

Beyond Reasonable Doubt

Justice for Derek Christian

Newsletter No. 1, Oct. 99

Dear friends,

Welcome to the first - long overdue - newsletter from *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, which has been established by Tracey and I, Derek's brother and sister, in support of Derek's fight to clear his name. Through the newsletter we hope to keep everybody abreast of events as the campaign unfolds. This first edition broadly covers what has happened since mid-1998 and the refusal of Derek's second and final application for leave to appeal.

It is not merely intended for Derek's immediate family and friends, but also for the many people who have never even met Derek yet also expressed their belief that he is innocent and that his case should be referred back to the Court of Appeal.

Many people have in the meantime asked us what they can do to help. The greatest thing anyone can do to help is simple. Write to Derek. A letter, however brief, a postcard, a photo, can make all the difference to Derek's day. And a lot of mail also makes prison staff take a different attitude towards prisoners who, like Derek, are innocent of the crime of which they have been convicted.

When staff see that a prisoner is receiving a great deal of outside support, they also tend to offer theirs.

What you can also do to help...

Write to your MP, the Home Secretary, the Chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee, your MEP. Indeed, to anyone you see fit. This is something that everybody can do. We can find addresses, let you have sample letters, copies of the booklet to enclose for further reading.

Even if MPs etc. refuse or decline to do anything on Derek's behalf, they will at least become aware of his case. And as we are finding out, there's no justice without publicity!

As anyone who saw the recent broadcast of *Trial and Error* dealing with the conviction of Sion Jenkins will be aware, no matter how flimsy the circumstantial evidence which convicts a person, it takes a lot of work to get a case back into the courts.

Tracey Noble

Kevin Christian

WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE 1998

Initial setbacks ...

After Derek's final appeals had been rejected in June 1998 and his solicitor John Batchelor felt he could no longer pursue the case, Tracey and I began looking for people willing to help. We wrote to a number of organisations which campaign on behalf of victims of a miscarriage of justice. To very little avail.

... and help

Eventually, in November/December of 1998, a message posted to a "newsgroup" on the Internet got an immediate offer of help from the Liverpool-based solicitor and former barrister Andrew Keogh, and an equally immediate response from the director of *Scandals In Justice*, an organisation that has since offered invaluable guidance and advice, and which helped us establish contact with Simon Regan, the journalist and editor of *Scallywag* magazine, who then wrote an article about Derek's case.

The campaign starts

We decided to write the booklet *Beyond Reasonable Doubt* (Tracey has copies) and publish a "website" on the Internet so as to make Derek's case known to a wider audience.

The website, launched in April 1999, is kindly hosted by *Scandals In Justice*. The booklet, which was completed in July, contains most of the material on the website. We are now able to enclose copies of the booklet with letters to MPs, journalists, civil rights organisations etc.

New solicitor

In July 1999 Andrew Keogh officially became Derek's new solicitor, taking on Derek's case and the submission of his application to the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC), the last body which may refer Derek's case back to the Court of Appeal.

Crimewatch File

Following the broadcast of *Crimewatch File* in October 98, Tracey and I wrote to the BBC, complaining about its unfair treatment and portrayal of Derek. We also wrote to the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC). There was further correspondence with the BBC whilst it conducted an internal investigation. Unsatisfied by the outcome of this investigation, a complaint was activated with the BSC, which will reach a decision on our complaint by late October.

NEWS

Media interest

One of the numerous persons we have contacted is Bob Woffinden. A freelance journalist, Bob has already written a number of books, including one on the case of James Hanratty, and intends to write an article about Derek's plight, for publication in a major newspaper sometime in October. Watch out for more about this in our next newsletter.

Booklet/website on disk

The booklet and website are now available on diskette. Please contact Tracey for a copy.

Forthcoming events

Tracey has been invited to a meeting of the campaign group "Innocent" at the end of October, where she will distribute material on Derek's case.

Derek Christian

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