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

MOHAMED AL FAYED said he was the victim of a "smear campaign" after being cleared of a sex assault on a girl of 15 at his store in Knightsbridge, west London, in May last year. The Crown Prosecution Service said no charges were brought because of "conflicting evidence" and the absence of any reliable accounts of the incident. A statement from Mr Al Fayed's representatives said: "At the precise time of the alleged offence, which Mr Al Fayed learned was supposed to have taken place at Harrods, he was at Fulham Football Club, in full view of television cameras, enjoying a match."

The Harrods tycoon hit out at prosecutors after he was told he would not face charges for allegedly "forcibly French-kissing" the teenager. Mr Al Fayed, who also owns Premier League club Fulham, said: "The investigation reached an obvious and proper conclusion. But I have to ask why it took so long and why it was handled in such a way as to cause me and my businesses the maximum degree of damage. This should never be permitted in a democratic society. The leaks, the false stories, the innuendo, all make a bad situation worse. I am shocked the system can be manipulated in such a way. It cannot be right that an accused person is publicly named before proceedings are brought. I intend to fight to ensure that others on the receiving end of false allegations are properly protected."

We do feel that possibly the only reason that charges weren't brought, and Mr Al Fayed not subsequently "successfully" convicted, was that he could conclusively prove his innocence. Sadly, despite what the 'rules' are supposed to be, in Britain nowadays, when faced with this kind of allegation, you really *do* need to be able to prove your innocence. Even more sadly, sometimes even when you do have a cast-iron alibi, a judge will tell the jury that "the complainant might well have been confused" about dates and times, so even that may not be good enough!

We wish Mr Al Fayed well in his fight for protection for the falsely accused.

IN ISSUE 59, WE PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE about Northamptonshire Police Officers William Docherty and Sean Holditch being sacked after being found guilty of assaulting and threatening a 16-year-old male suspect, and then trying to cover up their actions, and Officer Steve Eaton being asked to resign after pleading guilty to three charges. Despite the officers originally being charged with criminal offences of Misconduct in a Public Office, the charges were later dropped due to a 'legal ruling'. SAFARI asked HM Court Service why the officers were not prosecuted. A spokesman refused to tell us, saying, "Although you state that you are not making the request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we must process your request under the said act. Therefore, after reviewing the case I confirm that Section 32 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 exempts information in respect of any court record that may be held still stands. Section 32 (1) states that information is exempt if it is held only by virtue of being contained in documents that have been filed with, or has otherwise been placed in the custody of the court for purpose of court proceedings; and those that have been created by a court or member of the administrative staff for the purpose of such proceedings. It is clear that Section 32 (1) applies to the information that you have requested, which is an absolute exemption. Therefore there is no requirement to consider the public interest." The FOI Act was used as a reason to refuse to say why Police Officers appear to have been exempt from prosecution despite one *admitting* guilt of serious offences. SAFARI has given HM Court Service every opportunity to demonstrate that there was no cover-up, but sadly they have been unwilling to answer the simple question of why these officers were 'let off the hook'. Perhaps one of the many MPs who read this article might like to ask a question in the House about how the Government proposes to reassure the public that there was no cover-up in this case and that Police officers are not exempt from prosecution when they commit criminal offences.

GEOFFREY LAWSON HAS BEEN CLEARED OF molesting two young girls on separate occasions, and of abusing another girl decades later. Mr Lawson told police that the allegations were lies, and he maintained that there were personal reasons why the women would have made the false allegations as they had a grudge against him. One of the women had claimed she was abused in a single incident when she was eight. The court heard that she did not report it at the time, and did not think about the incident any further, until she heard about the other allegations. Mr Lawson was cleared of a charge of indecency with one child, and six 'specimen counts' of indecent assault involving another, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He was also cleared of a rape charge, three counts of indecent assault, four of attempted rape and one of indecency with a child, involving a third complainant, in the 1990s and 2000s.

FINGERPRINTS FROM CLOTHES. Researchers at Abertay University have come up with a way of taking fingerprints from victims' clothes. David Bremner, Professor of Applied Environmental Sciences, said: "Until now, getting fingerprints from cloth has been extremely difficult, but by a process called vapour metal disposition we can trace fingerprints left on the material." The work is being led by Joanna Fraser (a teaching assistant at the university) who is studying the technique as part of her PhD.

Graeme Pearson, Professor of the Study of Serious Organised Crime at Glasgow University, said the work would be a "tremendous advance" in the recovery of evidence from crime scenes. "All too often we recover clothes in crimes but have no ability to get fingerprints from them," he said. "Of course, when you have fingerprints it should be a natural progression to get DNA from them." This is hopefully good news for the innocent, because it's always easier to prove your innocence by being able to prove someone else was guilty! We do not know how effective this new technique will be on 'historical' evidence.

INDEPENDENT WRITER, STELLA KAYE, writes: "How false accusations convict the innocent. In a fair and just society it should not be possible for a defendant to be convicted purely by accusation but sadly this can and does happen rather more frequently than most members of the British public care to realise. It is a common occurrence in America too. The Criminal Justice System is held in high regard by most UK citizens and is still viewed as one of the finest in the world but it is being abused by malicious liars who bring false allegations to court in the same way as some people make fraudulent claims on their insurance. But in cases such as these, the monetary gain succeeds in destroying the lives of innocent people, sometimes causing them to be incarcerated indefinitely. This is no overstatement; due to the introduction of the absurd Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection in 2005 it is possible to be imprisoned for up to 99 years even if you are an innocent person, falsely accused.

Currently in the UK our prisons are full to overflowing and the number of wrongly convicted prisoners needs to be drastically reduced. There is very little opportunity for the innocent to overturn the decision of the court and right the wrongs that have been done to them once their trial is over. Recently in the UK, legal funding for appeals has been reduced even further so these unfortunate victims of an imperfect justice system are left with no realistic hope of release. It should be made impossible for a person to be convicted when the only 'evidence' that an offence was actually committed is based on the accusations of others. But at present it is quite possible for juries to convict when there is no proper factual evidence such as a body in the case of a murder or DNA evidence in the case of a rape. The only 'proof' of the defendant's guilt is sometimes the lies and vindictive corroboration of people who bear grudges against the accused and are abusing the power of the state to convict an innocent citizen.

The Jury only have to be convinced by the prosecution that the defendant is guilty and if they believe what is placed before them 'beyond all reasonable doubt' then a conviction is guaranteed. The Jury are more than willing to go along with the lies of many rather than the truth of few. This is especially true in cases of alleged sexual offences against children when quite often the mere implication that this may have occurred is enough to swing the jury in favour of a conviction.

Judges in cases of this nature should be more willing to direct juries away from this absurd reasoning which would be better suited to a medieval witch hunt than a fair and reliable justice system that we should be able to respect and rely on. The defendant should always be found not guilty when it is a case of accusation alone or perhaps the introduction of the Verdict of: "Not Proven" would be prudent as is the case in Scotland. The Crown Prosecution Service, in bringing innocent people to trial is only succeeding in imposing further burdens on the British tax payer. It costs over £30,000 per annum to keep a prisoner imprisoned so the only people who benefit are the liars who have ruined the lives of upright citizens. The British legal system can therefore be abused by blatant liars who know they can secure the conviction of the defendant purely by invented evidence. They may be awarded compensation for their false evidence - sometimes as much as £20,000 apiece but as a result an innocent person can easily be denied justice and have their life completely ruined. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority will gladly pay out to the unscrupulous people who have borne false witness against their neighbours and perjured themselves in a court of law and the public will feel safer because they have been led to believe that another dangerous offender has been locked away. Justice has not been done, it has been abused but the innocent prisoner and the people who know the real truth are given no chance to prove it. Cases based on dubious evidence should not be allowed to proceed, thus avoiding expensive trials and depriving innocent people of their freedom. Innocent people should never be deprived of their freedom without any realistic hope of release or ever having a chance to clear their name. It is a breach of Human Rights... and there are enough real criminals with which to fill our prisons."

This story can be viewed on-line at <http://www.helium.com/items/1298631-innocent-prisoners>.

If you have published any story on the Internet (enabling us to download it easily instead of re-typing it) that may be of interest to SAFARI readers, and are happy for us to reproduce your story in a future newsletter, please eMail us at safari_editor@yahoo.co.uk. Please remember that any story must be relatively small (i.e. under 800 words), be clear and concise and contain useful or positive information. We can make no guarantee of publication.

STUART BAILEY has been cleared of shaking an 11-week-old baby and causing severe brain damage. The judge halted the trial and ordered the jury to find him not guilty. Robert Smith QC, defending, told the Court that hospital doctors 'got it wrong from the start' and were 'reluctant to acknowledge their mistakes'. Dr Christopher Rittey, a consultant paediatric neurologist, concluded from head scans that she had suffered a skull fracture, and soft tissue 'impact' swelling indicated she could have been 'thrown against a brick wall or beaten with a baseball bat'. However, Mr Smith said the baby did not have a fracture, and the swelling that Dr Rittey regarded as suspicious was actually 'old' damage caused during birth. The absence of any bruising on the baby - which could be associated with a violent episode of shaking - left 'huge question marks' over the issue. He said that doctors ignored NHS protocol by failing to carry out a lumbar puncture test that would have identified a possible infection, and a blood sample sent for analysis was lost, and the results never revealed. Doctors at Sheffield Children's Hospital originally reported signs that the girl had been violently shaken but at trial Dr Carlos de Souza, from Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, said under cross-examination that the notes showed retinal bleeding was only discovered on the fourth examination of the child - more than a day after the alleged incident. In that case, he said, he would not be able to say the most likely explanation was shaking.

SAFARI e-Petitions: Please get everyone you know with Internet access to sign our on-line Government ePetitions. Visit:

<http://safari-uk.org>

...to view all our ePetitions.

Thanks to Terry McCarthy (Parole Board for England and Wales) for supplying us with the statistics of those granted release on Parole despite maintaining innocence.			
Figures for month of January 2009			
<i>Non-lifers:</i>			
All offences	4	of 34	11.8%
Rape	2	of 17	11.8%
Indecent Assault	0	of 4	0.0%
Other Sex	0	of 3	0.0%
Violence	1	of 3	33.3%
Property	0	of 0	n/a
Drugs	0	of 0	n/a
Others	1	of 7	14.3%
Total Sex	2	of 24	8.3%
Total Non Sex	2	of 10	20.0%
<i>Lifers only</i>	0	of 1	0.0%
[The lifer remained in closed conditions this month]			