

Issue
27

SAFARI

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Supporting All Falsely Accused with Reference Information

Web Site: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~safari>

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." (Edmund Burke)

MOHAMMED INNAM HAS BEEN CONVICTED of perverting the course of justice after he admitted falsely accusing two other people of kidnapping him. South Yorkshire Police launched a major investigation to locate the alleged kidnapers, which involved around 20 detectives and cost around £130,000; the police are now planning civil action to recover the massive cost of their wasted investigation. As the investigation developed, police confirmed the men named by Innam both had alibis, which proved they could not have been involved. They also recovered closed circuit TV footage, which showed Innam had gone to Manchester as a conventional taxi passenger, rather than as a kidnap victim. Innam is now serving a five-year sentence for making the false allegation. SAFARI often has cause to criticize the Police for "going for the conviction instead of seeking the truth" but in this case, it appears South Yorkshire Police are to be congratulated for doing their job well. And they still got their conviction – but this time for the correct person!

FROM A RECENT LETTER: "At least as much damage is done to the victim by the 'child protection' & prosecution machinery as is done by the perpetrator."

KEEP IT SHORT & SIMPLE (K.I.S.S.). When writing letters to your solicitor (or SAFARI for that matter!) about your case, stick to the facts and keep it as short as possible. Golden rule: the *more* you write, the *less* they'll take in!

WE HAD AN INCREDIBLY POSITIVE response to our January 2006 newsletter; a great number of you asked for copies of the Parole Board's document (written especially for SAFARI) on parole for the innocent [thanks for the stamps to cover our costs!]; the CCRC have also responded to our article concerning them with an invitation to meet with SAFARI and discuss matters about the CCRC in general. We will report back after the meeting!

SMUGGLERS' CASH – BUT DRUG CONVICTION WRONG. John McGinty suffered a miscarriage of justice in 1997, after being falsely accused of drug dealing, and has had his convicted quashed. His original drug conviction was based on the fact that traces of cannabis had been found on banknotes in his bedroom, but research has now shown that many banknotes can become tainted with drugs by being transmitted through sorting machines and in the general circulation of notes.

It must seem quite obvious that a note contaminated with traces of drugs – either from being used rolled-up to sniff drugs, or from being kept in a pocket alongside cannabis – is likely to come into contact quite innocently with other notes as it passes from person to person, leaving traces on any other note with which it comes into contact. The trial at the High Court in Glasgow heard that a police raid found £75,245 in cash in the unemployed man's bedroom. The Court of Criminal Appeal in Edinburgh heard that the money came from an illegal operation by his brother and others in the trade in cigarettes, spirits, and fake designer gear smuggled into Britain.

The Appeal Court said: "Our own conclusion was that while test results in this case were accurate in that they did discern traces of cannabis, the conclusion drawn that these traces resulted from someone having handled cannabis resin before handling the notes ... was insupportable." Lord Gill said the evidence presented at Trial omitted the alternative possibility that the traces of drugs resulted from the circulation of contaminated banknotes, and significant evidence at Mr McGinty's trial ought not to have been given if Crown experts had been fully up to date on research. Lord Gill, who heard the appeal with Lord Osborne and Lord Maclean, said they were in no doubt a verdict returned in ignorance of the fresh evidence must be regarded as constituting a miscarriage of justice.

RE-CATEGORISATION: One SAFARI reader has been told that a prisoner cannot be considered for a move from B to C unless they have less than 6 years of their sentence left to serve. We took up this matter with Nina Buckby of NOMS (National Offender Management Service) who passed it to Lesley Cuthbertson (Security Policy Unit of the Prison Service Management Board). Lesley kindly confirmed that there is *no such policy* and that each case is considered on individual merits.

INCENTIVES AND EARNED PRIVILEGES SCHEME - PRISON GOVERNORS RESPOND. In December 2005 we wrote to over 50 Prison Governors about our concerns that innocent prisoners were being refused Enhanced Status or category reduction. 13 Governors have replied; they were at HMP's Bristol, Doncaster, Dovegate, Edmunds Hill, Ford, Full Sutton, Kingston, Low Newton, Norwich, Peterhead, Romsey Road, Sudbury & Wakefield. Some were more helpful than others! We have written back to the more helpful ones for some clarification and hope to report back in next month's newsletter. We aim to achieve a nationwide change in a system that sees innocent prisoners wrongly treated.

Thanks to Terry McCarthy (Parole Board for England and Wales) for statistics of those who achieved release on Parole whilst maintaining innocence.			
Figures for month of December 2005			
<i>Non-lifers:</i>			
All offences	30	of 61	49.2%
Rape	6	of 22	27.3%
Indecent Assault	3	of 6	50.0%
Other Sex	0	of 2	0.0%
Violence	3	of 3	100.0%
Property	2	of 6	33.3%
Drugs	10	of 10	100.0%
Others	6	of 12	50.0%
Total Sex	9	of 30	30.0%
Total Non Sex	21	of 31	67.7%
<i>Lifers only</i>	0	of 4	0.0%
[0 of the 4 lifers were recommended for open conditions]			

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Contact us by eMail at SAFARI_Editor@yahoo.co.uk

(We can accept no responsibility for errors in this newsletter as we only share information received)