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Alison's Wonderland



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By Alexander Baron

**39**
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Last month there were calls for Director of Public Prosecutions Alison Saunders to resign. She should, but for reasons diametrically opposed to those given. The furore concerned her failure to bring charges against Lord Janner, who has now been accused of 22 historical sex offences, including buggery, against no fewer than 9 boys dating back to 1969.

Saunders declined to authorise charges because Janner is suffering from dementia, not because the allegations are too weak or uncorroborated. In this [BBC interview](#) she talks about Janner's victims rather than his accusers – so much for the presumption of innocence. If a Lord of the Realm is not entitled to this, what price the rest of us?

Her decision has now been reviewed, she has accepted this, and as things stand he will appear in court on August 7, and in due course there is likely to be a trial of fact, which is substantially different from a regular criminal trial. For example, in September 2008, a woman called Nicola

Coleman stabbed a man several times. She and Mark Cannon were or had been lovers. One of the knife blows, to his neck, was fatal. In December 2010, Coleman was **found unfit to stand trial**, so there was a trial of fact, she was found guilty of manslaughter, and Sectioned.

The big difference between her case and the allegations against Janner is that a crime had definitely been committed, and there was no real dispute about who had committed it. In Janner's case there is only, as far as we know, credible evidence that he sexually abused one victim. (See [this article](#) for the background).

All the other alleged victims – note that important word, *alleged* – came forward after the initial allegation, and the claim made by Saunders previously that the police had *developed* their evidence is really an admission that the case against him with regard to these other alleged victims is the result of a police trawl.

Prior to this current witch-hunt, Janner had been investigated no fewer than four times, and no charges had been brought against him. The conspirators claim this is a cover-up, but is it? Janner was not only an MP, he was also a QC, an author, and active in both Jewish causes and children's charities. Should this latter really be a cause of suspicion? For example, in 1972 he raised the case of a **severely disabled boy** in a House of Commons debate. Was there anything sinister about that?

As was pointed out in the previous article, Janner was a busy man with a full diary, and it is likely that some of the allegations against him could be shown not to have happened. At the time, that would probably have been enough to persuade the police they were chasing shadows. Indeed, this should be the case today, but we are told now that *victims* must be believed regardless, in some cases apparently regardless of the laws of physics.

So did Alison Saunders make the right decision initially? Unquestionably. But she should be condemned for the way she and her organisation have persecuted innocent men and have led to at least two serious miscarriages of justice: the convictions of **Rolf Harris** and **Max Clifford**. We can add to that the persecution of Dave Lee Travis, and quite likely the **conviction of Gary Glitter**, who, odious human being that he is, was almost certainly convicted solely because of his reputation rather than because of any credible evidence against him.

Alison Saunders may be many things but she is certainly not ignorant, including of the dangers of prosecuting historical cases in the absence of some sort of contemporaneous corroboration. The first Dave Lee Travis trial is a stellar example of this. One of his so-called victims claimed that in 1973 – ie four decades previously – she had been indecently assaulted by Travis. She said he had put his hand up her skirt and groped her. Furthermore, this one, brief incident had caused her **40 years of hell**. She was left ashamed, frightened, scared to go out alone...boo hoo hoo.

All very emotional, but what happened next? The DJ was alleged to have carried out this assault at the opening of a hospital radio station. Someone reading about the trial contacted his legal team, and would you believe he had filmed the event? Travis had turned up with his wife on his arm and an entourage in tow. At what point did he put his hand up your skirt and ruin your life, dear? This woman should have been charged with attempting to pervert the course of justice, but how often

does this happen when a self-styled victim or *survivor* has come forward to point the finger at an innocent man and possibly ruin his life?

The women who have testified at these trials, the so-called victims, have been universally pathetic, yet Saunders and her underlings have revelled in these facile prosecutions. Now, in addition to Janner, Max Clifford is **facing another trial**, this time for an indecent assault dating to 1981. Or maybe it was 1982. How can he possibly defend himself against an allegation like that? Clifford is a sitting duck for any demented or malicious female who may have met him in the past, who may have taken a dislike to him for whatever reason, or who may have seen his photograph juxtaposed with one of Jimmy Savile.

If the police had conducted proper investigations, and if Saunders and her ilk had applied a little nous, this madness would never have happened. Stuart Hall, **Ray Teret** and Chris Denning could still have been prosecuted successfully because there was independent corroboration of their crimes, indeed the police who investigated Teret went to considerable lengths to prevent the evidence of one alleged victim contaminating another. So why has Saunders allowed her organisation to pursue these historical cases on evidence that is clearly at best tainted and at worst totally worthless?

The reason is not far to seek, agenda-driven special interest groups like **Women Against Rape** have been whispering or rather shouting in her ear that the rate of conviction in rape cases is scandalously low, and something should be done about it. The perceived wisdom, one that is refuted totally by empirical evidence, is that for the most part women are damsels too afraid to fight back against their attackers, too afraid even to say no when sex is suggested, and that months or even years after being violated somehow they find the courage to come forward and point the finger. This is what happened in the case of Dave Lee Travis and the teenage girl he didn't grope at the opening of a hospital radio station. By that time this woman, having made a mess of her life, was looking around for someone to blame it on, and Travis was a convenient peg on which to hang her troubles, and maybe to pick up a little tea and sympathy into the bargain. Not to mention compensation.

Saunders will soon be retiring on a fat pension; if she had any integrity at all she would stop this witch-hunt and recommend that like the United States, the UK implements **statutes of limitations** for reporting rape and other sex crimes. What are the chances of her doing that?

Alison Saunders is the second woman to hold the post of DPP; the first was the odious Barbara Mills who was forced to resign after persistently refusing to prosecute corrupt police officers even in the face of overwhelming evidence of guilt. It is ironic that Saunders has gone to the other extreme; Max Clifford and anyone else in the celebrity sphere is now likely to be deemed guilty by virtue of the allegation being made; for him to even to mount a defence is considered in some quarters as nothing less than victim blaming. When she retires, that is likely to be the true legacy of Alison Saunders.