

PAP NEWS ISSUE 26 2017

Welcome to **PAP News**. The Penal Affairs Panel of the Unitarians brings news of some current issues in criminal justice, Human Rights and in prisons. Follow the links for fuller information.

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1 No Child is Safe – HM Inspector of Prisons Warns The Chief Inspector, Peter Clarke, reports in his annual report that conditions in prisons are deteriorating at a “staggering” rate. Not one prison for children can be considered safe. Violence and self-harm are increasing quickly while rehabilitation is declining. More suicides were recorded in 2016. See <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/rise-in-prison-violence-youth-jails-young-offenders-no-longer-safe-watchdog-warns-government-a7846886.html>

2 Howard League Compares New and Old Prisons In the last PAP News we reported on the Government's present policy to build new super-sized prisons to expand the prison population. The Howard League has compared the records of the 10 new privately-run prisons built since 1997 and found them just as dangerous as inner-city Victorian prisons despite being protected from overcrowding. See <http://howardleague.org/blog/building-massive-jails-in-remote-locations-is-a-recipe-for-disaster/>

3 European Union (Withdrawal) Bill Criticised By Lords and Bar The Lords Constitution Committee has strongly criticised the Bill now before the Commons as “a significant and unacceptable transfer of legal competence between the Government and Parliament” and raises “fundamental concerns from a rule of law perspective”. Andrew Langdon QC, Chairman of the Bar, has said the Bill would set up UK citizens for second class status after Brexit by reducing the legal remedies available to UK citizens. See <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/unprecedented-and-extraordinary-repeal-bill-under-fire/5062684>

4 Is Having a Prison Inspectorate Worthwhile? Conditions in British prisons have deteriorated in recent years. This is clear from many sources, not least the annual reports of the Chief Inspectors and the reports on announced and unannounced visits to individual prisons. The reports on prisons contain recommendations for improvements but why are they not carried out? Are they simply ignored? See http://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/the-prisons-inspectorate-when-the-recommendations-are-ignored-what-is-the-point-a7900321.html

5 The Lammy Report is Delivered – The Problem is in the Justice System David Lammy was asked to examine and report on why black, Asian and ethnic minority children are so over-represented in British prisons. His conclusion is that racism is widespread throughout the British justice system. His proposals are startling. See <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/sep/08/david-lammy-review-bame-children-face-prejudice-flawed-criminal-justice-system> and for the review, see https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/660000/lammy-review-final-report.pdf

6 Recalls to Prison Rise to Record Levels A prisoner sentenced to more than 12 months must, on release under licence, be supervised for at least 12 months by the Probation Service or the privatised supervision companies. If the conditions of the licence are breached, however slightly, the licensee may be recalled. In 2000/01, there were 3,200 recalls in England and Wales. In 2015–16, recalls had grown to 22,400. At least 6,000 prison places are required to be kept for recalled prisoners each year. The Howard League has began a campaign against this destruction of rehabilitation work and ineffective use of scarce prison resources. See <http://howardleague.org/news/recallspiraloutofcontrol/>

7 Indeterminate Sentenced Prisoner to be Released After 10 Extra Years When the Supreme Court decided in 2012 that Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection were unlawful, they could do nothing for existing IPP prisoners. The result was that the then 7,500 IPP prisoners has slowly reduced to 3,400 in 2017. Many prisoners stay for years beyond their “tariffs”, the period fixed by the sentencing judge. A prisoner is to be released after serving 10 years beyond his 10 months original imprisonment. See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/09/14/prisoner-trapped-jail-decade-longer-original-10-month-sentence/>

8 Women Prisoners Discriminated Against on Release What used to be called Probation Hostels are now “Approved Premises”. The Supreme Court were told there are 96 Approved Premises for men released on licence condition they reside there but only 6 for women. Women on licence often live very far from home and family. After 10 years of repeated criticism of the lack of more local Approved Premises, the Supreme Court found the situation “directly discriminated” against women. See <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/female-prisoners-jailed-away-families-far-supreme-court-uk-prison-service-howard-league-penal-reform-a7752956.html>

9 Threats to Deport EU Nationals The number of EU citizens deported from the UK has grown rapidly in recent years and with more than a year before the earliest date on which the UK might leave the EU, the Home Office has issued about 100 letters to the wrong persons. The Prime Minister has apologised for the Home Office. See <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/aug/23/home-office-apologises-for-letters-threatening-to-deport-eu-nationals>

10 Government Refuses to Make Cold-Calling Unlawful In May 2017, the Government made an election pledge to make cold-calling illegal. The House of Lords is currently considering the Financial Guidance and Claims Bill which proposes to strengthen control of claims management companies. The Peers proposed an amendment to prohibit cold-calling. The Government has refused to agree. See https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/government-kills-latest-attempt-to-ban-cold-calls/5062784.article?utm_source=dispatch&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=GAZ141016

11 Please Send Your News for PAP News Do you have social responsibility news about what your meeting is doing for publication to Unitarians and our friends on the PAP Network? Please send a short note with a link to your website to bruce_chilton@hotmail.com so we might include it in **PAP News**.