

# ***NO TO IPP! SOLIDARITY WITH JOE OUTLAW, TILL ALL ARE FREE!***

## **WHAT IS AN IPP?**

Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) is a draconian, indeterminate sentence that means an individual can be held for as long as the courts believe they are a threat to the public. This means some IPP prisoners face the prospect of never being released, on the grounds of imagined future behaviour rather than anything they've actually done. Even those lucky enough to be released remain on life long license, meaning that they might be recalled to prison at any time. IPPs were ultimately seen to be too outrageous even by the Coalition government, who abolished them in 2012. However, this abolition wasn't retrospective, so thousands of IPP prisoners are yet to be released.

## **WHO IS JOE OUTLAW?**

Joe is an IPP prisoner who was given an indeterminate sentence for robbery in 2011. He has been trying to draw attention to the ongoing injustice of IPPs, most recently by engaging in rooftop protests at Strangeways in Manchester (the site of a famous revolt in 1990) and again at HMP Frankland. At Strangeways, he wrote "FREE IPPZ" on the roof. Joe has since been transferred to HMP Belmarsh, a prison infamous as a tool for the repression of political and rebellious individuals. This recent transfer is the state's attempt to suppress his resistance and prevent its spread.

## **PRISON (SOCIETY) AND REVOLT**

Prison bosses are rightly afraid of Joe's revolt and the potential it might spread. In fact, British prisons have already seen a number of outbursts of unrest this year. In many institutions prisoners have been trapped in lockdown since Covid, with screws unwilling to grant even the minimal rights prisoners are entitled to. This is due in part to being chronically understaffed and underfunded in their mission to keep in cages those deemed undesirable and unmanageable by capitalist society. Prisoners have been growing increasingly agitated in these intolerable conditions, leading to protests and attempts at revolt when prisoners are given the rare opportunity to mingle and discuss their common cause.

Of course, prisoners are still "allowed" to work - the exploitation doesn't stop. In this way, prisons in crisis (a crisis of funding etc) are simply an exaggerated version of what we can expect from society on the outside, a society which is also mired in perpetual crisis (ecological crisis, cost of living crisis etc - perhaps, if crisis is so normal for this form of society, this society is itself the crisis?). On the outside as in the prisons, there isn't money to facilitate anything but the bare minimum to keep people alive enough to continue being exploited.

Wages fall, benefits fall. Yet still, the government finds money to sling over to its construction contractor mates to build yet more prisons, and expand the ones that already exist (even when they prove unwilling to hire enough people to manage them and stop prisoners from liberating themselves). Cops are granted ever expanding powers to criminalise dissent. In this, we see the solution to society's various "crises", and it's the same as the solution in the prisons: **LOCK 'EM DOWN!** The resisters to ecological genocide, the unmanageable populations pushed to crime and violence by the economic

terrorism called profit, any and all that cannot or will not conform to the increasingly unlivable conditions of the present world, will fill the new prison places. IPPs and prison lockdowns are two of the most on the nose examples of injustice and repression in Britain, but they are not aberrations in a country that seems intent on transforming itself into an open air prison, where every boss is a warden, every manager a screw, every attempt at resistance and failure to toe the line a crime. A country that sold the carrot to buy more sticks.

For these reasons, it's critical that we do not only struggle in solidarity with Joe for the retrospective abolition of IPP sentences and release of IPP prisoners. We must struggle for the freedom of all prisoners, for the abolition of prisons and the boss's world of violent exploitation that uses them to maintain its control over our lives. We need to make a world where life matters, not profit, and we need to do it ***RIGHT NOW***.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Our solidarity with those in revolt inside the prisons must go beyond words and live in our actions. Certainly, words can form a powerful part of action; for example, to express your support to Joe directly, you can write to him at:

Joe Outlaw  
A1236AY, HMP Belmarsh,  
Western Way, Thamesmead,  
London SE28 0EB

However, our solidarity cannot end there. Prisoners take immense risks when speaking out or rebelling, often subjected to tortures such as the years of solitary confinement inflicted onto Kevan Thakrar and now Joe. Words of encouragement alone aren't enough - we have to continue the revolt outside.

All bosses benefit from the continued practice of state-sanctioned kidnap - but certain bosses benefit more than others. Construction companies such as Kier, Laing O'Rourke and Wates are receiving hundreds of millions for building new prisons. Private security firms such as G4S and Serco get to drench themselves in the public money hose reserved only for the functions of repression and control (and bank bailouts, of course). This is despite the relentless allegations of abuse, particularly against G4S staff.

These companies provide the physical, material infrastructure that makes it possible to hold people in captivity. For small groups of trusted friends and comrades, the possible consequences for this infrastructure are limited only by our imagination. Ensuring there are consequences for the companies that benefit directly from getting more and more human beings into cages, is the least we can do to act in solidarity with prisoners.

When enough of us create informal groupings and affinities which independently attack these profiteers with consistency and persistence, motivated by the same ideas of freedom lived in revolt, we can make an unmanageable situation for the bosses of already ailing British prisons.