AIMS For a better birth...

A Cry for Help

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I am writing from Holloway Prison, as a pregnant mother to be, since my arrival, I have suffered not only physically, but mentally. The treatment here by officers and doctors is beyond contempt.

My sentence was for theft, I received two years imprisonment, in which I will do twelve months. I was allocated Open Prison at Askham Grange, but as there are facllltys for only 18 inmates, I have to stay here until the birth of my chlld 20th December.

I have been here since end of September and believe punishment is to be taken away from Sociaty but mosley (from) the people you love, my children my family, the pain of missing them never goes away. My husband is also in Prison for the same offence, he received four years, I do not disagree with my sentence, that Is not an issue.

Since my arrival I have not stopped crying not for myself, but for my unborn child, and the other mothers-to-be. It is a maternity wing yet there are Remand Prisoners of all kinds (including) violent drug importers, all soughts.

The bathrooms are rotten, filthy, the unit we are kept on is filthy, we are locked up 5 days a week for 22 hours, there is no excarcize, maybe three times a week for 15 minutes, in which you sit on a bench to frightened to move because you have to excarcize with other units.

I have a history of Blood disorders, I myself spent the first six months of my life in Belgrave Childrens Hospital for a blood disorder, I also lost my youngest sister to leukaemia in 1988, and they have told me I have a blood problem, I don't know what, but I they give me extra iron tablets.

The food is not healthy the only meat you resieve is corned beef or some sought of very spicy curry, it not only looks disgusting but tastes disgusting. So, you find you only eat four out of seven days a week, and you eat then only then because you have to false feed your self just for your child.

The antenatal care is appalling, they do the usual Blood Pressure, weight and moniter the BaBys heartbeat, that is the only time I smile, I know my baby is alive. When you are pregnant it is said you should look well and be blooming. I look like the walking dead, it is a wing of Zombies. Pain, crying, worry, there is no one to talk to. If you are in Pain, you are given Paracetomol, not examined. I have seen 1 miscarriege, every other day a girl pregnant is taken to the hospital in handcuffs, I have spoken to seven women who have had children, all have been made to give birth in chains, with male officers present but behind a screen, When your child has been born you have only three hours and then brought back to

Prison; at no time are these chains removed, only on the last Stage of Birth. I am terrified of what I have to through, I cant Sleep at night as I have terrible nightmares, I wake up and cry myself back to sleep.

I have three other children that were healthy, 6-8lb Babies and I have only ever had a cold, my oldest is 15 now. I am only 31, my children are all being cared for by my family, they are good honest children, very loving, they are so looking forward to a new brother or sister. I fear that this Baby I am carrying will not be born normal or will not be healthy, or will suffer later on in his or her early life.

My husband I have not seen or spoken to since arrival, but he writes every day (he) is so worried for me. I can rarley get to the one Phone here, it is too much stress, because the quiews for the phone is so long and there are so many arguments.

The offlcers are inhuman and unfeeling, it is a nightmare, the cells are so cold, you have to have 6 (to) 7 blankets on your bed you get your meals and are locked up again straight away.

I go to church twlce a week and ask god to give me a healthy child, I dont want my mother and children to come to the birth as I couldn't bear for them to see there mother in chains. I ask why we are being treated this way, we are cold, hungry, and being treated like we are not human.

Please help, if you do not believe me then I give permission for someone in AIMS to be presant when I go into labour and to be there through out my stay in Whittington Hospital.

Annette

PS My story is all truth, but there are many more horrific truthes that I cannot write down.