involved in the criminal justice system experience the same barriers when faced with unemployment levels in excess of 2 million people. In addition, they are also faced with the additional barriers of discrimination, social stigma and alienation associated with having a criminal record. However the majority have been convicted of petty and minor offences, which is often compounded by the associated lack of skills, qualifications, employment history and experience.

Those leaving custody or who have a record are much more likely to gain employment if they were equipped with the relevant skills required by local employers. Crucially, Nickson et al. argue that these 'relevant skills' are quite often the social skills that many of us take for granted, appearance, attitude, work ethic, team work, and communication, concluding that 'the focus on qualifications ignores some key issues in skill formation within the labour market'.

What we have tried to highlight here is that if barriers are to be successfully broken down and if the individual is to be successfully equipped for employment there needs to be a greater concentration upon the broader, social and life skills if there is to be a sense of success in tackling social exclusion and skilling people for life and work.

lack of vigour and an inability to perform its functions in an independent manner. In the meantime deaths in police custody, and their investigations, are continuing under its remit.

Who Polices The Police? is an investigation of the Rigg case but it's also a much wider exploration of the issues involved, and the use of experimental techniques and poetry allow a more personal, and political response. The film is now making a contribution to a much larger debate and a number of media organisations have been forced to wake up and look at this as state crime. As Sean's brother Wayne Rigg reflects in the film, "If a police officer commits fraud or does something like that they may end up going to prison, but when it comes to someone dying in their custody it seems like whatever agencies are involved – the CPS, the IPCC – the government, the state does everything they can to cover it up because, who protects them? The police protect them, so they protect the police." After almost five years of campaigning, the family of Sean Rigg are beginning to get the justice they have been demanding. Time will tell just how far the state will go in giving them the justice that they deserve.

Volver - *Paul Blackburn, Innocent hostage of the English government 1978-2003*

How long, how many long, long nights had I waited for that knock on the door!

The memory of footsteps echoing the landings, the rattle of keys & the crashing open of the door as the pack of hounds rushed you. Was it a ghosting? Was it a beating? Would they get too excited & drunk on their absolute power & go too far? Though "Positional asphyxiation" seems to be the favoured weapon of abuse & murder by the authorities these days???

The walls closed in & the bright morning sunshine turned dark Gray & claustrophobic. The terror of a trapped animal gripped me & finally fear overcomes logic & I flee for my life! The chase is on! Nowhere else to run so I take to the rooftops, from one to another, as the hounds from hell, the dogs from Animal Farm bay their glee as the sight their prey & the blood lust rises. They can taste the kill on the wind!

The body shakes & breath rasps harshly, no food for weeks & no sleep have taken their toll, left me starving & broken as you live the high life on blood money before you led the dogs to my door!

My Innocence is stripped away in an administrative nightmare. Whether by accident or design? They will have their revenge they will have my blood. For the loss of my innocence is their salvation, their rehabilitation!

I have no fear of the dogs; they are what they are, as I am, as you are! I don't fear death but life! I don't fear being alone but the company of those who believe they are free, those who reviled me & now absolve themselves. The sheep that bleat whatever you tell them as long as it assuages their own guilt! The Jeremy Kyle generation that would murder a Paediatrician in a spelling mistake!

Step forward now those of you who did not condemn me, step forward now those of you who did not revile me & set your hearts & minds against me, step forward now those of you who would not have seen me hang as a monster! Not one of you!

The body gives out, what once was my armour is now a dead weight, wasted away & exhausted! Flight is my only salvation for I know already what awaits me in the cells in the dead of night! I jump from the rooftops & into the river as the dog's circle below, brave in their numbers, pack mentality taking over from their natural cowardice! The cold water hits me like a train but I can't stop running from certainty into uncertainty, it's my only chance, sheer terror drives me on! The shock of the cold forces all breath from my body, gasping & gulping air to feed muscles screaming for oxygen & fuel, there is none!

The dogs pace the far bank, arms folded & impatient you watch but this kill will not be yours & I laugh at you, a freak in a natural world. I will not hear again the heavy sexually excited

breathing as you & your pack crash the cell & exult over a body of flesh at your feet as you rain fist & boot & baton down! In all your glory! A body of flesh but not a soul & I smile inwardly again at your powerlessness to possess that & I pity you!

Like a fish laid on the dockside drowning in air it flaps about weaker & weaker, the body gives out, there is nothing left, every last drop of strength is gone! The mind slows from its blind racing panic; arms & legs become dead weights that can no longer support you. Head & neck straining to keep that last tiny part of you above water & in life, choking & gasping for breath! The dogs stand & watch as you go under. All hope is gone!

I went under, sounds disappear as you enter Afanc's world & there is a moment of absolute stillness & calm. This is how I die! You can't help reaching up towards the light, some primitive instinct that still desperately screams for survival. The light blinks off & there is total darkness, there is no fear, no pain, no panic, only the blackness from which nothing escapes. - It is done!

There is no heaven & there is no hell I can tell you!

Maybe the handprint I still have on my shoulder is where random passing canoeist felt about under water & managed to grab the body as it floated past, maybe it's where the devil pulled me under? The dogs dragged me almost lifeless down the dock to the ambulance, telling me if I ran for it they would Taser me. "The Hills Have Eyes" (70's version) extra in uniform sniggered at his own joke to discharge a firearm at me! Well who else would!!!

It's all been a bad mistake they said, somebody forgot to change the record from Guilty to Innocent they said! Yet you came to the cell in dead of night & spit your bile in my naked face, just like dogs do, it's their nature & choice! Treating me as a nonce, thinking I would scuttle away to hide under my rock! Now you hide behind the others casting fearful & furtive glances at me when you think I'm not looking because you can't understand how I could survive 25 years brutality & still stand before you as a man! I lived death in all its non-glory & face you with bright blue eyes full of life & love & laughter. Only a brief darting shadow clouds them, the darkness in my soul you created with your evil deeds.

You should reap what you sow & I can see in your eyes you do, you live in fear, ostracised from our society by your own hand! I don't need revenge, your soul is as black & rotting with fear & hate as the uniform you wear, I would leave you to your fate but I can't! I can't help but feel compassion for your next victim & the next & for you who would create them.

So chain me if you will! A fresh prosecutor, an organ of state sent to crush rebellion is a fresh approach & lets carry on as before, above & beyond all laws of man or nature! "But I am the spark that becomes the flame, I am the raindrop out at sea that becomes the crashing waves" So put on your robes of authority "Oppenheimer" but you will never be more than the black cap you once wore. I will face you across the courtroom once again with complete irreverence, never silent & after my death what more can you do to me!

Convicted Mothers Fight for Places to Bring up Their Children *Mail Online, 26/08/13*

Around 75 children currently spending their first 18 months in jail. 7 UK prisons have special units attached for mothers to bring up babies, allows mothers to feed and bond with their baby while serving time. Since 2010 711 mothers applied for places but only 220 were successful

The female prison population has more than doubled to more than 4,000 since 1997 and currently around two a week will become a parent while in jail in a 'worrying' trend. New figures from The Ministry of Justice reveal that 711 new mothers have applied for one of these spaces, but they are so oversubscribed only 220 have been successful since 2010. It means that

many will be taken into care or looked after by family outside the prison walls. In most cases, the mother were sent to prison for crimes committed while pregnant.

There are seven prison baby units around the UK, including Holloway in London. In order to qualify, the majority of the mothers will have committed serious crimes while pregnant, including violence and drugs offences. In the first 18 months women will be able to feed and play with their child, and are given childcare so they can take part in other elements of prison life. The cost of formula and nappies would be taken from the prisoner's benefits. After the 18 month period is up, if their mother is still imprisoned, they will be returned to life on the outside, either with a family member or in care.

Government guidelines insist young children behind bars must have contact with their family and see the world outside prison, with trips outside jail with nursery nurses to go shopping and visit local parks. The Government offers the places in the 'assumption that the best place for a young child is with his or her parent'. Each application by a mother is considered by a board who will recommend to a prison governor if it would be best for the child if they come to prison. We provide Mother and Baby Units for the benefit of the prisoners' babies who would otherwise have to be separated from their mothers. The primary consideration is the best interest of the children,' he said.

David Green, criminologist and director of the think tank Civitas, said: 'This is a worrying trend and deeply regrettable for the children who are spending their infancy in jails. But culpability lies with their mothers. Nobody should be spared a custodial sentence on the ground that they have children. Prison acts as a deterrent – we cannot send a message that people with children will get away with crime'. A spokesman for the Howard League for Penal reform said: 'Forcibly separating a baby from his or her mother should only be done to protect the welfare of the child and too many babies are being taken away from mothers in prison'

Prison Monitors are There to Stop Abuse

It is a shameful that a woman has been illegally detained for five years in a "squalid" cell in HMP Bronzefield (Report, 22 August). The 2007 Causton report on women in prison legitimately argued that the vast majority of women did not need the physical security provided by the masculine model of prison regimes but required "relational security", a term coined by Wish (Women in Secure Hospitals, of which I was formerly a regional director), based on its years of advocacy work with women both detained in prison and forensic psychiatric hospitals. With the knowledge and training developed by Wish, which has been available to staff working in these services for the past 10 years, there is no excuse for any woman to be abused in this horrendous way. One has to ask what the independent monitoring board – whose role is to ensure that humane treatment of any "prisoner" is upheld and their human rights are not compromised – was doing. - Laila Namdarkhan, Abbots Langley, Herts

• The independent monitoring board at HMP Bronzefield should have known about the situation and challenged the authorities repeatedly, up to and including the minister of justice. At its best, the IMB is a most effective organisation for ensuring that prisons are operated in a truly humane manner. But an IMB is only truly effective if it is a high-quality team operating in a professional manner, understands its role and possesses the drive and character to carry it out. The work of the IMB as a whole is, unfortunately, weakened by the lack of an effective system to monitor, assess and advise its individual prison IMBs. If poorly organised, staffed and led, they become little more than a fig leaf to cover weaknesses in the prison system.

Ken Ellis (ex-chairman of a prison IMB) Dereham, Norfolk