

PAP News Issue 17 2014

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1 Emergency Motion to GA Meetings on Books for Prisoners A revised Incentive and Earned Privileges Scheme started in prisons in England and Wales on 1.11.13. The Scheme prohibits parcels being sent to prisoners by families and friends and, in particular, books. The Howard League has launched a campaign urging "the Government to reconsider this draconian measure." The PAP and others are asking the GA meetings to resolve to back the campaign. For the Howard League's Press Release see www.howardleague.org/books-for-prisoners/. For the announcement of the Scheme by the Secretary of State for Justice, Chris Grayling, and the details see www.gov.uk/government/news/major-shake-up-to-prisoner-incentives

2 Use of Pepper Spray on Prisoner Inhuman and Degrading Treatment The European Court of Human Rights heard in February a claim of ill-treatment brought by a life prisoner in Estonia. He claimed he had been chained to a bed for three hours and sprayed with pepper. The Court referred the use of the pepper spray to a specialist body, the European Committee for the Prevention of Degrading and Inhuman Treatment and Punishments. The advice given to the Court was that pepper spray is dangerous and should only be used as a last resort when alternatives such as flak jackets and helmets have been used and failed to control a prisoner's violence. In the decision of the Court, the use of both the restraint and the pepper spray amounted to degrading and inhuman treatment. This case has repercussions for prison and police authorities across the world, including the UK. See *Tali v Estonia* [2014] ECHR, application no 66393/10 (13 February 2014) at <http://hrc.org.au/>

3 Secure College next to Young Offender Institution Announced The Deputy Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Justice together announced what has been described as a "fortified school" to be built at Glen Parva, Leicestershire, as a pilot for more Secure Colleges across the country. The college with 320 places will cost £85 million and will be provided in addition to existing places at a time when the numbers of children and young people in custody have been falling rapidly. See www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jan/17/fortified-school-education-young-offenders-glen-parva

4 Independent Police Complaints Commission to Reform Procedures An IPCC report has urged changes in the way it investigates deaths in custody following complaints from the bereaved families. The report wants witnesses to be interviewed immediately. The practice of police officers sharing information before witness statements are made should come to an end. The report notes the views of relatives that the police receive more favourable treatment than members of the public and recommends better training for the IPCC's investigating police officers. See www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/mar/17/bereaved-families-criticise-ipcc-lack-of-sensitivity

5 Dead Man on Suffolk Beach may have been being Deported Essex police are investigating whether a body found on a beach near Harwich was that of a man being deported to the Netherlands. It follows the deaths of two Albanian men who jumped from the ferry whilst being deported. See www.gazette-news.co.uk/news/11092085.Body_discovered_on_beach_could_be_ferry_jumper/

6 Reports on Children Leaving Custody The High Court has decided that reports on children under the Children Act 1989 should not be prepared by the Youth Offender Team but by the Social Services Department of the local authority. The High Court had quashed the decision of the Parole Board on the ground that the child in question did not have the assistance of an appropriate adult in preparing his application for release. The local authority should prepare the assessment for the Parole Board of the risks to the public of the release and the future arrangements. See www.howardleague.org/fileadmin/howard_league/user/pdf/AFP_K_-_judgement.pdf

7 High Court Orders Home Secretary to Review Refugee Aid An asylum-seeker to UK is given aid usually amounting to £36.62 per week for their essential needs until their case is decided and meanwhile not allowed to work. The Refugee Council challenged the Home Secretary's decision and the High Court decided she has taken insufficient evidence into account when deciding to freeze the aid for three years. The review of aid for refugees by the Home Office must be completed by 9.8.14. See www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/defeat-for-theresa-may-in-legal-battle-over-threeyear-freeze-in-money-granted-to-asylum-seekers-9249297.html?origi

8 Howard League seeks Judicial Review of cuts in Legal Aid for Prisoners The cuts which started on 1.10.13 are being challenged. The Parole Board often require oral hearings on issues of public safety before deciding on release of a prisoner. The Howard League argues the consultation process on the cuts was unfair, the decision unreasonable and the lack of legal representation lowers rather than increases public safety. See www.howardleague.org/legal-news/

9 Three G4S Guards Charged with Manslaughter The guards involved in Jimmy Mubengo's death whilst being restrained on board an aircraft at Heathrow Airport in October 2010 have been charged following the review of the case. But G4S which runs several removal centres has not been charged with corporate manslaughter. See www.theinformationdaily.com/2014/03/13/poor-emergency-care-pervades-immigration-removal-centres

10 Care at Immigrant Removal Centres Poor reports Ombudsman The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman was appointed to investigate deaths and serious incidents at IRCs. The latest findings include poor medical emergency responses, such as slowness in calling an ambulance, lack of medical training and poor communications. There have now been 15 deaths in custody at the immigrant Removal Centres since 2004. See www.theinformationdaily.com/2014/03/13/poor-emergency-care-pervades-immigration-removal-centres

11 Send your news to PAP News. Is your Unitarian Chapel, Church or Fellowship taking action on a social responsibility issue? Tell other Unitarians. Send it to the **PAP News** at bruce_chilton@hotmail.com

Social responsibility is religion in action