



THE JURY'S OUT

By Andre Power

First edition, preview chapter

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my Mum, daughter, sister and nephew, as well as my extended family, for the love they have gifted to me.

Also to Ty, whose deep affection inspired me to commence this work.

To my dear "Aardvarks"; Martin, Tina, Fluff and Warren and to the lovely Amos, Tony M, Ollie B, Micky B, Dev, JoJo, Loulou and Trudy in particular, who have never failed to inspire me, protect me and teach me the real meaning of friendship, as well as too many other friends to mention, all much loved and cherished.

To dear Jooli who tirelessly typed the first draft from my hand written manuscript, massive thanks.

For all the inmates and staff of Chelmsford Prison, in February and March of 2012.

And finally for Terry Power, my father. Rest in peace.

FOREWORD

This book was written not just in light of my own difficult experiences of the past decade, but also to highlight the perilous state of our public services and institutions. It also seeks to address the takeover of our "justice" system by vested interests, supported by an ever more supine and corrupt collective of judges and law lords, who have abrogated all responsibility to uphold the law in favour of their political and establishment interests and corporate paymasters. Never has a poor man or woman been so vulnerable and defenceless against a remorseless and unyielding government machine that brooks no dissent, no challenge and no explanation of its all too often twisted and subverted public services, least of all by the people who fund them.

It proposes a forensic examination of the breakdown of our current justice system, literally from the inside out and the dreadful cost to civic society that this is enabling. It shockingly illustrates the further anguish subjected on the most vulnerable in our society, notably our less able children and our disaffected youth, whilst also highlighting how the state has sought avidly to remove the father from his traditional role as protector and steward of his children.

Finally and most importantly it richly identifies the main reason this absurd and totally non-civil set of circumstances have been allowed to fester and corrupt our entire understanding of what a true democracy should be. That is the single most important factor; the thread of commonality that is at the heart of so many of the issues I have identified. That is the systematic removal of our rights to a jury in all but an ever-diminishing number of criminal cases. I have sought to point out how this one omission in a supposedly civil society has ripped the heart out of what should be a great and noble democracy.

There are only a few of the protagonists named, as these have all been involved in court hearings against me, so it is a matter of public record. I have been scathing of their roles in such actions and have presented my critique of them with sometimes utterly withering objectification. I stand by every word. If they have the temerity to challenge such observation of their actions and deeds then sue me. I can assure you, that will simply not happen. That fact alone should tell you so much about these dysfunctional public servants.

The UK has a magnificent and diverse group of peoples that are constantly stymied in their quest for excellence by a few vested interests. Without the right to jury, we have been controlled and subjugated in ever more suffocating ways. It is my hope that this book goes some way to engender a debate that will ultimately ensure the return of a *court de jure* in all cases, civil and criminal, where it is requested, as an inalienable and inherent right for each and every one of us. I hope that after reading this book that you too agree with this and add your voice to the growing numbers of us who seek to bring a true democracy to this great and glorious sceptred isle.

Andre Power

Chapter One

TUESDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2012

Well, today is court day. Not by choice, I hasten to add! Castle Point Borough Council have been chasing me for unpaid Council Tax for the period of May 2011 to March 31st 2012. They have spent the last six months or so trying to force me to attend court.

In the past, since the original Poll Tax was introduced, followed by Council Tax, I have paid every single year this iniquitous tax, so it's not like I'm a serial dodger. I've probably paid approaching £20,000 up till this point. As 25% of this is my contribution to council employees' pensions, I have therefore funded £5,000 toward the pensions of strangers whilst having no pension of my own whatsoever and, at nearly fifty-four years of age, very little time to remedy this perverse scenario.

Since 1976, when I left college, I have been self employed virtually all that time. I have had various small businesses, including four invited into the Essex County Business Award Finals, with one winning the Millennium Award in 2000. I have also won two Southend District Business Awards. At a guess, via business and my personal expenditure, I have contributed over £250,000 of VAT and also, via my staff and myself, a similar figure in Inland Revenue income tax payments.

Furthermore, I have smoked for thirty-five years, drunk socially for a similar period and driven a car for nearly thirty years, as well as supporting company car costs in the past. I estimate that the duties and taxes on these alone amount to around £100,000. Plus, I have paid over £10,000 in fines and council charges and have been a social gambler, mainly on horses, and imagine I have contributed a further £25,000 in betting tax. Add about £2,500 for TV licensing, £25,000 in import taxes and maybe £5,000 in personal National Insurance contributions and you have a grand total of two thirds of a million pounds, or average £18,000 per annum since I left college at eighteen years of age. I remark on all this purely to illustrate that I have not been remiss in paying my way throughout my adult life. A lot less than some perhaps, but a fair amount more than others.

Ah! But what have I taken from the Government benefit pots in that time? I was out of work for nearly a year as a young man and probably received around £2,000 in "dole" payments as it was then known. I was also out of work for a year recently, due to stress and ill health, the cause of which I will identify in these writings. In that time I claimed around £10,000 in benefits. I also previously claimed about £1,500 of tax credits. That's £13,500 in thirty five years, averaging around £400 per annum. At college I received about £1,500 in grants and I've probably cost the NHS around £30,000 thus far. Therefore, my net costs have been £45,000 - as set against nearly

£670,000 of contributions. Not an inconsiderable sum for a self employed guy who has never personally earned more than £25,000 in any single year, even when I had a £million plus turnover company.

I have a beautiful daughter, who was statemented as a child with learning difficulties, probably dyspraxia and mild but obvious autism. She lived with me for half of every week for the best part of fifteen years, as I parted with her mother when she was still a baby. I never received any child benefit, tax credits or carer allowances in that time. I personally paid for a host of new and innovative therapies for her along the way, without a penny of support from any government agency.

Impressive as it may sound I've been no angel, especially in my youth. In my early twenties I got involved with other rather clueless counterparts and was arrested for credit card fraud. The total amount proven was £6,300 and the Judge ordered I repay the entire sum by way of compensation. In the mid-eighties that was a huge sum of money, especially for a rudderless ex-council house kid. I'd never seen such a sum, let alone even earned such in a single calendar year at that stage. Nevertheless, I repaid it all in full over the next five years and considered it a lesson in culpability. We were buying credit cards at £50 each from a local wideboy at a pub in Benfleet and running them until they were at their limit. I made a poor decision in taking this route and thereafter thought that was the way of things when you went outside of the law. I resolved never to get embroiled in such again and never have, though I have been a social drug user. But, that principle, if you through negligence, ignorance or downright criminality cost others, then you must make full reparation remained paramount in my understanding thereafter. What I never realised until the last decade is that that only applies to the "underclass": the worker bees, the self employed, the private sector and the middle classes. But, it decidedly doesn't include those we pay our taxes to employ – more pertinently the senior management and directorate of our public sector agencies, the senior civil service autocracy that has grown to the point where we have become suffocated by their incumbent bureaucracy and red tape, drowning in statutes and obsolete legislation, overwhelmed by charges, new taxes, levies, tithes, fines and interest payments. This obscene state of affairs, allied to a state legislature and civil service hierarchy that brooks no protest by the people who fund these supposedly august organisations and which remains rooted in nepotism, secrecy and non-transparency without even recognising it has any reason to justify such conduct is the single greatest barrier to true democracy and human rights facing our country and many others to this day. It is also the reason for my apparent fall from grace in the decade commencing 2003.

As we move on I will fully relate the episodes that concluded in my eventual unlawful imprisonment, but suffice it to say, that in all that time I have lost my right to a family, my right to health to a large degree, my right to conduct my business without interference, my right to prosperity such as it was, my ability to generate

income, my right to a home which has been severely impeded as I cling onto it by a mere thread, my right to freedom and liberty and my right of consent.

These scenarios have been detailed in letters to the Courts, to Castle Point Borough Council, to the Chief Constable of Essex Police and copied to my woeful excuse for an MP, Ms. Rebecca Harris, who has provided nothing but another drain for the dutiful taxpayer. These letters sum up my utter incredulity at the negligence inflicted upon me by various agencies highlighted below, not one of which has ever felt bound to explain their actions, justify their methodology or even to offer a meaningful response to a decade of complaints submitted to and levied against them in that time.

They include the following groups and agencies:

Essex Probation Services
The Prison Service
The Home Office
Essex Police
Her Majesty's Court Service
The Ministry of Justice
Southend County Court
Southend Magistrates Court
Castle Point Borough Council
CAFCASS
CORE
Southend Social Services
Royal Courts of Justice
Essex County Council Legal Dept.
Legal Aid

I have also written to every serving MP in the country, every Lord and Lady in the House of Lords and so many complaints bodies from the police to HMCS that I have truly lost count. I have yet to receive one reply that even begins to deal with a single complaint, let alone the litany of abuse I have been forced to correspond over. The hubris is overwhelming, the corruption quite breathtaking and the refusal to even acknowledge a single fault quite staggering. I shudder to think how ordinary people, perhaps without my ability to take on such entities, ever cope in such a rigged structure of officialdom. Doubtless, they just keep paying the piper and hope against hope that they can hold on to what little resources and self-respect they have left, and when you see such a well oiled machine lined up against you it is hard not to agree with their reticence in challenging such. As stated, I have endured the most appalling negligence and corruption of public service imaginable via the aforementioned agencies. I have been violently interred against my will and

threatened with violent apprehension, all over civil matters of dispute, never criminal matters of intent. I have been forced to engage in dozens of court appearances in that time and am yet to ever see a jury of my peers, despite fervent requests for such in many instances. Instead, I have been hung out to dry by an alarming amount of bent and corrupt judges, magistrates and law lords. They include the insipid and self serving Justice Blair, brother of our ex-prime minister Tony, and the ignoble, pompous Lady Justice Hallett, who arrogantly refused the right of the 7/7 victims families to ask questions at the inquiry that she headed. I know how I would feel if I was barred from asking questions of the authorities who were supposed to be dealing with such tragic circumstance.

This is the major flaw in our supposedly “public” services. They are patently not transparent. We who fund such have no say whatsoever. Freedom of Information requests are exempted or glossed over in many instances. There are no public enquiries, no involvement in policy agendas by taxpayers who pay their bloated salaries, pensions, health insurances, legal costs, “expenses”, credit cards and more frequently their huge redundancy payments. When added to a legal system that patently fails to support any private litigation against public sector bodies whilst completely supporting the abrogation of our human rights in such cases, notably the right to a fair trial, we are left to lick our wounds and return to the economic slavery thereby enforced upon us to pay for this parasitical social injustice.

It’s important at this juncture to differentiate the vultures in senior management, executive and directorial positions from many of the worthy and often unsung and diligent frontline workers. But even this is muddied by good people trying to do good things often hamstrung by the diktats of these senior officials, whilst also being hampered further by fellow workers only too keen to impress their bosses in order to move up the greasy pole.

One dear friend of mine was ex-head of a county probation services. He is an outstanding, humble and wonderfully principled and moral man. Contrast that with the toadlike present incumbent of Essex Probation, Ms. Mary Archer, (not the sainted Lady Archer, wife of the author Jeffrey, I hasten to add), who engineered an injunction to stop me asking her why she allowed a fifteen year recidivist, a violent thug, halfway through a prison sentence for burglary, on electronic tag, to be emplaced in my household in my absence, when I also had a ten-year-old special needs child living there? She also wrote to every other Head of Probation in the country to stop me trying to establish the protocols that should have been followed. Thankfully, one did advise me and as I thought, as the principal occupant and rentpayer of the house, of course I should have been consulted and furthermore, as my daughter was statemented as “a very vulnerable child”, this should have prohibited the offender ever even being considered for such a placement, let alone actually being ensconced there with a communal bathroom opposite her bedroom.

Naturally, a single judge, with no sign of a jury found in her favour, he also refused to allow me to question this obnoxious toad, so as to establish why she was refusing to answer my letters, and she sat glowering in the background, obviously having already sorted out with the judge that she was not going to have to justify her utter negligence and complete abrogation of duty and civic responsibility.

In the lead up to today's case concerning my alleged "wilful neglect" in not paying Council Tax for this particular year, I have had over two dozen police in couples and foursomes turning up at all times of day and night unannounced at my house, all without anything so much as masquerading as a lawful warrant for my arrest. One in three have been reasonably courteous and respectful in managing this unlawful task. They appear to be conflicted by the demands of the job they are doing, but are unable to do the right thing, as like the rest of us their job is all that stands between them and a nightmare of indebtedness and life on the unemployment lines. Unlike most of us, they are witness to the results of such abuses of the civil law enforcement that are now endemic in our country, suffocated by statute, fines and levies, repossession and council byelaw enforcement. They attend evictions and property snatches in support of the bailiffs, but ostensibly to ensure there is no "breach of the peace". But actually they know they are there to blindly and without question support such endeavours that ensure ordinary people are dispossessed or made homeless on behalf of the faceless corporations and authorities on whose behest they are really now employed to act for.

Furthermore, those who do seek to challenge the status quo are sidelined and marginalised, moved on, transferred, forced into early retirement, sacked or worse, find themselves in court for the mere act of being a whistleblower or releasing "privileged" information. Woe betide the truth sayer or anyone who argues against internal protocols or procedural public service dictates, increasingly politicised and pursuant of an iniquitous social engineering programme known as "Common Purpose" in the UK.

As I say, one in three on average of the police I have dealt with under Essex Police employ, seem to be considerate of the aforementioned and try to tread softly and without undue vigour and zest for their sometimes distasteful "duty". Sadly, that leaves two-thirds who don't have such sensitivities and they conduct themselves with ardent zeal through to utter animal-like ire, spitting bile and vitriol, thinking nothing of common assault or of inflicting incumbent mental anguish that they seem so fervently happy to exacerbate and invoke.

In which case, how does a pleb, a prole or a worker bee ever challenge, negotiate resolve or arbitrate with such unwieldy and unyielding civic agencies? That is a question that has gone round my head endlessly over the past decade. Is our place in all this merely to endeavour without question, to toil without complaint, to endure

without critique of our supposed lords and masters? Is that what I have contributed two thirds of a million pounds in direct and indirect taxes for? Is that right? Is that fair, just and equitable? Is that the “democracy” we have all been conscripted into?

Then, lo and behold, I discovered Common Law, the original law of the land as passed on from King Alfred’s time and formalised in the Magna Carta in the thirteenth century and finally ratified in the Constitution, as set out in the seventeenth century.

The beauty is in the simplicity. These are God’s laws, as laid down in the Ten Commandments – thou shalt not kill, steal etc. These are the obvious principles of civil society. They can also never be changed. It will always be wrong to kill, though mitigation such as self-defence may influence the judgement and sentencing. This is why such cases of criminal law have always had a jury to ensure a balanced and fair ruling. Common Law also recognised that man’s laws, or statutes, would also have their rightful place. These however are mutable in that they can be amended, superseded by new legislation or even repealed. And because they may also conflict with God’s laws or because they can be created to further advance the King or Queen’s power and latterly that of Parliament’s, they were never intended to be absolute laws. They can never supersede our natural laws, therefore they required the consent of Freemen for them to be enforced. Typically, a new tax could be introduced. If a Freeman discerned that this was an unfair toll then he could withhold payment. He would then have to attend a court to explain his reason in taking such action. Most pertinently, he had the option of calling for a “court de jure”, a jury of his peers, being twelve persons good and true.

These juries had the right to decide whether or not said person should be made to “stand under” such legislation, with the full power to rule against the statute or law, as they felt appropriate. This then ensured the checks and balances that would assure the Freemen of the land that they could never be enslaved or become subordinated to a debilitating bureaucracy or corrupted Parliament. No Act, Law or Statute has ever been able to change this – it is enshrined both in our Constitution and the Magna Carta. It cannot be revoked or ignored, though that is now the scenario in our courts, where our right to jury has been severely curtailed and disabled. Please remember in the case to be tried today and every other cited case I have been involved in that you will become privy to as this book unfolds, I have never seen sight of nor been granted my right to a jury. The most outrageous example of this was Justice Blair, when I took the Ministry of Justice to court. I asked him, “who pays your salary and pension? It’s the Ministry of Justice, is it not? Therefore there is a clear conflict of interest and you must stand down and grant me a hearing that is jury led.” Naturally, he declined. Another arrogant and self important spiv, puffed up on his own presumed credibility and bloated contempt for

those who seek to challenge his right of authority over us. I cannot tell you the contempt I hold this odious chancer in.

Thus, like a growing band of free thinkers, lawful advocates and non-violent anarchists and activists who are opening up to this knowledge, I embarked on a mission of "lawful rebellion" whereby I refused to give my consent any longer in the summer of 2011 to being taxed by my local authority, as the service provision it pays for is no longer responsible to those of us who fund it. Letters to the local authority, the police and the courts fully detailed my reasons for taking this path, after a ten-year abuse of my rights had also left me bereft of funds and barely able to pay household bills or heat the house. At the time of my arrest I had no car, no TV, my phone/broadband was about to be cut off, I was facing possible house repossession and I had 76p in my only bank account. I had no savings, shares, investments or pension and absolutely nothing of intrinsic value by way of possessions. The most valuable thing I had in the house was an eight year old computer. I was also in massive debt as a result of my failed business. Naturally, I had no contents insurance. I'd had one week's holiday five years previously to Lanzarote with my daughter. All the relevant agencies dealing with my case were fully versed to my dint of circumstance, including the year-long cancer tests I had just been through, prolapsed disc I'd had physio for and the fact I'd almost certainly earned under the threshold to even be obliged to pay Council Tax. As you will see, absolutely none of this was taken into account at the court hearing I was about to attend this day.

Due to the unreal corruption of courts in my previous cases I was unwilling to recognise a lower court, in a purely civil matter, unless a jury was agreed upon to hear my case. The issue for me, besides the obvious danger of being sentenced at the whims and fancies of a single judge or magistrate is the fact that our courts are supposed to be beholden to God's laws; the Common Law of the land. I wished to know whether that salient and inalienable right had been subverted, perverted and diminished by eight hundred years of legislation, statute, European and international laws? That is what I sought to establish in taking this stance.

It is also a question of "who owns me?" Am I a legal fiction, sold at birth via certification and bound by implied contracts and statutes that make me the property of the state, the local authority and the corporations, or am I a sentient being, a sovereign person, a freeman, able to decide via consent my own path in life, without interference or impediment? This then is the state of play as I prepared for yet another unlawful court hearing.

In order to get me in court, Essex Police had attended my house on numerous occasions and each time I'd politely declined their offer unless they presented me with a lawful warrant, printed on HMCS paper, signed by a serving judge in wet ink, with a court seal. They had come round mob-handed on more than one occasion

and one officer in particular had been spitting venom and vitriolic threat as if my clash with the local authority was a matter of his personal concern. They had also been to call when I was out, knocking on neighbours' doors and asking my whereabouts, asking if I drove a car, what time I was normally at home, if I had a girlfriend and other utterly outrageous questions, bearing in mind I was wanted for alleged non-payment of Council Tax for a year that hadn't even ended yet, as March 31st was the end of said calendar year. When I found out I went ballistic, phoning up the police and challenging them as to why they would act with such unbelievable zeal over a civil matter, especially considering that I had met with them at my door two or three times previously and said I'd be happy to go with them if they presented a lawful warrant for my arrest.

What is incomprehensible to me is the fact that I had written to Essex Police and requested that they stipulate their involvement in any such civil matters and also if they would be supporting Council-employed bailiffs if they tried to enter my house. They replied that they would attend only to stop any breach of the peace. So you can imagine my chagrin on realising that my peace was only being breached by said police force, with their incessant harassment and continual cajoling en masse of both myself and my neighbours over precisely such an issue, when they had stated in writing that they would only attend to "stop a breach of the peace". That alone is a brazen dereliction of duty and also a clear breach of their own correspondence to me. Effectively, they "set me up" with blatant lies and utterly corrupt enforcement of their own stated protocols for the handling of the matter.

Even more puzzling was the phone call I received from a police officer soon after my telephone complaint concerning aforesaid harassment. He advised me that he now had a "lawful/legal warrant" and that they would be attending on Tuesday 21st February at 7.30am to arrest me and take me to Southend Magistrates court, where apparently a "bail hearing" was to be played out. This begs the obvious question; what on earth do they think they were doing piling round my house at regular intervals previously if they didn't even have as much as a warrant for my arrest? If that's not abuse of process, harassment and a contravention of various of my human rights then I'd like to know, what is?

So, they came at 7.30 this morning and it was no great surprise to find out that it was a pack of lies engendered to manoeuvre me into a court room that was already prepped to render a decision against me, regardless of my plea or current circumstance. The "warrant" they presented to me was a plain paper photocopy of their own making that was utterly worthless. I rejected it immediately on presentation and shut the door on them after remarking that I would not be leaving with them until/unless they presented a lawful document. However, things then took a nasty turn. The attending police shouted at me that they would break down the door if I refused to go with them and I would be handcuffed and taken away if I

did not go willingly. They also stated that the “real” warrant was at the police station and that I could see sight of it then. It was then that I made what I believe was a fatal decision. Instead of calling their bluff and responding that I had no obligation to leave without representation of a lawful warrant, I regrettably agreed to their demands. I was concerned my door would be left smashed and wide open in my then absence and I also didn’t want my neighbours to see me being dragged handcuffed into a waiting police car against my will. The policeman who was doing most of the talking said I would not be handcuffed if I came quietly, so reluctantly I conceded the standoff and was shown to the waiting police car without restraint and taken to Southend Police Station. I had no money on me and just my key and a mobile. I hadn’t even had time to leave any instructions to my lodger if I were not to return, though as I was led to believe I was going for a bail hearing I had no real reason to expect I wouldn’t be returning for some time.

Once there I immediately asked to see the warrant. The desk officer showed me another plain piece of paper headed “Essex Magistrates Court”. It was not on HMCS headed paper, it had no apparent seal or stamp on it, but was signed, in an illegible scrawl, without printed determination of who by underneath, with the word “Judge” crossed out and “Justice of the Peace” written in its stead. I challenged this sham piece of paperwork. Only Her Majesty’s Court Service has the lawful right to force any person to appear in a court room, otherwise it isn’t a lawful court. In fact, it isn’t even a recognised civil/county court, rather an administrative court for an unincorporated local authority – effectively a Corporation with a Chief Executive and Directorate. In other words, this is a whole new level of the judiciary, solely established to enforce statutes via unelected authorities, profitmaking bodies, corporations in all but name, who seek to unlawfully impose a new level of taxes and charges, fines and tithes on us, without fear of recrimination or even our implied, let alone implicit consent.

The warrant was immediately withdrawn from my perusal and I was refused a copy of such. The desk officer said I would be granted such in the hearing to follow (more lies!) It should again be noted that I had previously been advised that this was a “bail hearing”, presumably to set a court date in the near future to hear this matter in full. As Council Tax hearings apparently normally take place on a Wednesday, not a Tuesday, I had no reason at that stage to believe otherwise.

Then, I had my keys, phone, belt, jacket, trainers and handkerchief taken and was hand searched, presumably for contraband and/or weapons and then taken to a holding cell under the court itself. It was now around 8.30 am. Approximately three hours later I was taken from that cell in handcuffs to a holding point in the courtroom where the handcuffs were removed. I was now on display to the various puffed-up officials in the benches and a host of young schoolchildren at the back, doubtless there for the day to be indoctrinated into the ways and methodology of the

alleged great and good. I felt very alone all of a sudden and also nervous as something didn't seem right. My thoughts suddenly became jumbled and I was now unsure of my approach to this scenario. I had no prepared notes as I had been taken without the ability to produce the mitigating circumstance and welter of information on the hard drive of my computer, amounting to hundreds of pages. I hoped they had read all my previous submissions to the court, the police and the local authority over these matters, but now I felt that without access to such paperwork that I was vulnerable if I couldn't produce such on demand. I'd soon find out, I supposed.

It should be noted that Essex and notably Southend-on-Sea are run by freemasons, who have an unrealistic stranglehold on our public services, courts and local authorities with a hitherto all too cosy relationship on such as contract tendering, which any cursory review of such will prove all too revealing. For decades there has been an iniquitous form of freemason nepotism engaged in on the golf course and in secret meetings that has allowed local authority senior executives and fellow freemason businessmen to foster "friendly" tendering for service contracts and the like. It is only in the past few years that this has softened slightly, due to a few public scandals that caused a slight easing on such restrictive practices. But make no mistake, it's still alive and kicking and I was about to be another victim of such contempt for the ordinary citizen within our community.

This alone is a very compelling reason to request a jury in any such "civil" hearing, otherwise the obvious bias of self-seeking freemasonry to maintain its grip on public dissent is difficult to surmount. I am not a mason and resent being judged by them and their acolytes rather than a jury of my peers. The current state of play is not conducive to challenge such ploys of the Essex elite. I personally think that any member of a secret society should at least be bound to declare such and even barred from assuming such positions that allow them to engineer the imposition of taxes, fines and imprisonment to suit their long term aims and short term gains. It is a sobering thought that all the people who have been involved in this: police, magistrates, council enforcement officers and court officials are all dependent on our willingness to fund their jobs and positions of power over us. They will brook no dissent or revolt by the great unwashed that feed them. It wasn't nurses and teachers, train drivers or street cleaners who battered on my door incessantly for nearly a month, trying to entrap me with fictional and fake warrants, was it?

Whilst standing there like a captured beast on display, my eyes were drawn to the bench as we were told to stand for the magistrates – an anachronism in itself, as surely, they being the public servants should stand for us? Three people appeared, late forties, early fifties. Two instantly forgettable grey haired non-entities, both male, were flanking exactly the type of woman I was dreading. An older, uglier version of Sarah Palin; a veritable "pig in lipstick" indeed, with large framed glasses that made her porcine eyes appear even more bulging and detached from the brain

that was pulsing malevolently behind them. I've met more than my share of these desensitised pretenders of the feminine persuasion. Cold, arrogant, stoked up with her own self-importance; an overweight, over-promoted succubus, relishing the opportunity to enforce the pitiful amount of power she possesses and presumes as her God-given right. Obviously childless, as are so many who involve themselves in these judicial environs. They make judgements on mainly young offenders day in and day out, without even having a point of reference that normal functional parents have concerning raising a child in these straitened times.

This was my main argument with CAF/CASS, Southend Social Services and CORE, who involved themselves so assiduously, heartily and negligently when I three years previously sought the prompt renewal of my court order for continual joint stewardship of my daughter. I submitted bitter complaints about the unending number of middle-aged spinsters and their young unmarried apprentices who so insidiously interfered and impeded with every aspect of my attempt to be reconciled with my child. Surely it is not too much to ask that senior staff at these agencies that primarily deal with children and parents, young offenders and teenagers in trouble, kids up for adoption, should at least have the experience of raising a child before dictating such scenarios to those of us who have. As oft-stated to so many, I had fifty glowing references to my ability as a father, including from one of the leading childcare protection specialists in the country and a number of other professionals in this field, whilst the mother had none, not even from her own family! The scandal is that the people who all got involved in this farce were obliged to provide no reference, no proof of their ability and no real-life background that might hint at their own child-rearing skills. Indeed, their only criteria appeared to be the ability to toe the party line, whereby their pre-programmed doctrine of "common purpose", the basis of their diabolical social engineering programme, was enacted and children became pawns in the State's pursuit of the breakdown of traditional family structures, where the State sets the agenda and the parent, notably the father, becomes a mere child-rearing subordinate, unable to challenge such vexatious and heavy handed interference in their right to raise their children.

In the fifteen years previous I had never raised a hand to her or even had to punish her in any way as she had responded so well to all the love that been showered upon her. A gentle, loving and beautiful child with learning difficulties, she had been a delight and constant wonder to me in all that time. However, her mother had, unbeknown to me until the trial, been under Social Services scrutiny with a litany of written concerns that I was only ever allowed to know the headlines of and never the detail. They had expressed serious concerns about the mother's stewardship as well as allegations of sexual abuse by the mother's boyfriend, which to this day every agency involved has refused to elaborate on. So, why was I the one no longer able to see our child? Good question, and one we will never know the answer to as I have never received more than a paragraph by way of response to richly detailed

submitted enquiry. "We are not obliged to furnish you with..." "This request is exempt from the Freedom of Information Act..." "Your request is being considered by..." "Thank you for your letter which has now been forwarded to..." and so on, *ad nauseam*. I may seem to be digressing with my relation of such previous clashes with government agencies and the courts, but it's important to remember that I was in court today because I refuse to pay taxes any more that will support these groups in condemning further of our citizens to similar misery and tragic circumstance. They want us to pay and feel no obligation to even explain their actions when such disputes are dealt with. And as you will see as we go forward, this is just one of several such miserable encounters I was forced into over the previous few years. Enough to make me ill physically and mentally for a time – and enough to make me realise that only a serial masochist would actually pay to have it done again and again to them.

So, back to the pig in lipstick and the grey silent men who flanked her. In front of her on a lower bench, on his own, was another grey man who appeared to be the Clerk of the Court, whose job it seemed to me was to stop me having my say. Further behind him, alone on a bench was yet another grey head, a rather forlorn man of little obvious persona or *joie de vivre* who I presumed was the senior enforcement officer for Castle Point Borough Council. What chance is there for judicial reform when we have turned over our courts to such sad, pinched, grey non-entities as these? Would it be too much to ask for personnel with genuine intuition, loving natures, charismatic and real, life-enhancing empathetic men and women to populate our courts, instead of these relics from the middle ages? These are Inquisitors and Witchfinder Generals, who yearn to get back to the halcyon days of flogging, forty lashes and public executions. They represent a byzantine, antiquated, but nevertheless all-powerful legal system which has treated reform with the utter disdain of a titled lord to the peasants who would seek to cross his land. They know better – who are we to challenge such vested authority? Don't we know our collective place after eight centuries of corruption of our common law rights? They say the law is a "living thing". But, all living things die and our law is in the last throes of dotage, choking on laws and statutes that would actually take us ten lifetimes to read and God alone knows how long to interpret and comprehend, giving rise to the further much more pertinent maxim, "the law is unknowable".

Back to the court proceedings.

"Is your name Andre Power?"

I responded. "I am here making a special appearance, *in propria persona*. Is that acknowledged?"

"No, it is not!"

I then responded, "Are you telling me that this hearing will not be held in respect of my request for my common law rights to be upheld?"

Answer, "That will not be happening in this court!"

My further response, "Then you are in breach of your oaths of office and I demand a *court de jure* as is my inherent right."

The pig in lipstick retorted. "This court will proceed without you if you refuse to confirm your name and you will be returned to custody and sentenced in your absence!"

I replied, "I have no legal defence or attorney assigned, therefore if you intend to sentence me in my absence I must be allowed to conduct my own defence – are you denying me that right?"

At that point, they decided to move me from the screened area up to the left of them, to the witness stand, to their immediate right. Bear in mind it was only at this juncture that it dawned on me I was not here for a bail hearing, as the police had totally misled and deceived me on such.

"Are you Andre Power?"

"That's *Master* Power to you, the name that belongs to my sovereign person and not the legal fiction you seek to have me stand under."

There was then a heated ten-minute exchange between us. I was being questioned by the pig in lipstick and the clerk of the court who kept supporting her with further impertinent and often unfounded interjections. It became apparent that the Magistrates hadn't even read any of my detailed previous letters and submissions to the court or copies of letters to the Police and the Local Authority. She said that my previous disputes were nothing to do with Council Tax (which is funny as most of the agencies who have abused and infringed on my human rights over the past few years are all recipients of funding from such) and asked if I intended to pay or not?

At that point I reiterated what was already in statements previously submitted. I had 76p in my only bank account and £150,000 of indebtedness brought on by Her Majesty's Court Services, previous proven negligence against me. That was not in dispute, even by Justice Blair, who ruled on such. He had, though, ruled that they were not liable for such negligence as they were crown civil servants. How, therefore, could I be effectively liable now I had been dispossessed of my business, credit rating, finances and earning power if they weren't? I further related that I had

no car, electric, gas and water were all on meters, two being prepaid ones and that my modest work in providing appointment generation for commercial solar installations was currently at a standstill as the government had halved the tariffs and commercial sales were collapsing, due to the continued uncertainty over the past three months of government indecision on the matter. I was not on benefits and because of my previous sad experience of such would never again apply for them, therefore how exactly would you like me to pay this sum of over £2,000 which appeared to include some £800 of added costs and charges, presumably to keep you people in the manner you've become so obviously accustomed to? I suggested, yet again, that only a *court de jure*, a jury of my peers, had the right to judge my culpability in all this and that as it had been denied each time that this case must therefore be dismissed as it was in breach of my inherent right to a fair trial.

At this point, the odious excuse for a human being peered at me through her enlarged porcine eyes, made even more gross by the large lenses and frenzied intensity of her gaze, and she said, "You have declared your intent not to pay this fine (so, it's a fine now, not a tax!) and will go to prison for thirty days!"

I interjected that she was ignoring the salient facts of my indebtedness and how could I be imprisoned for alleged wilful neglect if I only had 76p in my bank account and I'd obviously not had access to such financial largesse for some time? I was barely managing my mortgage and indeed was still catching up on previous arrears and was subject to a repossession order if I failed to do so. Finally, I again tried to explain the medical conditions I was now being monitored for, almost certainly brought on by the stress of this and many previous such interferences in my personal, family and business life. They should absolutely preclude me from being sent to prison for an alleged civil offence and that as my blood count could change without warning and become leukaemic if I didn't maintain a stable environment and circumstance, that a prison sentence could actually be life-threatening and under no such circumstance could it be lawfully enforced.

She remarked that under oath I had declared I was not prepared to pay and that I would therefore be sentenced to thirty days in prison. Case closed! At no point did she consider other available non-custodial options or discuss them with two silent greys flanking her. These include suspended sentence, fines, community service and dismissal of case. This is a clear dereliction of duty as she had clearly refused to consider any of my advised circumstances, legal, financial, health or historic.

As I was led away past all the fresh-faced, young and fascinated students in the aisle seats, I declared in a very loud voice, "Let this be a lesson to all you young people! This is how they claim ownership of you. You have just had your first lesson. This is the real enemy, sitting on that bench (I pointed at the pig in lipstick and her silent

grey subordinates.) This is the democracy they seek to impart on you!" I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall in their classroom later on that day!

Thereafter, I was taken back to the holding cell and handcuffed to another pig in lipstick (where do they find them all?) who apparently worked for SERCO, the private contractor profiting from such misery and a keen proponent of expanding such unlawful incarceration. No doubt they obviously held the contract for such court "services". She remarked to me that she always paid her taxes. I drily imparted the fact on her that people like me went to work to fund the government to employ people like her in the first place and that that included the so-called taxable element of her wages she so dutifully ponied up each month. Naturally, she failed to see the irony in this or why I would seek to stop funding her and her ilk in the future! Rather deflated, but proud that I'd not backed down, I awaited the trip to Chelmsford Prison back in the holding cell. A little later I was taken out of the cell and handcuffed again. Another SERCO lady apologised, saying, "I'm just doing my job!" I couldn't help retorting, "I'm a Jew, I haven't heard that before!". After a hundred lifetimes of enduring such people, "only doing their job", most Jews and many other minorities' skin crawls when they hear this worn-out old excuse for lack of a moral compass.

Then I and others were taken outside to the police car park at the back of the building and placed in cages in a police van, with a bench about three feet across and two feet wide. God knows how they squeeze the odd twenty-stone man in such a confined space. I asked if there was a seat belt and they said no. Ironic; if I was still a civilian, I could be arrested for such an offence by the very same police who were refusing to now provide me with such a supposedly legal requirement! I was two to three feet max from a solid metal partition. Every bump would hurl you toward it unless you kept your hands pressed firmly against such. But of course, the police driver and other guards were in seats with safety belts attached. One day, there will be an accident (probably been a few already unreported) and prisoners in transport will be concussed, badly injured or even killed as a result of not having safety belts to restrict their forward motion into a solid metal partition not three feet from their face. It should be obvious to anyone with a modicum of intelligence and indeed compassionate leaning, but that appears to be in short supply within this working sector.

I started pondering how the police advice that this was a bail hearing had turned into a thirty day prison sentence for wilful neglect. I'd had no proper opportunity to represent the historical background that had led me to take this stance or to have my resultant financial circumstance and health issues taken into consideration before sentencing had been enforced. All statements I had written and submitted had clearly not been read or heard and I realised that this corruption of due process had

clearly been determined before I even entered the courtroom. So much for our much vaunted "human rights".

My first scary moment came en route, when uncannily I heard another prisoner shout across to an obvious further incarcerated friend of his, "is so and so (name withheld) still inside?" My blood ran cold. The guy he was referring to was the killer that Essex Probation Services had negligently emplaced in my household during my absence on holiday previously. I had been a material witness against him from behind a screen at Chelmsford County Court whilst under supposed police witness protection. Surely I couldn't be placed in the same prison as this violent recidivist? He'd got eight years, around six years previously, so he couldn't be out yet, with his previous track record, could he? This was deeply worrying and I knew I was going to have to bring this up with immediate effect when we entered the prison.

And so we arrived at Chelmsford Prison, around 1.30am, I think. It's a sprawling complex that could be mistaken for a sixties Romanian housing complex, were it not for the razor wire and barred windows. We were led through various locked gates and walked along tarmac paths in between low level buildings, through more locked doors, until we were taken to an induction area with a few guards milling around. I walked up to one and told him about the killer who had been interned there and that I couldn't possibly be in the same prison as I had been under police witness protection because of this person. Thankfully, the guy understood my panic and quickly checked the prison records. He came back a minute or two later and much to my relief advised me that said person had been released three months previously. Good news for me, harsh though for the rest of Essex.

There's another point to raise here though. If he was released three months ago, why didn't Essex Police or Essex Probation Services advise me and perhaps tell me what area he was now living in so I could take care to avoid bumping into him (perish the thought) in the future? So much for their pathetic "witness protection programme". Probably because all their officers are out chasing Council Tax non-payers and supporting bailiffs over house repossessions, as they are more concerned with protecting corporate interests than the general public who pay their wages. This richly illustrates why I hold the Chief Constable of Essex Police and Mrs. Mary Archer, the still Head of Essex Probation Services in utter contempt, considering their utter disregard for public safety. I would willingly go to prison again before ever funding the bloated salaries and fat pension pots of these supercilious, unelected, utterly secretive and corrupted personnel. I will say one thing, the vibes in Chelmsford Prison from both the prisoners and the so far courteous and decent staff is a privilege to behold after having to deal with the aforementioned groups and has also gone some way to shaking off the negative energetic residue that envelops Southend Magistrates Court, whereby I felt stained and sullied having to

lower myself to engage with the Pig in Lipstick and her gutless cohorts. Give me prison any day rather than time spent with those grey, grasping, self-serving crooks!

Then I was ushered to a small undressing area, with a curtain for privacy, where I had to undress and be relieved of all my clothing bar my trainers for some reason. A guard watched over me as I stripped, and passed me my prison issue uniform, which consisted of blue t-shirts, grey flannel top and matching elasticated bottoms, underwear and socks, all of which had undoubtedly been worn many, many times before by various of my predecessors. I was then forwarded to an adjacent room to await my cell allocation. I am quick to criticise public sector failings, especially at senior managerial and directorial positions – and why not, as I have paid my fair share in funding them? So it is appropriate that I point out the more positive aspects when I'm made aware of them. I don't doubt the guards and staff here are eminently capable of cracking down on particularly aggressive individuals. But they treated me with great care, respect and no degree of friendly rapport. That was a small surprise to me and richly illustrates that many public frontline employees are doing their best in jobs that may at first glance appear authoritarian and restrictive, but are often managed with much empathy and warm hearts. Many expressed amazement at my being detained over such an insignificant matter, especially when they found out I had never been sentenced to prison before.

Then my mobile phone was taken from me, but I was told that I could take down important numbers of those I would need to phone. God! My mind went blank. No-one knew I was here, I had made no provision to advise my mortgage company. There would be bills to pay whilst I was interred, and I had a beautiful girlfriend who had no idea of my predicament. This vexed me a great deal. She worked in child care of vulnerable young offenders. If I were to phone her from prison, would I be putting her job on the line as they obviously checked and monitored such calls? That dilemma was resolved for me as I was frantically scrolling through my numbers starting at A, trying to work out who I needed to call, as I only had £2 of phone credit coming to me and no money on account to make further calls. I'd just got to "T", which was also the initial of her name when the phone was taken abruptly from me: "That's enough, you've had enough time!" So, the first woman I'd had a meaningful relationship in the last decade was going to be excluded from my life for the next thirty days. I hoped with all my heart that she would understand this ridiculous scenario I had been placed in.

Next we were gently herded to a library room and met a lovely young guy who was also a prisoner and obviously a trustee or similar. He went through the initial protocols with us, gave us each a pin number for phone calls with £2 of available credit and he advised us how to fill in forms to request visits and further phone time, as well as sending letters. The problem was that this could not be reasonably effected for at least two weeks and I was under the impression that I would only serve 15

days if I behaved as that appeared to be the case with most sentencing. Regardless, I had no money and didn't wish to write begging letters to friends though I knew they'd have sent me ample funds if requested. The trustee even ensured I took a couple of books with me as I think he sussed that I may be an avid reader in my spare time. He advised us that we'd be in "F" wing for a couple of days with most of the time being spent locked up, but thereafter we would probably be moved, in my case with the over forty-fives on another wing. As it turns out, I'd be happy to stay here with the mainly young aggregation of prisoners of many ethnicities. There's even a couple of adolescent Russians who don't seem to speak English, one of whom appears to look particularly ferocious.

Finally, I was moved on to a single cell. White metal bedstead, a blue, worn plastic mattress, a fixed table with a small portable TV on top, fixed open cabinet for storing prison issue change of clothes and two threadbare single towels, a solid metal open toilet, a sink and a bucket for wastepaper and food remnants, which apparently, one empties on being woken at 7.45 am. There's a light switch and a buzzer for "room service" and a heating pipe running through. For the first time in two months I am warm and cosy and won't have to worry about feeding the meters at home. I've been working at home, on the phone, with many layers and a bobble hat in order to not switch the central heating on till evening. Bet the pig in lipstick who sentenced me has no idea what it's like when you've been stripped of all funding and finance. I think it is most satisfactory and it's not dissimilar (locked door and barred windows apart) from the rooms at Pontins where I holidayed forty years ago on the East coast! However, the irony of all this did strike me as somewhat weird. Here, there was no meter running on emergency credit, I don't have to wear extra layers and a hat, I'm not obliged to work to support such modest ambition as retaining the roof over my head and my meals are assured. My question is, if this is appropriate for serving prisoners (and it is, in my opinion), then why isn't it for the rest of us who go to work to support such structures and organs of the state? The workers, the pensioners, of whom twice as many died this winter from hypothermia than last year, and single mums coping on their own; how come they/we don't get the same guaranteed respect and rights over what should be the basic provisions to which we are all entitled? It seems to me that I have just been placed in prison by an unelected, unlawful, administrative court via alleged public servants, that presumes it appropriate that we who can't afford currently those basic privileges that appear to be statutory in prisons, should indeed be criminalised for such and imprisoned without the basic and fundamental right of a jury of our peers to discern if such culpability is indeed an actual crime punishable by imprisonment.

A guard entered my cell, arousing me from my thoughtful meanderings, to bring me bedding, being a pillow case (but no pillow), a green bottom sheet and what looks and feels like a big orange dishcloth masquerading as a blanket. It is very basic indeed and would actually be a travesty in winter were it not for the generous

warmth of the cell. Nevertheless, it was such a thin and threadbare set of bedding that I would still have to retain my t-shirt, underwear and socks to keep properly warm through the night. A basic quilt would have solved that problem but these were apparently not available. When I advised the guard that I only had one teabag in there, he kindly got me a bag of teabags, coffee sachets and whiteners, which should see me through the next few days. The trustee I'd met earlier also dropped by with half an ounce of tobacco, a pack of rolling papers and a lighter. That's £7 on the outside. I'd stopped smoking previously on doctor's advice, but felt so pressured in here that I took it without a second thought. At least it would help me stay calm - and it could also prove useful currency in this place!

However, this is to last a week and it's my understanding that any further such benevolence has to be earned by working or getting the education that I will be introduced to in the next few days, or by getting money assigned to your account from outside from friends or family. As it takes over two weeks to facilitate such, it seems a bit pointless involving others close to me as I'm only here for thirty days, fifteen if I'm lucky. I was also given a toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, a bar of soap and a throwaway Bic razor. I will probably grow a beard until my release as there is no shaving foam and I don't fancy scraping at my beard with a thin soap lather and a cheap Bic on a daily basis.

It was past 6pm when the doors were next opened for us to get dinner. This was very poor, though obviously considered adequate and I certainly wasn't expecting *à la carte*. I had a piece of dried-out battered fish, boiled white rice and warmed frozen veg, with very little discernible taste. Weirdly, the fish didn't actually smell or taste of fish and I'm unsure of its provenance. This is one area that should definitely be improved, not just because prisoners deserve decent balanced and nutritious meals, but rather because good nutrition, lots of "live" food, less cheap reformed meats and processed packaged meals will improve their general health, their mental processes, IQ and overall fitness. They will concentrate, study and learn better as well as work with greater endeavour. If prison is truly about rehabilitation then this should be a given, as with our children and school dinners and our sick in hospitals, where food as part of the healing process seems to have been seconded to the likes of big business and the cheapest quote. Indeed, a nutritionist may well argue that a couple of decades of junk food is partly responsible for the states of being that lead to many entering prison (and hospitals) in the first place. As they say, "you are what you eat."

After dinner I settled down to writing, watched "Iron Man" on Film 4 and fell asleep around midnight. Don't think I'll be forgetting this day in a hurry!