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violence formed a routine part of their treatment. When the lesson being taught to children in custody is that power is represented by the power to hurt and control then that lesson will eventually be learned and practised in their own lives. What is sown behind the walls of child prisons will eventually be reaped by the wider community. The campaign to stop the abuse of children in custody shouldn't be viewed as it is by tabloid newspapers and those responsible for that abuse as the prerogative of wishy-washy liberals; the wider society should realise that it has a vested interest in stopping the de-humanization of imprisoned children.

methods as The ritualistic humiliation of children and a clear abuse of human rights.

Phillip Noyes, director of strategy and development at the National Society for the prevention of cruelty to children said: These shocking revelations graphically illustrate the cruel and degrading violence inflicted at times on children in custody. On occasions these restraint techniques have resulted in children suffering broken arms, noses, wrists and fingers. Painful restraint is a clear breach of children's human rights against some of the most vulnerable youngsters in society and has no place in a decent society.

During the 12 months up to March 2009, restraint was used 1.776 times in the UK's four secure training centres.

In the Houses of Lords on 21 July 2010 Lord McNally in response to questions about the methods of control described in the manual said we use the word children very casually to describe often very large and quite violent young people in these centres, and we also have a duty of care to the staff who deal with these often very violent young people. Often disturbed and unruly children, some as young as 12 years of age, are metamorphosed in Lord McNally's mind into large and physically violent young adults as he tries to defend what Ms Swaine the legal director of CRAE, describes as Guidance given in a staff authorised manual to violate human rights because is allows staff to deliberately hurt children outside cases of life-threatening necessity.

What the manual actually reveals is an attitude and mindset that believes damaged and already brutalised children can be made to conform by the use of even more brutality and cruelty. In reality what such treatment creates is more severely disturbed young people seriously alienated from and actively hostile to society. What is being manufactured in these secure training centres are ticking time bombs that are then delivered into the wider community. A disproportionate number of seriously violent offenders and long-term prisoners are the product of a childhood spent in children's homes and youth custody institutions where physical abuse and

For the past 30 years John Bowden has been at the forefront of the British prison struggle, and is by far our most prolific prisoner writer. Time and again, John's articles have shone a searchlight into the State's murky dungeons, exposing brutality and repression, and challenging the very nature of prison. For many years now, John has been held in jail because of his political views and his willingness to challenge injustice. That has never been clearer than now, as the State attempts to use 'secret evidence' to keep him behind bars. Leeds ABC

In The Belly of The Beast

Fyoder Dostoevsky, the Russian novelist and sometimes political dissident, once wisely observed that a good barometer of the level and quality of a society's civilisation is the way it treats it's prisoners, the most dis-empowered of all social groups.

There has of course always existed a sort of socially organic and dynamic relationship between prison society and the wider ordinary society beyond it's walls, and the treatment of prisoners is usually an accurate reflection of the relationship of power that prevails between the state and ordinary working class people in the broader society. It is how political power is shaped and negotiated between the state and the poorer social groups on the outside that essentially determines the treatment of prisoners on the inside.

Prisons are concentrated microcosms of the wider society, reflecting it's social and political climate and the balance of social forces that characterise it's political culture. The more authoritarian and politically oppressive the society, the more brutal it's treatment of prisoners is. The treatment and sometimes the very lives of prisoners is therefore critically dependent on the balance and alignment of power in society generally. For example, changes in state penal policy always tends to reflect shifts and changes in that relationship of power between the poor and powerless and the elites who constitute a ruling class, and it is always the more marginalised and demonised groups such as prisoners who feel and experience the repression more nakedly when society begins to shift even further to the right.

During the 1960s, 1970s and part of the early 1980s structures of established power in society were seriously challenged and the

thinking Ken Clark, include ramming knuckles into the ribs of children and raking shoes down the shins. It also authorised staff to: Drive straightened fingers into the young person's face, and then quickly drive the straightened fingers of the same hand downwards into the young person's groin area. Use an inverted knuckle into the trainee's sternum and drive inward and upward. Continue to carry alternate elbow strikes to the young person's ribs until a release is achieved. Nose distraction techniques – sharp blows to the children's nose had already been found by the Court of Appeal to have been routinely and unlawfully used against children in at least one secure training centre. The contracting out of such brutal methods of control and punishment to institutions run by private firms for profit raises an obvious moral question and issue.

Instructions issued to staff in the secure training centres reveal a calculated understanding that such control techniques could lead to serious injury to the child and even death; the techniques could risk a fracture of the skull and temporary or permanent blindness caused by rupture of the eyeball or detached retina. There is also an acknowledgment that some techniques could cause asphyxia; staff are told that while applying headlocks to children that if breathing is compromised it could lead to a medical emergency.

Carolyne Willow, national co-ordinator of CRAE, said: The manual is deeply disturbing and stands as state authorisation of institutionalised child abuse. What made former ministers believe that children as young as 12 could get so out of control so often that staff should be taught how to ram their knuckles into their rib cages? Would we allow teachers. etc., to be trained in how to deliberately hurt and humiliate children?

Images of Abu Graib prison in Iraq are evoked by instructions instruction to force difficult children to adopt a kneeling position while a second member takes control of the head by grabbing the back of the neck while cupping the chin. Whilst in this position steel handcuffs are applied to the child. Ms Willow describes such

Conditions in Youth Prisons

In 2004 15 year old Gareth Myatt died whilst bring restrained by three members of staff at a privatized children's prison called Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre in Warwickshire. In the same year 14 year old Adam Rickwood hanged himself in another privatized children's jail, Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in Co. Durham. A Judge later ruled that the guards who restrained Adam shortly before his death had used unlawful force on him. Six years later and following a sustained campaign by parents of imprisoned children and groups like the Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) a shocking government document detailing control methods used on children, some as young as 12, in custody has been revealed under the Freedom of Information Act.

Published by the Prison Service in 2005 and classified as a restricted government document, the manual provides staff in secure training centres with authorization to inflict physical pain on children with so-called restraint and self-defence techniques. The methods of physical force described in the manual are so legally questionable that the government was prepared to be taken to a tribunal to fight against disclosure of the document despite a ruling by the Information Commissioner that it should be publicly released. Previously government officials had even refused to provide a copy to the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee. Eventually the Ministry of Justice was forced to back down and release the document; it's contents made the reticence of the Justice Ministry to shame with the public, such information all too self-explanatory.

Some of the restraint methods used against children in custody approved by the Justice Ministry, currently headed by the liberal-

atmosphere and movement of radical social change became manifested within the prison system itself in prisoner protests, strikes and uprisings, and an organised movement of prisoner resistance that was recognised and supported on the outside by political activists, radical criminologists and prison abolitionists. The struggle of long-term prisoners was recognised by such groups as a legitimate political struggle against an institution originally and purposely created to punish the rebellious poor and as an integral part of an entire state apparatus of repressive social control, along with the police and judiciary. Just as the heightened social struggle of groups like the organised working class in the broader society caused a shift and change in the balance of power, within the long-term prison system itself prisoners used the weapon of solidarity and self-organised to collectively empower themselves as a group. This climate of increased struggle and freedom that permeated society generally at that time found expression within long-term prisons and even found limited reflection in the thinking of those administering them with the adoption on policy of the one relatively liberal recommendation of the 1968 Mountbatten report concerning prison security: whilst Maximum-Security jails should make physical security as impregnable as possible the regimes operating in such institutions should also be made as relaxed as possible.

But just as changes in the balance of power can be to the advantage of progressive forces in society so it can shift the other way, and that is what happened in Britain during the 1980s and 1990s with the defeat of the organised working class movement and the apparently finale triumph of Neo-Liberal Capitalism (deregulation, free trade, unfettered profits and minimal state benefits – in short, capitalism at it's most savage) and a Thatcherite ideology of greed is good and "there is no such thing as society". This found expression in the treatment of prisoners with the seizing back of the long-term prison regimes and their re-moulding into instruments of "Dynamic Security" and naked repression. The control and absolute disempowerment of long-term prisoners was conflated with

the necessity of physical security now. And of course the economic principles of Neo-Liberal Capitalism also found expression in the prison system with "Market Reforms" and the flogging off of increasingly greater parts of it to multi-national private prison entrepreneurs. Prisoners would now be bought and sold as commodities and also as a source of forced cheap labour. They would also be taught and conditioned to know their true place in a massively unequal society, and prisons would revert to their original purpose of re-moulding working class "offenders" into obedient slaves of capital and those who own it. Towards this end the huge proliferation and empowerment of behavioural psychologists in the prison system over the last decade is a symptom; the breaking and re-creating of prisoners psychologically in the image of a defeated and compliant working class on the outside has become once again the purpose and function of prisons. Rebellion and defiance in prisoners is now labelled "psychopathic" and "social risk-factors", which depending on how they are "addressed" will determine the length of time one spends behind bars, especially for the growing number of "recidivist offenders" serving indeterminate sentences for "public protection".

As what were once tight-knit working class communities on the outside fractured and were destroyed following the last high point of organised working class struggle during the 1984 miners strike, so the solidarity and unity of long-term prisoners was broken and withered away. The flooding of heroin and crack cocaine into now marginalised and poor communities created an almost alternative economy and was reflected in the changing nature of the prison population. What had been a generation of prisoners from strong working class communities imbued with a culture of solidarity, mutual support and a readiness to confront and challenge official authority, was increasingly replaced by prisoners with no memory of a time before the victory of Thatcherism and the dog eat dog culture it bred and encouraged. The increasing prevalence of drug-orientated crime found expression in the "Millennium con-

There is clearly a greater propensity on the part of staff supervising the behaviour of children in care to view any non-conformist or disruptive behaviour on the part of such children as potentially criminal and therefore requiring intervention by the police and courts at the earliest opportunity, which also absolves such staff of the responsibility of working closely and consistently with young people in dealing with such behaviour in an emotionally supportive setting. How much easier to just offload such "difficult" children onto the courts and Young Offender System, where an awful self-fulfilling prophecy then takes place along with the process of criminalisation and institutionalisation. Ultimately, the wider society reaps the cost and consequences of this abandonment of vulnerable children to the Criminal Justice System.

being referred to the police by Children's Homes and children are being charged with criminal offences and placed before the criminal courts. Ms Cauthery has warned that children in care who receive criminal records for what is in reality normal adolescent behaviour are being drawn into a "vicious cycle" of crime, joblessness and imprisonment, that would go on to seriously affect the lives of their own children. Ms Cauthery said: "Many of the young people we see coming to court have never been in trouble before going into care. These young people are often charged with offences that have occurred within the care home, including damage (e.g. to a door, window, or crockery) and assault (often to one of the care home staff involving pushing and shoving). This behaviour is mostly at the lower end of offending, and in a reasonable family environment would never be dealt with by the police or courts. We worry about these children being criminalised". She added: "Surely the home has a duty to try to help the young people and find other solutions rather than resorting to the courts for minor offences which, in a normal family environment, would not be thought of as offending behaviour". She went on to warn that the maltreatment of children in care might be the reason for the "anti-social behaviour" in the first place, which is what classically happens in total institutions when inmates resist and challenge brutal regimes.

Recent high-profile cases when neglect by social workers has seriously contributed to the deaths of children already at serious risk from abusive or drug-addicted parents has created a public mood and climate favourable to the placing into care of even more poor and disadvantaged children, and for many of them an entry route into the penal system. The massive empowerment of social workers in the wake of tragedies like the Baby P case to remove more children into care, often for contentious and contested reasons, makes it reasonable to ask the question if many of these children actually face even greater abuse and the risk of destroyed lives by being placed INTO care.

vict", lacking in principle and with an acquiescent, submissive attitude towards their captors and a focused determination to do whatever it takes to achieve an early release from prison.

The uprising at Strangeways prison in 1990 was the last significant expression of collective defiance and protest in a British jail and is unlikely ever to be repeated in such a form. The current Justice Secretary, Chris Grayling, with his Tory "Attack Dog" reputation and contempt for the human rights of prisoners, blended of course with his determination to sell-off virtually the whole of the criminal justice system to multi-national capitalism, is a perfect representation of the social and political climate outside prison. Deep economic crisis generates social fear and insecurity, and the scapegoating of marginalised and demonised groups who are used as a focus for public anger. Folk devils and moral panics are stock in trade for the tabloids, Tory politicians and far right groups when social climate is at its most receptive for easy, powerless targets. Grayling is pandering to what he imagines is the masses appetite for revenge, as long as its not focused on those actually responsible for the economic and social destruction of people's lives.

If, as Dostoevsky believed, the treatment of prisoners is an indicator of a society's level of civilisation then we seem to be entering another Dark Age, and of course history provides us with some chilling examples of what can happen when an apparently modern and developed society enters such a phase.

Education Is Subversive In Prison

The role of teachers and educational tutors employed by local colleges and contracted to work within the prison system can be a conflicting and potentially very hazardous one. Empowering prisoners with knowledge in an environment intrinsically organised to disempower them can sometimes be a dangerous activity.

Unlike the function and role of most other types of staff working within prisons (guards, probation officers, social workers and psychologists etc.) that revolve around the containment, control and disempowerment of prisoners, teaching within jails usually involves a relationship with prisoners that is often inimical to that custody and control dimension of prisons. The uniformed guards who basically control and maintain 'discipline' in prisons instinctively understand the empowering influence of education on prisoners, which is essentially why they view civilian teachers working within prisons with suspicion and as an always potentially weak link in the chain of security and 'discipline' (control), whose loyalty is always in question. There is a very strong and all-pervading occupational culture amongst prison guards that views any attempt to empower and humanise those over whom they exact an absolute degree of power as just another step to a liberalism that undermines and weakens the basic function of the prison – punishment and absolute control. It's an attitude and culture that teachers working within prisons are confronted by every day, as well as a balance of institutional power firmly tipped in favour of the guards, who charged with maintaining the physical security of the prison will always inevitably label teachers who question their authority and power as a 'security risk', which is a sure way of getting them

Criminalising Children In The Care System

Criminalising the behaviour of working class children and feeding them into the Criminal Justice System is a practice that has existed for generations and is now responsible for Britain having the unenviable reputation of Europe's worst jailer of children in terms of the numbers imprisoned.

"State raised convicts" form a substantial part of the adult prison population and all share a common genealogy of Children's Homes, Approved Schools, Borstals and Young Offenders Institutions, and finally the long-term prison system. Many children who through no fault of their own enter the so-called Care System are percentage-wise seriously at risk of graduating into the Criminal Justice System and a life disfigured by institutionalisation and social exclusion.

There are currently 10,000 children in local authority care, their number doubling in the past four years, and the government's current "Austerity" agenda with its attack on state benefit and services will so deeply impoverish an already desperately poor section of the population that the number of children from this group entering the Care System is bound to increase significantly.

A leading magistrate and member of the Magistrates' Association Youth Courts Committee, Janis Cauthery, has openly condemned the care system for operating as a doorway into the penal system by regularly prosecuting children for behaviour such as pushing, shoving, and breaking crockery. Behaviour that in normal circumstances would simply be punished by parents is frequently

prison system will protect and insulate her from possible legal proceedings if she refuses to co-operate with the Parole Board . In the past Halliday has no doubt been rolled out many times by the management at Glenochil to write and lend her authority to psychological "risk-assessments" of prisoners that were little more than lies dressed up in psychological jargon, and probably never before has she had to defend or explain any of those lies, hence her cavalier attitude on this occasion when called to submit herself for cross-examination at my parole hearing.

Halliday's behaviour is in fact typical of prison psychologists generally, a group that over the last decade or so has been enormously empowered as the Parole Board and criminal justice system's obsession with the future potential risk of prisoners has increased dramatically. Within the prison system itself the massive proliferation of psychology based and run behaviour modification courses and programmes has become a veritable industry giving prison psychologists a dictatorial degree of power over prisoners, as well as providing them with enormous career opportunities and financial rewards. Within such a milieu of vested personal and occupational interest and common institutional purpose with ordinary prison staff the professional integrity and independence of prison based psychologists is fatally flawed and compromised. The wide scale use of middle class professionals like psychologists to legitimize the repression of prisoners of course breaches all ethical standards and should be exposed, challenged and opposed by all those interested and involved in the struggle for prisoners' rights.

removed from the prison and recalled to a local college usually desperate to protect and continue it's contract with the prison system.

Essentially, however, to usually poorly-educated prison guards it's the spectre of educated and empowered prisoners that disturbs and angers those responsible for maintaining and enforcing the 'good order and discipline' role of prisons, and in the mini totalitarian world of prison the aphorism "knowledge is power" is something clearly understood by those keeping prisoners in a constant condition of absolute powerlessness.

The education department, or Learning Centre at Shotts maximum-security prison in Lanarkshire, Scotland, was, before the arrival of Kate Hendry in the summer of 2011, a place of little inspiration or significance within the prison. The curriculum and number of subjects available was basic and poor, the classes poorly attended, most numbering less than a half-dozen prisoners, and teachers always mindful of their lowly position within the hierarchy of power within the prison. Education and classes were always peripheral to the main daily activity of the jail: enforced attendance in the cheap-labour work sheds where a more acceptable 'work ethic' could be instilled, the fundamental basis of prisoner 'rehabilitation' for those who have failed to accept their true place in class society. Classes were usually attended by those desperate to escape the mindless drudgery of the work sheds but unwilling to risk a 'disciplinary report' and the removal of even the most basic of 'privileges' by outwardly refusing to 'attend labour'. Classes were usually a last option before the punishment of the removal of recreation time with other prisoners or a spell in the very austere lock-down 'segregation unit'.

The function and purpose of the Learning Centre at Shotts had been reduced to achieving little more than the prison's statutory obligation to provide at least the basic rudiments of an education (the three Rs *[reading, writing, arithmetic]*) to those prisoners who needed and asked for it.

Kate Hendry's impact on the Learning Centre at Shotts prison could be fairly described, from the first day, as seismic, simply because of her commitment and dedication to providing a high quality of education to prisoners, something her colleagues in the Learning Centre, apart from the odd, isolated individual, had long ago forsaken in the interests of just supervising a class, not rocking the boat, and continuing to draw a salary. Kate also pushed hard against the boundaries that restricted the development of the Learning Centre, the institutional culture of control and 'dynamic security', that which says prison security is not just about bars, walls, lock and keys, but also about the control of prisoners, both physically and psychologically, and the treating with suspicion of anyone who enters and works with the prison who might threaten or challenge that concept of 'security'. Kate certainly did that with her uncompromising belief in and commitment to the educational and intellectual integrity of the Learning Centre, and her attempt to involve her chief employer, Motherwell College, far more closely in the activity and range of classes provided by the Learning Centre, thereby strengthening its independence from the restricting influence of the prison's management and their uniformed guards who believe prisoners should be watched, controlled and counted, not educated to a point where they might challenge the authority and legitimacy of the regime inflicted on them. An educated convict is a dangerous convict in the eyes of most jailers.

Her achievements within her first twelve months of working at the prison were considerable. She created a high-quality, award winning national prisoners' art magazine based at Shotts. She formed a prisoners/students representative forum with direct input into discussions and decisions influencing the management and quality of the Learning Centre. Virtually single-handedly she created a new library in the jail, where before there existed just a few shelves of pulp fiction and true crime books in an almost inaccessible area of the prison for prisoners. She organised a "Cuba Week", featuring Cuban music, art and films, and a talk from a rep-

noid thoughts"; "It also appears that underlying paranoid thoughts linked to ideas of conspiracies characterize his attitude to prison authority"; "He has a tendency to lapse into paranoid suspicious feelings and thoughts"; "He has an issue with authority figures reflected by his responses in prison". The image created by Halliday in her report to a Parole Board assessing my suitability for release is one of a border-line mentally ill prisoner with a paranoia fuelled hatred of authority and a propensity for physical violence; she claimed that I had been "consistently violent" whilst in prison. In fact, my prison records show that over 30 years I had committed just 3 minor physical assaults against prison staff, the last one almost 20 years ago. Of course Halliday omits any reference to my physical ill-treatment in jail, especially a successful civil action that I launched in 1990 following my sustained beating-up by prison officers at Winson Green jail in Birmingham. Her dishonesty extends itself to blatant lies and twisting of facts; she claims in one place that I was transferred from Castle Huntly Prison in 2008 because I had formed what she described as an "inappropriate relationship with a female social worker" at the prison. In fact, it was what the administration at Castle Huntley claimed was my connection to a "terrorist organisation" (the Anarchist Black Cross) that provoked my transfer from the prison. The Health Professionals Council is now investigating the more flagrant distortion of facts in Halliday's report.

On the 11th March the Parole Board opened it's hearing at Edinburgh Prison and began to hear witnesses, but adjourned midway through the proceedings because Halliday failed to appear. Glenochil jail was contacted and a video link-up facility offered to Halliday via which to give her evidence and be cross-examined but she refused. It might now be necessary for the Parole Board to request that the Secretary of State for Scotland issues a witness summons compelling Halliday to attend the Parole hearing when it resumes in May. Obviously unable to defend the lies in her report Halliday is nevertheless arrogant enough to believe that the

hands of prison staff, so prison employed psychologists dutifully prostitute their authority to stigmatize prisoners as social misfits, psychopaths and sociopaths, thereby re-enforcing their marginalisation and de-humanization and the power of the system over them. In the totalitarian world of prison system-hired psychologists they are encouraged and allowed to vent their innate middle-class prejudices and hatred of the poor and most marginalised confident in the knowledge they will never be held accountable.

In the summer of 2010 the Parole Board informed Glenochil Prison in Stirlingshire that a hearing was to be held to review my continuing imprisonment after 30 years and as part of that process a psychological report would be required to assess my current state of mind and level of risk to the public. A senior forensic psychologist based at Glenochil, Kirsty Halliday, was asked to write the report. Halliday had no intention of writing an unbiased and impartial report, and knowing what was expected of her she immediately sought out the opinion of prison officers who a short time earlier had transferred me from Glenochil for what they alleged had been my attempt to create unrest amongst other prisoners. Before ridding themselves of me the same prison officers had been the subject of investigations by the Scottish Prisons Complaints Commission and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, both instigated by me, because of their concerted attempt to undermine sentence planning procedures and the prisoner personal officer scheme at the prison. Halliday writes in the introduction to her report that she held discussions with these prison officers to get their "impressions of John Bowden's behaviour whilst he was in the prison". The subsequent contents of her report are an obvious reflection of their hatred and bigotry which she provides with the jargon of forensic psychology.

She describes my propensity to complain and protest in prison as a symptom of "paranoia" and a personality disorder, and elaborates on this in the following way: "His tendency to experience strong feelings of anger appears to be linked to experiences of para-

resentative of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign. She was in the process of organising a "Writers in Prison" week, looking at the lives and writing of prisoners of conscience from around the world, before the events that were to lead to her exclusion from the prison unfolded. For the relatively brief period of time that she worked at the prison she created a dynamic in the Learning Centre that was empowering and inspiring, and revealed the true potential of education as a means of transforming the lives of prisoners in a fairly revolutionary way.

I had attended classes in the prison a short while before Kate began working there and had attempted to organise a 'debate' class, encouraging prisoners who attended to learn the skills and confidence of public speaking and debate, something difficult for individuals whose self-esteem has been virtually destroyed by years, and often lifetimes of brutal institutionalisation. The class became a sort of organisational nucleus for events like a large debate held in the prison chapel and attended by prisoners throughout the jail, all debating the topic, "Alternatives to Prison", which a guard at the back of the chapel taking notes would subsequently become an 'entry' in my security file presented to the parole board, that claimed I had simply used "as a platform for his latest political views". Even before Kate's arrival in the Learning Centre at Shotts my presence and influence there was perceived as in some way 'subversive' and probably motivated by intention simply to create disruption and discontent within the jail.

My initial impression of Kate was unfortunately coloured by prejudice and suspicion and so I viewed her as a middle-class liberal probably driven by personal ambition, not the empowerment of my brother prisoners. I was wrong. I eventually collaborated with her on a number of projects within the Learning Centre that were probably viewed by the jail's administration as dangerously 'left-wing' and potentially threatening in terms of the effect they might have had on the intellectual confidence and increased self-esteem of prisoners. Over time the intellectual and political relationship I formed

with Kate would be interpreted by some guards and jail managers at Shotts as a 'security risk' and justification for her removal from the prison. Two events probably became the catalysts for the process that would lead not only to her exclusion from the jail but a deliberate attempt by the administration to destroy her professionally and personally. The first was my openly confronting a delegation of Turkish prison officials being taken on a guided tour of the prison and its Learning Centre by the jail governor and an E.U. Official. Prior to their arrival Kate had made known her views about the visit and how it was legitimising and lending respectability to probably the most brutal prison system in the so-called developed world. She was therefore viewed as complicit in my attempt to embarrass the visitors by confronting them with their verified record of human rights abuse.

The second event was clearly the most critical one, revealing as it did something about Kate's true loyalty in the eyes of the prison guards and clearly marking her out for removal from the jail as a consequence. Guards supervising the Learning Centre had obviously been told to 'keep an eye' on certain prisoners who attended classes ans restrict as much as possible their movement around the centre. I was in no doubt that I was one of the prisoners being more carefully watched.

One morning a young and particularly over-zealous guard decided to interpret the instruction to 'keep an eye' on me as probably a license to put me on a disciplinary charge for whatever he liked. He decided to 'nick' me for smoking in the Centre's tea break area. Not a single one of the twenty or so prisoners also in the area at the time saw me smoking, neither did the guard's own colleague who was also carefully watching those prisoners, including me. The guard's action quickly created an atmosphere of anger amongst both prisoners and teachers in the Centre, although the later had long ago learned never to take a prisoner's side in a dispute with guards and risk professional suicide as far as continuing to work in any prison was concerned.

Letter about prison psychological repression

The use by the prison system of in-house psychologists to medicalise the personality of "difficult" prisoners and prolong their imprisonment has become wide-spread and institutionalised. Historically the involvement and collusion of prison-hired doctors, psychiatrists and psychologists in the ill-treatment and repression of prisoners has a long and infamous tradition. In the 1960s and 1970s compliant prison psychiatrists frequently and unlawfully assisted prison staff to control and subdue "unmanageable" prisoners by forcefully administering psychotropic drugs in a practice known as the "liquid cosh". Jail psychiatrists also provided their authority to facilitate the removal of rebellious prisoners to high-security mental hospitals such as Broadmoor and Rampton in a practise that became known as "Nutting-off". In the early 1990s prison doctors at Wormwoods Scrubs Prison in London were revealed to have conspired and colluded with prison staff in covering-up the physical brutalisation of prisoners in the jail's segregation/punishment unit. A number of prison officers were subsequently prosecuted for having assaulted prisoners and the British Medical Council called for removal of prison doctors from the council's register.

Psychologists employed by the prison system and based in individual prisons are used as an integral part of the control armour of these jails in the guise of a "multi-disciplinary" team based approach to maintaining the status quo and disempowerment of prisoners. Just as prison doctors have sometimes been used to cover up the physical maltreatment and occasionally their murder at the

That is a spectre that unnerves those employed to subjugate and disempower prisoners, and their deepest wrath is reserved for those actively trying to make that spectre a living reality.

Kate, however, was not so constrained and she directly approached the guard and expressed her unease about what appeared to be my victimisation. By appearing to openly take the side of a prisoner against a guard, Kate would provoke an immediate and total hardening of attitude against her by those who ran the prison. Her position wasn't helped by the official perception of the prisoner that she appeared to align herself with – a long-time "subversive" and "disruptive influence" in the prison.

I would subsequently be cleared of the charge the guard had invented against me by a prison disciplinary hearing, but for Kate the nightmare was about to begin.

The guard that Kate had confronted in my defence submitted a "security intelligence report" to the prison's security department alleging that Kate was involved in an "inappropriate relationship" with me and was therefore a "security risk". A prison manager then phoned Motherwell College and claimed that Kate had become "emotionally involved" with a prisoner and she was under suspicion. A manager at Motherwell College then phoned Kate at home late one night whilst her partner and children were present and informed her of the prison's allegation.

She was also informed that when she returned to the jail the following day she would be 'interviewed' by a security manager about the allegation. She was duly summoned to the prison's security department the next day and in the presence of the Learning Centre manager warned that prison staff suspected her of becoming unprofessionally close with a prisoner and that "boundaries" had been crossed. She strenuously denied the allegation and demanded to be shown what real evidence existed to support it. Of course there was none, so she was then warned that I was a "psychopathic" and "subversive" prisoner who was simply "manipulating" her for my own sinister and disruptive ends. She was then questioned about some of the projects we had organised in the Learning Centre and told that prison staff suspected my involvement in them suggested a "politically subversive" dimension to the activities that could im-

pact on the "good order and discipline" of the prison. She was finally warned that I was being closely watched by the guards so her contact with me should be kept to the absolute minimum.

Of course the intention to remove Kate from the prison remained and a second guard submitted a "security intelligence report" on her, claiming she had taken me without permission to the prison library and spent some time there alone with me. This was a complete lie and related to a visit Kate, me and another prisoner had made to the old prison library to assess what books should be retained for the new library. She had obtained permission to take myself and the other prisoner to the old library which was situated in the busy administration area of the jail. The guard who submitted the security report against Kate was actually present with us in the library at the time.

On the 26th September 2012 a known prisoner informer told a member of the teaching staff that Kate had exchanged "love letters" with me and had witnessed us being intimate with each other. The teacher reported the information to the Learning Centre manager, who passed it on to senior prison management. The following day Kate was denied entry to the prison and Motherwell College told her that she would be placed before a college disciplinary hearing on a charge of "gross misconduct". I was also seen by two prison managers and informed that I was barred from the jail's Learning Centre and my behaviour was under investigation.

No "love letters" were ever discovered or produced as evidence against Kate or me, and when closely questioned by security staff at the prison all of the teaching staff said they had never witnessed or seen any inappropriate behaviour between myself and Kate, and neither had any of the guards who supervised the Learning Centre. The prison informer was revealed to be someone with a history of serious mental illness who had previously passed false information to prison staff.

Kate's treatment deeply angered the prisoners who attended the Learning Centre and who had benefited from her dedication and

tireless commitment to prison education, so they organised and signed a petition in support of her and sent copies to the Scottish Prison Service H.Q. And the local M.P. For the area. The M.P. Pamela Nash, wrote to the governor of Shotts, Ian Whitehead, expressing concern about Kate's treatment and asking that the matter be fully and promptly investigated. She also asked that copies of her letter and Whitehead's response to it be made available to all those prisoners who had signed the petition. In his response Whitehead tried to absolve himself or his staff of any responsibility for Kate's removal from her post at the prison and instead shifted the blame and responsibility to Motherwell College, claiming they alone had decided to withdraw her from the prison, and the responsibility for any investigation subsequently lay with them.

A short while after that a story was leaked to a Scottish tabloid that claimed there had been a "love affair" between me and Kate, and inevitably I was described in the usual folk devil way. The purpose of those who passed the story to the tabloid was essentially to destroy Kate's professional and personal reputation.

Following Kate's sacking from the prison all her projects and work in the Learning Centre were closed down and eradicated. What happened to Kate Hendry absolutely epitomises the treatment of any member of staff working in prisons, especially in a 'non-custodial' role, who dares to relate to prisoners with humanity and solidarity. The position of civilian teachers is particularly hazardous in that regard because of the nature of their relationship with prisoners and the potentially empowering effect their work has on prisoners, something prison administrations would rather was purged from prisons for obvious reasons. In many long-term jails the education department or Learning Centre is the one place where its possible to effect a change in the relationship of power between prisoner and jailer, as well as returning some semblance of self-respect and intellectual integrity.