

Gang Orchestrated £30m Drug Deal Inside HMP Wandsworth

Paul Peachey

The gang's kingpins even paid more than £1m to persuade a freelance "fixer" to get himself deliberately convicted of fraud and sent to their prison to co-ordinate the operation – which involved shipping a ton of heroin and ketamine to Britain. The plotters manipulated the court system to ensure the six-strong group came together in HMP Wandsworth prison in south London where they used computers supplied by the authorities, under a taxpayer-funded scheme to help inmates prepare their own legal cases. The computers' security features were cracked by another member of the gang – an East European hacker – using a coded memory stick smuggled into the prison by a girlfriend of one of the plotters. A corrupt prison officer supplied a phone and other equipment to help run the operation, The Independent understands. The gang used the computers – combined with a smuggled dongle – to communicate with overseas contacts to stow the drugs on to shipping containers of legitimate operators travelling from South Asia bound for Britain. The plot was only possible because key players in the gang secured two of the laptops made available to inmates under a scheme known as "Access to Justice" – which allows inmates to read legal papers and write to their solicitors. The lax regime around the use of the computers at Wandsworth prison, Britain's largest jail, means nearly a quarter of the laptops given out by prison authorities there over a four-year period were tampered with or stolen by prisoners.

Michael Gove's MoJ Cuts Could See More Children Jailed

Nigel Morris, Independent

Levels of teenage crime and numbers of children behind bars could increase because of the Government's austerity measures, the Youth Justice Board has warned ministers. The board has warned the Ministry of Justice that a planned deep cut in its budget this year would have dire consequences for efforts to tackle rates of offending among the under-18s. The risks are spelt out in a letter by the board's chief executive, Lin Hinnigan, which has been obtained by The Independent. She said the YJB, which oversees the youth justice system in England and Wales, has lost more than half its budget since 2010 and disclosed she had protested to Michael Gove, the Justice Secretary, over the prospect of further cuts. Ms Hinnigan warned youth offending teams, which are run by local councils and involve police and probation services, but are funded by the YJB, that their budgets are set to be slashed from £85m to £73m. In a letter to teams across the country she said she had warned Mr Gove that further savings would be "detrimental" to efforts to steer teenage offenders from a life of crime. "This could lead to a reversal of the positive trends we have seen over recent years. This would see more young people coming into the system, rising costs for police, courts and other justice agencies and, ultimately, risk increasing custodial populations.

Hostages: Anis Sardar, 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, John Twomey, Thomas G. Bourke, David E. Ferguson, Lee Mockble, George Coleman, Neil Hurley, Jaslyn Ricardo Smith, James Dowsett, Kevan Thakrar, Jordan Towers, Patrick Docherty, Brendan Dixon, Paul Bush, 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 Allan, Carl Kenute Gowe, Eddie Hampton, Tony Hyland, Ray Gilbert, Ishtiaq Ahmed.

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MOJUK: Newsletter 'Inside Out' No 543 (20/08/2015) - Cost £1

Anthony John Allen Wrongly Jailed 2002 - Died In Prison August 2015

Dear MOJUK, With sadness I write to let you know that my friend John Allen died yesterday, Saturday 8th August at Yeovil hospital. Although he has been unwell, I've known him for over ten years and his sudden death was unexpected. The previous Sunday afternoon he had walked the 200 yards to visit me (we are on different wings) but had not been allowed in to my wing due to staff shortages. I understand that he had been taken out to hospital on the Thursday or Friday morning because he was unwell but had been returned to the prison later in the day as the prison could not spare staff for the escort. I have spoken to a couple of John's neighbours about what happened. It appears that on Friday night he tapped on his cell wall for help and his neighbour pressed the call bell but the night staff would not unlock John's cell door. At the Saturday morning unlock he was unresponsive and appeared to have suffered a stroke. They quickly took him back out to hospital where he is reported to have died at 22.40.

I know John had been very worried about how he would cope when his kind neighbour left. In the absence of any practical day to day help from staff, and out of compassion for John, his neighbour helped John to take the correct medication each morning and cleaned his cell. His neighbour is due for release later this week. The prison was supposed to have put a care plan in place but the meetings to discuss the options kept being cancelled. They were putting pressure on John to move away from the enhanced privileges wing to a wing with fewer privileges but with a bigger cell that could accommodate a wheelchair. John was frightened about what was going to happen and physiological problems such as rocketing blood sugar levels affecting his diabetes were attributed to the stress he was suffering. I expect the ombudsman will conduct an investigation and make recommendations but little ever seems to change. Thank you for the work you do to help wrongly convicted prisoners. It is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely, Glyn Razzell, A0744AK, HMP Guys Marsh, Shaftesbury Dorset, SP7 0AH
Anthony John Allen Murder Appeal Bid Rejected

Wednesday, 13 April, 2005

A Dorset man jailed for killing his family nearly 30 years ago has lost a bid to appeal against his convictions. Anthony John Allen, 70, from Poole, was jailed for life in 2002 of killing his wife and two children after they disappeared in Devon in May 1975. He maintained his wife, Patricia, left him, taking the children with her. At the Appeal Court, Allen claimed his convictions were unsafe due to delays in bringing him to trial. Three judges on Wednesday ruled they were safe. Allen who lived with the family in Salcombe, south Devon, had maintained his wife left after a row, leaving him with the children - seven year old Jonathan and Victoria, who was five - but that she returned two days later and took the youngsters with her. He never reported his family missing, nothing has been heard from them since and no bodies have been found. The prosecution at his trial claimed Allen's motive for murder was his affair with widowed restaurant owner Eunice Yabsley, from Salcombe, Devon. He wanted his family out of the way, it was alleged. Edward Fitzgerald QC, applying for leave to appeal against conviction at the Appeal Court in London, argued that it was unfair to put him on trial in 2002 because of the "exceptionally" long delay of 27 years since the "alleged murders". The prosecution, he said, should have been halted at the pre-trial stage as an abuse of process "by reason of the prejudice suffered by the applicant as a result of delay".

HMP Maghberry Tightens the Screws on Irish Political Prisoners

In spite of its commitment to treat Republican Roe House as a single space, the Jail Administration is now attempting to forcibly divide Republican Prisoners from each other. On 10th August 2015, Security Officer, John Moore, under the direction of Security Governors Brian Armour and David Savage announced this further restrictive addition to their futile controlled movement policy. The same individual sought to elevate tensions the previous day when he restricted Republican Prisoners access to the Roe 4 Kitchen, engineered a bogus alarm incident and then ordered the wing into lockdown which resulted in two RPPs being charged for supposedly calling him a "Clown".

On Monday night, 10th August 2015, the hated Maghberry Jail Riot Squad complete with batons, riot shields and dogs swamped Republican Roe House, culminating in an unprovoked attack on the same two Roe 4 Republican Prisoners, Nathan Hastings (22) and Conal Corbett (18). This deliberate attack and forced cell shift of Roe 4 aligned Republican Prisoners, who were handcuffed before being trailed of the Roe 3 landing, is the latest malign action from the Jail Administration in an effort to weaken all Republican Political Prisoners by a de facto return to the old split wing set up. This attack and further tightening of controlled movement is the most recent reaction by the loyalist ultras to any perceived progress by Republican Prisoners in obtaining adequate living conditions.

For the past 18 months Roe 4 Republican Prisoners have prepared, took apart and analysed, every document, Jail Administration and Ombudsman correspondence along with every prison rule relating to the Jail's peer system and its equivalent PREP scheme around all 6 county Jails. Roe 4 Republican Prisoners lodged hundreds of individual and specific internal complaints and requests in order to tease out every available piece of information and criteria. All of the documented material was then properly formulated and presented to solicitors and barristers so as to begin Judicial Review proceedings.

From the opening of Roe House over 11 years ago the Jail was able to hold the line in regards to preventing Republican Prisoners from obtaining tier 2 through compulsory drug tests and other such criminalising demands. Republican Prisoners refused these compulsory conditions and instead broke the system down brick by brick. On the morning of the Judicial Review, 12th June 2015, the Jail Administration, being faced with such overwhelming strategically compiled evidence, conceded defeat.

Roe 4, Republican Prisoners have had recent similar success forcing all Jail staff in the 6 Counties to wear identifiers. This was more detrimental to the Jail in terms of financial cost and in exposing the hypocrisy which lies at the heart of the Administration's treatment of Republican Prisoners. It is forecast to cost hundreds of thousands if not millions of pounds. Such legal resource proved necessary after a number of cases in which Republican Prisoners were severely beaten by Jailers who had up until now evaded identification and scrutiny. The Jails tier system which determines the conditions and provisions available to prisoners had from the establishment of the Republican Wing in 2004 until yesterday always restricted Republican Prisoners to a tier 1 regime without the possibility of being elevated.

Rather than act progressively and simply address the issue NIPS reactionaries insisted on resisting change and progress. The Judicial Review proceedings were only conceded at the eleventh hour by the Jail Administration after considerable legal costs. It is of note that this supposedly cash strapped institution can always afford to finance its continued resistance to its own human rights obligations. Despite Roe 4 Republican Prisoners winning this modest victory (for all Republican Prisoners and indeed Loyalist Prisoners) at the beginning of June the Jail Administration continued to resist inevitable change preferring to defy a court ruling and com-

remained silent during the entire process. He did not confirm his name or address. The charges were put to him and he gave no answer." Mr Adekeye, of Bermondsey, south-east London, is charged with possession of a bladed article, a public order offence and wounding with intent. He was detained on Tuesday, after armed officers responded to reports of an injured man on a Victoria Line train at Finsbury Park. David Dane was taken to hospital with cuts to his arms and face and trains were disrupted for several hours. Mr Adekeye was later arrested at the Underground station for Heathrow Terminals one, two and three. He is also accused of aiming threatening abuse at Rajendra Cunnoosamy on a Piccadilly line train from London King's Cross towards Cockfosters station. Mr Adekeye was remanded in custody ahead of a preliminary hearing at London's Blackfriars Crown Court.

Sheku Bayoh Death: Police Accused Of 'Hypocrisy'

Police Scotland have been accused of "breath-taking hypocrisy" after refusing to meet the grieving family of Kirkcaldy man Sheku Bayoh. Chief Constable Sir Stephen House also declined a meeting with the town's MP, saying it could potentially jeopardise the outcome of an investigation into Mr Bayoh's death. This is despite the fact Sir Stephen met the officers involved in detaining the 31-year-old before his death. MP Roger Mullin is now seeking a meeting with the justice secretary to discuss the implications of Police Scotland's conduct. Mr Bayoh died of suspected asphyxiation on Sunday May 3 after he was detained by police who suspected him of carrying a knife. The Police Investigations and Review Commissioner is investigating the circumstances. Mr Mullin said it was unacceptable that the police had taken three weeks to reply to his urgent request for a meeting. Referring to the fact the chief constable had spoken to the officers involved, Bayoh family solicitor Aamer Anwar said: "It smacks of double standards and breath-taking hypocrisy"

Anna Graven Serving Eight-Week Prison Sentence Found Dead In Cell

Matthew Taylor, Guardian: A woman who was serving an eight-week prison sentence for shoplifting has been found dead in her cell. Anna Graven, 41, was found at Foston Hall prison in Derbyshire on Friday 14th August 2015. Paramedics tried to revive her but she was pronounced dead a short time later. Deborah Coles from campaign group Inquest said the death was deeply shocking. "It is a really alarming case and we have to question why women are still being locked up for non-violent crimes when they could be successfully accommodated in the community," she said. Over the past decade a series of inquiries and reports have concluded that prison is rarely a necessary, appropriate or proportionate response to women caught up in the criminal justice system.

The justice select committee inquiry into women offenders in 2014 concluded that "prison is an expensive and ineffective way of dealing with many women offenders who do not pose a significant risk of harm to public safety" and called for "a significant increase in residential alternatives to custody as well as the maintenance of the network of women's centres" seen as "more effective, and cheaper ... than short custodial sentences". In 2007 a report by Jean Corston called for women who do not pose a risk to the public to be kept out of prison. She said the more serious offenders should be kept in small custodial units, with the majority kept in a larger network of support and supervision centres in the community. Coles said: "It seems little has been learned in the intervening years."

A Prison Service spokesperson said: "HMP Foston Hall prisoner Anna Graven was found unresponsive in her cell at about 6.30am on Sunday 9 August. Staff attempted CPR and paramedics were called but she was pronounced dead shortly after. As with all deaths in custody there will be an investigation by the independent prisons and probation ombudsman."

declared that the UK is "not a land of milk and honey" and that "perverse incentives" attracting people to the country must end. Despite this rhetoric, the consultation paper provides the Government recognises that "...it would be impracticable to abruptly cease the provision of support by the Home Office to failed asylum seekers already in receipt of it when new legislation came into force" and proposes "...to put in place transitional arrangements for the management of these cases". The Government has attempted to address concerns that the support would be automatically cut off to those who genuinely need it, especially when children's welfare is at stake. Therefore, the Government has said that the new rules would not be applied automatically to all failed asylum seekers and their families, but assessed on a case-by-case basis. It remains to be seen what final form these proposals will take once the consultation period has ended in September 2015.

Migrants - Sue 'worst Gangmaster Ever'

Felicity Lawrence, Guardian

A group of Lithuanian migrants who were trafficked to work in farms producing eggs for high street brands are suing a Kent-based gangmaster operation and its directors, in the first case of a UK company being taken to court for claims relating to modern slavery. The six Lithuanians suing for damages are among a group of more than 30 men who worked as chicken catchers for DJ Houghton, owned by Darrell Houghton and Jacqueline Judge of Maidstone. Police raided houses controlled by the gangmaster couple in 2012 and liberated several suspected victims of human trafficking.

Speaking exclusively to the Guardian this week, the workers bringing the legal action have described inhuman and degrading conditions. They said they were driven to farms and factories around the UK to undertake back-to-back eight-hour shifts for days at a time. They said they were the victims of violence, described the process of being debt-bonded on arrival, and spoke of their accommodation riddled with bedbugs and of becoming so hungry that they ate raw eggs. They have reported being denied sleep and toilet breaks, forcing them to urinate into bottles and defecate into carrier bags in their vehicle. They also allege that their pay was repeatedly withheld, while Lithuanian supervisors working with the Houghtons abused and assaulted workers, intimidated them with fighting dogs and threatened them with instant eviction if they complained. Accommodation provided was dirty, overcrowded and unsafe and infested with bed bugs and fleas.

A Guardian investigation in 2012 revealed that the trafficked Lithuanians were working in supply chains producing premium free range eggs for McDonald's, Tesco, Asda, M&S, and the Sainsbury's Woodland brand. The farm sheds they cleared of chickens also produced eggs under the Freedom Food brand, and for Noble Foods, owner of the Happy Egg Company. Noble Foods is the UK's largest egg company and it and its chairman, Peter Dean, have been major donors to the Conservative party. The company helicopter has been lent on occasion to the prime minister, David Cameron, for election campaigning. Cameron promised earlier this month to tackle modern slavery in the UK. It is notoriously hard for victims of trafficking to get justice. There have been 75 convictions for gangmaster offences since the Gangmaster Licensing Act regulating them came in to force, but only one compensation order for workers.

Man Charged With Tube Attack Refuses to Leave Cell

Adeyemi Adekeye, 27, is accused of attacking a 63-year-old on the London Underground train with a pair of scissors. He was due to appear at Highbury Magistrates' Court, but he refused to attend. In response, magistrates and lawyers conducted the hearing in the cell. Mark Beattie, chairman of the bench, said: "We went down and saw Mr Adekeye, who

mence a review to delay change and refusing to implement that change for as long as possible. Since Roe 4 Republican Political Prisoners increased the tempo of their legal challenges they have been subject to efforts by the Jail Security Department to thwart access to legal representatives. The sole purpose of this interference by Brian Armour and David Savage is to sabotage legal challenges. All of this is also being documented and is currently being forwarded to bodies and organisations, such as, the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) International Red Cross Committee (IRCC) along with a list of Jail oversight bodies and politicians from Ireland, both North and South as well as a number of high profile legal firms.

Republican Political Prisoners, Roe 4, HMP Maghaberry, 12/08/2015

Fresh Concerns Raised Over Carroll Case

A solicitor for one of two men convicted of the murder of PSNI officer Stephen Carroll has raised fresh concerns about the case. John Finucane was speaking at an event organised by the Justice for the Craigavon Two campaign as part of Feile an Phobail on Friday. Mr Carroll (48) was shot dead by a Continuity IRA sniper as he answered an emergency call in Craigavon in March 2009. Two Craigavon men Brendan McConville and John Paul Wootton are both serving lengthy prison sentences after being convicted of his murder under joint enterprise laws. Prosecutors have never been able to attribute a role to either man, who both deny they played any part in the attack. Other speakers at the event included members of English based campaign group Jengba – Joint Enterprise Not Guilty by Association – and academic Kevin Hearty who spoke about policing in the north.

During the event Mr Finucane, who represents John Paul Wootton said that "if the judge isn't sure what John Paul did then I don't think he can be sure beyond a reasonable doubt that he is guilty of a plan to murder a police officer. The role has never been described," he said. "The judge made reference at the trial that it was some sort of logistical support after the event. At the appeal that changed to some type of logistical support either before or after. I don't think you need to be a lawyer to have concerns that is exceptionally vague. Again it ties John Paul into an act, a conspiracy which really there is very little evidence for." Mr Finucane is a son of human rights solicitor Pat Finucane who was murdered by loyalists in collusion with the security forces in February 1989.

Serving Prisoner Sets up Internet Dating Profile - Put in Solitary

Daily Star

Neal Bond set up a profile on prisondating.co.uk from his cell in super prison HMP Oakwood in Featherstone, Staffs. The divorced dad-of-two was caged for life in 2003 for battering mate Mustafa Ali to death with a fire extinguisher. He was ordered to spend a minimum of 16 years behind bars – but successfully appealed and had his sentence cut by two years in 2008. On his profile the murderer has uploaded two pictures of himself wearing a white t-shirt and grey jogging bottoms with what appears to be Oakwood prison in the background. He has written: "I haven't got long in prison. I like a good personality. I'm looking for someone who isn't shy so can hold a good conversation." Bond brags he is "very attractive" and calls himself an "athletic male". His perfect partner would have "intelligence, good looks, humour, money, power, flirtatiousness and thoughtfulness". But he writes he does not go for "overweight women". Bond has now been placed in solitary confinement while prison officials investigate the incident.

G4S Director for HMP Oakwood, John McLaughlin, said stopping prisoners from using mobile phones is "a constant challenge". He said: "There is no place for mobile phones at HMP Oakwood – and we will always act on information provided by the media or members of the public, which suggests that any prisoner has access to a mobile phone.

Court of Appeal Backs Compromise of Privilege in Death-Threat Case

Michael Cross, Law Society Gazette: A man detained under the Mental Health Act for attempted murder and who had threatened to kill his solicitor had no right to be left alone with lawyers when on trial for a further attempted murder, the Court of Appeal has ruled. In *Regina v Edward Brown* (formerly Latham) the court heard an appeal against a conviction on the grounds of a Crown court ruling that the defendant's conferences with his lawyers be conducted in the presence of two nurses. Brown was sentenced to life imprisonment for the attempted murder of a fellow patient at Rampton hospital in Nottinghamshire, where he was already serving life sentences for attempted murder, with a weapon fashioned from a radio aerial.

The judge in the case had ruled that, as there were no facilities at court to screen defense counsel from their clients, Brown, described as an 'exceptionally dangerous individual', must be shackled to a minimum of two nurses when in direct personal contact with a third party. Brown's appeal argued that the ruling breached his right at common law to consult privately with his lawyers and his 'fair trial' right under article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Dismissing the appeal, the Rt Hon Lord Justice Fulford, the Honourable Mr Justice Holroyd and the Honourable Mr Justice Singh ruled that the inviolable nature of legal professional privilege does not apply if communications are used for an improper purpose - in this case for the defendant to harm himself or his lawyers. The judgment also notes there was no suggestion that any misuse was made of overheard communications. 'Nurses deployed to ensure that someone who is detained does not harm himself (or others) are not to be equated with investigating police officers,' the judgment states. On the ECHR argument, the judges ruled that the right to confidential communications with lawyers is not absolute. 'Instead, it can be restricted for good reason and one of those reasons is if the individual's life is at risk.' The restrictions on Brown 'were a proportionate and appropriate response to the grave threat the appellant posed to himself and we do not accept that they rendered the proceedings unfair'.

LGBT Prisoners Reveal Reality of Life Behind Bars

Daily Mirror

Britain's 10,000 gay prison inmates often suffer from homophobia and sexual torture, but their experiences are rarely talked about. But prisoners at a Welsh jail are hoping to change that by sharing their experiences with the world in a book. The compilation, put together by the prison, arts and community lead Phil Forder, who is himself gay, recounts stories from people associated with HMP Parc in Bridgend. Not all of them talk about their experiences inside, but many tell tales of struggling to let loved ones know about their sexuality and other problems they have faced. And Mr Forder, who runs an LGBT support group at the G4S-run prison, has now been nominated for a gong at the National Diversity Awards as a result of the book called *Inside and Out*.

Denny, a prisoner at HMP Parc, says he has known he was gay since he was 15, but had never been able to tell his mother. He says he loves her but describes her as 'one of the most homophobic people I know, she also threatened to disown him if he had a gay relationship. Denny writes: 'When I came to prison I decided to attend the LGBT support group as I thought it might help me accept my sexuality. Going to the group made me realise that I wasn't alone and many had had to struggle with their acceptance, some had gone through worse things than I did.'

Prison manager Adrian writes of meeting Russ, an American who came to Britain in the 1970s to avoid being called up to serve in Vietnam. He eventually returned to the United States, while Adrian remained in Wales. Saying he wished he was straight, Adrian described feeling like "the only gay man in the world", and later began a heterosexual relationship

be likely to become destitute within such period as may be prescribed.

However, under the provisions of s94(5) of the Act, failed asylum seekers who have a dependent child continue to receive the support even after their asylum claim has been refused and all appeal rights have been exhausted. The Government states that an estimated £73 million was used to support failed asylum seekers in 2014-15 and claims that the protection offered under the current legislation "sends a wrong message", is open for abuse and needs to be "rebalanced".

The Government maintains that it is committed to fulfilling its international obligations to meet minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers set out by the EU Reception Directive 2003/9/EC, and has a "proud record of providing a safe haven for refugees". However, the Government suggests curtailing "the scope for support and to remove incentives" for failed asylum seekers and other migrants who remain in the country illegally.

The consultation paper proposes to introduce a so-called "grace period" for failed asylum seekers with families - i.e. time in which failed asylum seekers must leave the UK after their asylum claim has failed. The period would start immediately after the asylum claim is finally rejected and any appeal rights have been exhausted. Under the current regulations failed asylum seekers without dependant children have 21 days to leave the country. Under the Government's new plans, failed asylum seekers with families would see their support terminated within 28 days after their asylum claim fails. The family would need to depart the country unless they can demonstrate a genuine obstacle beyond their control to prevent the departure, such as medical problems, threat of being returned to a war zone or administrative issues with travel documents. There would be no right of appeal against a refusal to extend the grace period. The new rules would be incorporated into primary legislation and apply to those asylum seekers who had their claims finally determined after July 2016.

The paper claims that: "Failed asylum seekers are illegal immigrants and are no more deserving of welfare support than any other migrant in the UK unlawfully." However, many human rights, asylum seekers and refugee organisations, including UNHCR, take the view that an asylum seeker, even when their asylum claim has been refused, cannot be branded an illegal immigrant. UNHCR's web site states: "There is no such thing as a bogus asylum seeker or an illegal asylum seeker. As an asylum seeker, a person has entered into a legal process of refugee status determination. Everybody has a right to seek asylum in another country. People who don't qualify for protection as refugees will not receive refugee status and may be deported, but just because someone doesn't receive refugee status doesn't mean they are a bogus asylum seeker".

Although the Government has declared that the cessation of Home Office support to the failed asylum seekers would not trigger human rights infringements, it has invited the views of organisations and local authorities on the proposals set out in the consultation paper; in particular, whether the grace period should be longer. The response from NGOs to the proposals thus far has been negative. The Refugee Council announced that: "The Government has launched a consultation on new plans set to leave vulnerable families living on the streets...This deplorable plan could leave families homeless, penniless and vulnerable to exploitation as they struggle to survive." Refugee Action called the government's plans "seriously flawed". It is worth noting that ten years ago the Labour Government tried to implement similar rules as those proposed in the latest consultation paper, but after an unsuccessful trial, such measures were dropped.

The proposals form just part of a whole host of measures announced or introduced since the General Election aimed at reducing the number of asylum claims and illegal immigration.

The Government has recently adopted a much tougher tone to address immigration. It has

Inspectors were concerned to find that: - in a survey, 54% of the women held said they felt depressed or suicidal when they first arrived; - 45% of women said they felt unsafe, saying it was due to the uncertainty of their immigration status, a poor introduction to the centre, very poor health care and having too few visible staff on the units; - a new contract with reduced staffing levels was being introduced and inspectors were concerned that staffing levels were insufficient; - there was no counselling service; - staff and detainees told inspectors about a loss of mutual trust that had occurred since recent news reports; - early days processes were weak; - health care screening, which involved asking intimate questions, was sometimes carried out by a male nurse; - most use of force was well managed, but inspectors were concerned about one incident in which an officer appeared to use excessive force; - some women were detained for long periods and some of the most vulnerable women were detained without clear reason; - 99 pregnant women had been detained in 2014, despite the Home Office's policy stating pregnant women should not normally be detained; - Rule 35 reports, which should protect detainees who have been tortured, lacked detail and were perfunctory; - there were still too many male staff and it was unacceptable that staff still entered women's rooms without knocking; - health care had declined most severely, with severe staff shortages and poor local governance; - care planning for women with complex needs was so poor it put them at risk; - the available mental health care did not meet women's needs; and - pharmacy services were chaotic. - 29 recommendations from the last inspection had 'Not been achieved' - Inspectors made 86 recommendations, In surveys and interviews, inspectors asked current detainees, former detainees and staff about sexually inappropriate behaviour between staff and detainees. Inspectors did not find evidence of widespread abuse in the centre but the vulnerability of the women held, the closed nature of the institution and the power imbalance between the staff and detainees made individual instances an ever-present risk.

Nick Hardwick said: "Yarl's Wood is rightly a place of national concern. We should not make the mistake of blaming this on the staff on the ground. While there have been instances of unacceptable individual behaviour, most staff work hard to mitigate the worst effects of detention and women told us they appreciated this. However, Yarl's Wood is failing to meet the needs of the most vulnerable women held. These are issues that need to be addressed at a policy and strategic management level. We have raised many of the concerns in this report before. Pregnant detainees and women with mental health problems should only be held in the most exceptional circumstances. Rule 35 should ensure that women who have been tortured or traumatised or are extremely vulnerable in other ways are not in detention. Staff should have the training and support they need to better understand the experiences of the women for whom they are responsible. There are not enough female staff. This inspection has also identified new concerns. Health care needs to improve urgently. Staffing levels as a whole are just too low to meet the needs of the population.

Failed Asylum Seekers With Families to Lose Financial Support *Gherson Solicitors*

These are the proposals made by the Home Office in a consultation paper published on 4 August on: "Reforming support for failed asylum seekers and other illegal immigrants". Currently support to asylum seekers, such as accommodation and a weekly cash allowance, is provided by the Home Office under the provisions of section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (the 1999 Act). Section 95(1) of the Act maintains that: The Secretary of State may provide, or arrange for the provision of, support for (a) asylum-seekers, or (b) dependants of asylum-seekers, who appear to the Secretary of State to be destitute or to

which bore him a child. Russ later visited the family out of the blue during the 1980s – and dropped the bombshell news that he was HIV positive. Before long, he had developed AIDS. He wrote to Adrian saying he wanted to stay with him in Wales, but Adrian's wife was adamant it would not happen. Some months later a posthumous letter arrived at Adrian's home. It was from Russ, but posted by a friend who had found the envelope next to Russ' body. He had died of AIDS. Adrian then began a 10-year correspondence with Russ' mother. "I'm now an openly gay man, living with my boyfriend," Adrian writes. "It has been a long and difficult journey to get here with many costs attached but I am happy in a deep down way. I finally am myself. "I often smile when I think that Russ probably conspired from beyond the grave to get me to come out and I still regularly wear his cuff links with pride, glad that I had met him."

Linda, a transgender woman, is a prisoner at HMP Parc. She has spent seven years at various prisons and says she has been despised by staff and fellow inmates alike at other institutions. She says: "Before arriving here at Parc, it was like being on a motorway, only stuck in the slow lane, dragging along at a very slow pace, dodging scraps with others around me." And she adds: "There were originally issues but these quickly disappeared. Compared to my last prison this place is more understanding and as a result I am much more settled in myself. "Many of the other prisoners accept me for who I am. The ones that don't accept me just leave me alone and that suits me fine." Jason, 35, who has a traveller background, has not come out to his cellmate, but Parc's LGBT staff know. He explains: "I trust them because they are gay. I can talk to them and feel comfortable doing so. Before I came to prison I was not out and have only told a few people since being here. I feel safer in prison."

Danny Walker and Gavin Allen Cleared of Murder

Two men have been found not guilty of the Boxing Day murder of a man at a central London nightclub. Danny Walker, 34, of Haldane Road, south-east London, and Gavin Allen, 32, of no fixed address, were cleared at the Old Bailey on Monday. Hassan Mohammed Omer Isman, 31, of Poplar in east London, died after being shot at Shaftesbury's Avalon club in December 2013. The venue later had its licence revoked by Westminster City Council. A third man, Dean Robinson, 33, was convicted of possession with intent to supply a Class A drug and intention to commit acts to pervert the course of justice in May last year.

IPCC Proposes Fundamental Organisational Change

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) has proposed changes to its structure that will effectively support the work of an expanding organisation. Under the IPCC's proposal the organisation would be headed by a Police Ombudsman for England and Wales, a Crown appointee, with overall responsibility for its work and decision-making. Regional ombudsmen would have delegated responsibilities in the English regions and Wales. The proposals are published as part of the IPCC's response to its recent triennial review. The review, published in March 2015, endorsed the need for the organisation's role and supported its current change programme; recognising that changes to its governance are necessary to support a much larger organisation.

The IPCC has grown significantly over the last two years, in order to be able to investigate all serious and sensitive cases. The IPCC has grown significantly over the last two years, in order to be able to investigate all serious and sensitive cases. It is expected to begin more than five times the 109 investigations it started in 2012/13, and its staffing has more than doubled over the same period. A new office has opened in Birmingham, the existing Wakefield office has

expanded and an office in Croydon will open over the summer. The IPCC's proposals run alongside government proposals to reform the police complaints system as a whole and to provide the IPCC with Ombudsman-like powers to determine complaints and to act on its own initiative. IPCC Chair Dame Anne Owers said: "Our proposal has been developed after a great deal of thought and discussion and we believe it will enable us to meet the challenge of delivering many more timely and high quality investigations. The current structure has many strengths, not least the robust and visible independence of our Commissioners and the experience and knowledge base of our staff, built up over ten years. However, the Commission structure itself creates blurred lines of accountability and decision-making. In a smaller organisation we have been able to manage these aspects, but we do not believe it is sustainable in a larger organisation. We have submitted our proposals to the Home Secretary and Ministers will decide whether and how to pursue them further. We welcome any views on our proposals, so that we can be sure these changes are the best way forward."

Paedophile's/Sex Offenders Receiving Record Sentences as Convictions Soar

Nigel Morris, Independent: Soaring numbers of paedophiles and other sex offenders are being convicted and are receiving record prison sentences, new figures have disclosed. More than 6,400 were convicted in England and Wales in the year to the end of March, a rise of ten per cent, while prosecutions were up by three per cent. Statisticians said the growing number being brought to court was partly caused by the focus on Jimmy Savile's crimes and other investigations into historic child abuse. The Ministry of Justice figures also showed sex offenders now receive an average prison sentence of five years and three months, the highest figure on record. The spike in convictions is putting pressure on prison numbers, with around 11,500 sex offenders in the jail population of 86,200.

Andrew Selous, the Justice minister, said: "These figures show sex offenders are receiving harsher punishment than ever before for their appalling crimes. Longer sentences will be welcomed by victims, who deserve to know that those who commit these sickening acts are properly held to account." The statistics indicated that serious and violent offenders are more likely to go straight to prison than at any point in the last ten years. More than one-quarter (27 per cent) of people convicted of indictable offences such as rape, robbery and aggravated burglary, receiving an average sentence of almost 19 months.

Pentagon Block Deals to Return Shaker Aamer and Other Cleared Detainees

Spencer Ackerman, Guardian: The Pentagon is blocking the return of UK permanent resident Shaker Aamer and two other longtime Guantánamo Bay detainees for whom the US Department of State has completed diplomatic deals to transfer home, the Guardian has learned. American and UK diplomats reached an agreement in late 2013 for the return of Aamer, who has spent more than 13 years at the infamous detention facility without charge, according to multiple sources with knowledge of the understanding. But even as the White House pledged to make his case a priority after a personal plea from David Cameron, Barack Obama's defense secretaries have played what one official called "foot-dragging and process games" to let the deals languish.

Pentagon chief Ashton Carter, backed by powerful US military officers, has withheld support for sending Aamer back to the UK. The ongoing obstruction has left current and former US officials who consider the detainees a minimal threat seething, as they see it undermining relations with Britain and other foreign partners while subverting from the inside Obama's long-

I haven't been eating for 4 days, since the guy died. They know I'm not eating and they're not doing anything. They don't care at all. We can't take this any more. I've complied with everything. I given it all to them. I gave them everything I remember about my address in India and they say I'm going to get a two year prison sentence for not saying. Well I was 14 when I left India. I've been here half my life, so I am not going to remember everything. I told them everything I know. If you can't send me back at least let me go, let me think about my future. I'm thinking I'm going to be here 13 months and there's no way I can be here that long

Connecticut Death Row Inmates Spared in Court Ruling

A top court in the US state of Connecticut has overturned the death penalty for inmates on death row, deeming it unconstitutional. The ruling comes three years after capital punishment was abolished in the state, but for future crimes only. The supreme court's decision means 11 of the state's inmates still on death row will now be spared. Connecticut has had just one execution since 1976. Thirty-one US states still allow executions. The ruling came in response to an appeal by convicted murder Eduardo Santiago, who was sentenced to death by lethal injection in 2005. "We are persuaded that... this state's death penalty no longer comports with contemporary standards of decency and no longer serves any legitimate penological purpose," <<https://www.jud.ct.gov/external/supapp/Cases/AROCr/CR318/318CR306.pdf>> it said. It noted a "freakishness" in the use of the punishment, with what it said was a wide disparity in its application. Connecticut supreme court judge Richard Palmer said the death penalty amounted to "cruel and unusual punishment" and violated the state's constitution. New Hampshire is the only north-eastern state to still keep capital punishment, though its last execution was carried out in 1939. The latest state to abolish the death penalty was Nebraska in 2015.

Yarl's Wood IRC - Not Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Women

"Yarl's Wood has deteriorated since its last inspection and the needs of the women held have grown. In my view, decisive action is needed to ensure that women are only detained as a last resort. Other well-respected bodies have recently called for time limits on administrative detention, and the concerns we have identified provide strong support for these calls." said Nick Hardwick, Chief Inspector of Prisons as today he published the report of an unannounced inspection of the Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) in Bedfordshire.

Yarl's Wood IRC, managed by Serco, held 354 detainees at the time of this inspection. Most were single women but the centre also held a small number of adult families and a short-term holding facility held single men. Inspectors last visited in June 2013 and at that time concluded that the centre was improving, although significant concerns remained. This more recent inspection found that in some important areas the treatment and conditions of those held had deteriorated significantly, the main concerns from 2013 had not been resolved and there was greater evidence of the distress caused to vulnerable women by their detention. Inspectors did not find evidence of a widespread abusive or hostile culture among staff, although there were some matters of concern. Inspectors observed positive attempts by staff to ameliorate the impact of detention for those in their care, although staff numbers and training gaps limited what they could do.

Yarl's Wood had become more complex and challenging to manage since the last inspection. About 12% of detainees were ex-prisoners. Many women told inspectors harrowing stories about their histories. At best, they were distressed about their detention and the uncertainty surrounding their possible deportation.

faced a charge of conspiring the cause explosions. Strangely, his attitude and demeanour won him the admiration, rather than condemnation of trial judge Lord Justice Bridge. The judge described Murray as a “mystery man” with all the demeanour of a soldier and, in his summing up, suggested that the jury would have difficulty withholding a grudging measure of respect.

Murray got nine years - and before he was sentenced it was revealed that a few weeks earlier he had been convicted of separate charges of conspiracy to cause explosions and causing an explosion by a jury at Birmingham Crown Court. Murray's sentence at Lancaster Crown Court was ordered to run concurrently with the 12 years he had been given in Birmingham. True to form, he left court without a word.

But a growing number of people believe that when he stepped out of the court he took with him the secrets behind the terrible night of the pub bombings. If that is true, the irony is that the British justice system had one of the men they really wanted before a court - but facing the wrong charges. Later, while in prison, Murray told two of the Birmingham Six: “Sorry to see you lads in here. Nothing went right that night. The first telephone box was out of order.” An investigation by the Sunday Mercury's sister paper, the Birmingham Mail, which was published on the day the trial ended, was headed “The six-foot menace of stone-faced Mick” It described him as being a high ranking IRA officer who was “feared by the terrorists he led in Birmingham” commanding their instant attention and obedience.” Murray, it said, had helped to wage an office and factory blitz terror in Birmingham which had earned him the 12 years he received at the city's Crown Court. He served most of his time in solitary confinement and took part in the infamous IRA blanket protest, before being excluded from England on his release. He died in Ireland in 1999.

Alongside the Birmingham Six and Murray in the dock were James Kelly, 33 and Michael Sheehan, 48, who were charged with conspiracy to cause explosions and possessing explosives. Sheehan got nine years. Kelly was cleared of conspiracy but convicted of possessing explosives for which he was given a year - but because he had served most of that in custody awaiting trial, he was freed after a week. With the passing of time, it is unclear what became of Kelly and Sheehan.

Friday 7th August Someone Died in HMP The Verne

For some reason he killed himself. We are on the next landing to those guys. When the two officers did a room check in the morning found him. He was bleeding from his head. No one's saying why he died or how he died. They are saying something about drugs. He was on medication, and was asking them for help. He went to the NHS and they said he was late by 5 minutes. And for some reason he didn't get his tablet. The NHS is really bad in here. I've had complaints about my medication and I've made complaints and I've never heard anything from them. He was upset that night. And he was in his room and he decided to do that.

The next day someone else cut himself very seriously. The NHS came after a long time. He was bleeding for a long time. The officers knew he was going to do that because he told them. They check him every hour but he did it after they checked and was there for a long time. When the guy died an officer came in laughing, and joking as if nothing happened. They just think a joke happened. They were laughing loud. I told them how serious it was. I asked why they were laughing so loud in the corridor. I got no answer. Only two officers was shocked by what happened, they're the only one's that understand things here. The main officers don't care what happened. When the body and the ambulance was gone, that's it. It's like nothing's happened here.

Another friend has been here 13 months. That's a long time. He is really upset. I've been here 7 months. I've done no crime or nothing. I told them I'm going to kill myself as well.

stifled goal of closing the infamous detention facility. Some consider the White House indecisive on Guantánamo issues, effectively enabling Pentagon intransigence ahead of the release of a long-awaited strategy for closing the facility before Obama's presidency ends.

Two of the men being kept at Guantánamo were cleared by a 2010 government review, in which the Pentagon participated, that found them to pose little threat to US or allied national security. Aamer is among them. Administration officials said the Pentagon has never formally opposed the transfers, an act of outright resistance to a high-profile presidential commitment that risks reprisal. The transfers have the backing of the US Justice Department, the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. But since White House rules depend on full administration consensus, Aamer remains at Guantánamo until Carter and the Pentagon say otherwise.

By law, the US defense secretary must sign off on the transfers, which occur 30 days after the Pentagon chief's signature. Chuck Hagel's reluctance to closing Guantánamo contributed to his firing last year, but successor Carter has not proven any more pliable. “Carter is worse,” said one official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a topic of significant internal acrimony within the Obama administration. The Pentagon opposition helps explain why Aamer has remained at Guantánamo despite bipartisan anger from the United States' closest international ally. “A slap in the face is right,” one frustrated official said, agreeing with the characterization in a recent article by Labour MPs Jeremy Corbyn and Andy Slaughter along with conservative MPs David Davis and Andrew Mitchell. US officials said they reached a deal with their British counterparts on transferring Aamer at a meeting in Washington in October 2013, subject to final approval from senior officials. The Pentagon has been the holdout.

The other two detainees are the Mauritanian Ahmed Ould Abdel Aziz and the Saudi Abdul Shalabi. The state department has deals in place with the three detainees' home countries that still await Carter's signature. US diplomats reached an agreement to transfer Abdel Aziz in fall 2013; Shalabi was cleared on 15 June by a quasi-parole hearing called a Periodic Review Board. The Washington Post this week reported that Carter was positively inclined to transfer Aamer, raising hopes of his release. But the high-level meeting last month at which Carter expressed that sentiment was supposed to have been a forum to finalize decisions on transferring extant detainees, leaving other officials with the impression that Carter was continuing to stall while appearing cooperative.

The well of opposition to the transfers does not end with the defense secretary. Carter is supported by the staff of the outgoing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, as well as the powerful General John Kelly, head of US southern command, which oversees Guantanamo. Paul Lewis, whose high-profile appointment as Pentagon envoy for Guantánamo was touted as evidence of Obama's commitment to shuttering the facility, is seen as marginalized and ineffective. An official called Lewis a “non-factor. The building doesn't want to do it,” the official said, referring to the Pentagon. Brian McKeon, a senior Pentagon policy official, defended Lewis' efficacy to the Guardian, citing his “bipartisan experience and unrivaled expertise” on Guantánamo matters gained from his prior stint as a congressional aide. Mr Lewis is integral to the process of ending detention operations at Guantánamo Bay. He works closely with the secretary and other high-level leaders in the defense department and throughout the interagency, as well as with our international partners and members of Congress,” McKeon said, adding that Lewis has “enabled President Obama and Secretary Carter to achieve significant progress towards their shared goal of closing the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay in a responsible manner”.

For years, the Defense Department has forced the other US agencies through a laborious

process of requiring additional information about how the transfers of Aamer and Abdul Aziz will work, something officials outside the Pentagon consider a delaying tactic. Concern is mounting that the delays make it harder for US diplomats to convince other countries to accept Guantánamo detainees. The White House is considered irresolute on Guantánamo, lacking the force or the desire to impose a coherent policy upon the bureaucracy. There is already longstanding bipartisan hostility in Congress to closing Guantánamo, but transferring the 52 remaining detainees whom the 2010 government review deemed minimal risks is the least controversial aspect. For those who are approved for transfer, the laws passed by Congress permit it and we should be moving forward with those promptly," said Clifford Sloan, who until December served as the state department's special envoy for closing the Guantánamo Bay detention center.

Far more difficult is the question of what to do with the 32 so-called "forever prisoners" whom the review recommended for continued detention without trial until the end of a "war on terrorism" that has no defined endpoint. A forthcoming strategy from the White House, as anticipated as it is delayed, must grapple with Congress' legal ban on detaining them on US soil. There are 116 detainees currently at Guantánamo.

Aamer is one of its earliest detainees, arriving at the facility in February 2002 after his late 2001 capture by Afghan militiamen redeeming a US bounty. Shalabi precedes him by one month. Abdul Aziz joined them in October 2002. In the UK, Aamer's continued detention is a cause célèbre. In addition to the June "slap in the face" article, last month a politically diverse coalition of signatories ranging from London mayor Boris Johnson to Sting urged Obama to release Aamer as a method of restoring "America's notion of itself and its international standing".

Sloan warned that Obama's administration was running out of time to fulfill his promise of shuttering Guantánamo and urged the acceleration of the transfers of approved detainees. Any month where we're not seeing significant numbers of transfers undermines the president's policy and is unfair to the individuals affected," Sloan said. Clive Stafford Smith, one of Aamer's US attorneys with the human rights group Reprieve, said "it is time for the secretary of defense to stop playing these furtive games and put up or shut up. If there is one thing that is worse than indefinite, arbitrary detention without trial," he said, "it is indefinite, arbitrary detention without trial when 99% of the people on both sides think you should be released but one percent vetoes fairness secretly, without giving reasons, either to Shaker or to the prime minister of Great Britain."

A spokeswoman for the UK Foreign Office said the Aamer case "remains a high priority for the UK government". We continue to make clear to the US that we want him released and returned to the UK as a matter of urgency," said the spokeswoman. Henrietta Levin, a spokeswoman for the US Department of Defense, said she did not have a timetable for when select detainees might be released from Guantánamo. "However," she said in a statement, "the Defense Department is committed to reducing the detainee population and to closing the detention facility. We recognize the importance that our British allies have placed on resolving the Shaker Aamer case, and accordingly, we have made this case a priority."

Paddy Hill Claims IRA terrorist Took a 10 Minute Bus Ride Before Raising Alarm

Paddy Joe Hill, one of the Birmingham Six who were wrongly jailed over the slaughter of 21 people made the claim, ahead of the 40th anniversary of the biggest miscarriage of justice in British Criminal History. Birmingham's blackest night was heralded by its most infamous phone call. "There is a bomb planted at the Rotunda, there is a bomb planted in New Street at the Tax Office. This is Double X," were the words spoken in the call to Ian Cropper, a telephon-

ist at the Birmingham Post & Mail. He logged it at 8.11pm on the night of Thursday, November 21, 1974 and immediately called the police.

The caller, Mick Murray, had spoken quietly, but his words were deliberate and precise. Though Mr Cropper later recalled he could sense hatred in them, what Murray uttered was neither breathless nor hurried - quite the opposite in fact. Nor was Murray anywhere near New Street, where gelignite bombs hidden in holdalls - and packed with additional phosphorous to ensure victims suffered maximum burns - had been left at the Tavern in The Town and The Mulberry Bush pubs.

For, according to Paddy Joe Hill, callous Murray had taken a ten minute bus ride out of town to one of his local pubs in Aston, before using a phone there to make the call. It has long been suggested that the bombers had intended to use a phone box in New Street to raise the alarm, but on the night it was out of order, delaying the warning. But Paddy Joe's claims, if true, shed fresh light on what happened on that dreadful night. It also means that by the time the bombs ripped through the pubs in quick succession, killing 21 and injuring almost 200, Murray was calmly supping a pint several miles away.

Paddy Joe spoke ahead of this week's 40th anniversary of the wrongful conviction of him and five other men for the bombings. He said: "Mick Murray was supposed to phone the warning through. But he went round the side of the Bull Ring and there used to be a wee row around there of two or three (phone boxes) but they were all out of order. So he walked all around the Bull Ring and down to St Martin's Circus and there used to be a wee row there and he said they were all out of order. So he went across to Moor Street. And that phone was out of order. So what did that b***** do? He stood at the bus stop and waited for the bus to come, got on the bus and took the bus to come all the way down the bottom of Lichfield Road to his local pub, The Crown. And he knew there was a phone there so he f***** asked for that and that's where he phoned it."

Murray a father-of-six, who worked as a labourer at a forgings and press factory and lived in Watt Road, Erdington, was named last year as one of the masterminds we believe were behind the horrific attack. By choosing to take a bus out of the city, apparently in his frustration at the faulty city centre phones, it further delayed the alarm being raised, which - given that the bombs went off at approximately 8.17pm in The Mulberry Bush and 8.26pm at The Tavern, should have been made at the latest by 7.50pm. For it was the IRA's official protocol at the time to ensure that, where civilian targets were selected there was a warning of at least 30 minutes. But Murray and the rest of the five-strong terrorist team - out for revenge after IRA bomber James McDade blew himself up while intending to plant a device at the Coventry Telephone Exchange a few days earlier - ignored that. The time lost between when the call should have been made according to IRA directives, and when Murray actually rang it through, amounts to just over 20 minutes.

We will never know exactly what that would have meant in terms of the emergency services getting the pubs properly evacuated, for Murray had been ambiguous as to which buildings the devices were planted in. He could have named the Tavern and the Mulberry Bush, which were both packed with mainly young people on the night, but he didn't. It is safe to assume, however, that there would have been time for a big evacuation of the New Street area. While that probably would not have saved the pubs from being destroyed, it may have saved a good many lives.

Mick Murray was the silent man. The man who had nothing to say as he shared the dock with the Birmingham Six in the pub bombings trial. Throughout the ten week case in the summer of 1975, he remained stone-faced, refusing to recognise the court or make a plea. Tall and well built, Murray, then 38, was a self-confessed member of the IRA, though this was not an offence at the time of his arrest. He was not charged directly with the pub bombings but