



Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Chelmsford Crown Court

28 October 2024

Before:

Mr Justice Goss

Between:

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-v-

Mark Kishon Christopher

Matthew Dean Martin

Sean Harper

Shiza Harper

SENTENCING REMARKS

1. On 30th July this year, at the end of a trial lasting 10 days, the jury convicted you all of conspiring together and with others to kidnap and commit false imprisonment between 3rd March 2022 and 21st April 2023. The person you conspired to kidnap and falsely imprison was Lincoln Brookes, the Senior Coroner for Essex. In addition, you Mark Kishon Christopher, were convicted of sending threatening letters or emails to Mr Brookes with the purpose of causing him distress or anxiety.
2. At that time, in March and April 2023, you were all members of a group called the ‘Federal Postal Court’ or ‘the Court for the People’. You, Mark Kishon Christopher, was the self-appointed leader with the title ‘Chief Judge of England and all Dominions’. You claimed on your website to have jurisdiction over ‘any governments, courts and corporations’, that that the real world was a world of fiction, so that non-conformity to a

form of English language promoted by the group known as ‘Quantum Grammar’ enabled corporations and governments to be challenged and contracts to be avoided. You had self-conferred ‘court powers’ to help to achieve the group’s aims and objectives. Readers of your website were invited to undertake training at the your first Sole–University. On payment of almost £7,500, for which 28 hours of recorded webinar footage and two 30 minute Zoom calls in the first year would be provided, it was claimed a trainee would be equipped with knowledge of the tricks and traps of the modern world, courts, governments and corporations and achieve the objects identified on the website.

3. Matthew Dean Martin, you were a sheriff and a coroner and you, Sean Harper, were also a sheriff of the Federal Postal Court. Your role as sheriffs was to enforce the will of Mark Kishon Christopher and arrest persons on his behalf, administering corporal punishment if necessary. You, Shiza Harper, were a postal inspector, which you believed entitled you to enter any building that accepted post and check it, and to perform audits. You were all qualified by Mark Kishon Chrisopher; you all regarded him to be a judge and your instructor and you believed and still believe what you were told by him and that he had helped you. You were and remain committed to him and his status, his powers and his court for the people.
4. Lincoln Brookes was and is the Senior Coroner for Essex. The Coroner’s Court is in Seax House, the Council Office Building in Chelmsford. Between March and September 2022 he was sent about half a dozen letters by post which were in legal language but made no sense to him. One of the documents he received was what purported to be an affidavit of special appearance and notice of estoppel dated 11th March 2022 for and on behalf of Sean Harper stating that, under the penalty of perjury, he was to keep the correspondence in his court of records as retrospective correction and to answer the claims within 3 days. It is clear you were aware of this having been sent, Sean Harper. Mr Brookes referred the matter to the Legal Department of Essex CC fraud detection department. He was told it was not a known scam, and it was decided to keep an eye on it.
5. By March 2023 your actions became more personal and direct. You, Mark Kishon Christopher, sent further malicious communications to Mr Brookes. Also, in an online rally on 17th April 2023, you foreshadowed the closing of the Coroners Court and the Southend County Court and the administration of corporal punishment if ‘need be’. You

told those attending to remember that they were doing this because “their country is going to be taken over by Nazis, Nazis that think they can kick your door down and mutilate your children for surgery,” and they “had no option but to whack them to death because this carries a death sentence”. The clip ended with you saying you were going to go and shut down the coroners court, administering corporal punishment if need be. You all attended that rally.

6. Mr Brookes carried out research on you and your website. He forwarded the documents he had been sent to Essex CC. He felt it was a security threat to his safety. He contacted one of his 3 area coroners, Michelle Brown. The matter was referred to counter terrorism and the Metropolitan Police. Mr Brookes was told the risk was low and the police would rather treat it as intelligence and not a crime.
7. On Tuesday 18th April, the day after the rally, you, Mark Kishon Christopher, sent an email containing a condemnation of premises and seizure of goods to Lincoln Brookes for piracy and racketeering. Mr Brookes took this to be a threat of serious harm to him, but didn't pick up on the date of 20th April as the planned condemnation and seizure and sent the documents to Essex CC and intended to contact the police.
8. The sending of those various letters and documents between 3 March 2022 and 21st April 2023 are the offence of sending letters and email containing threats for the purpose of causing distress and anxiety to Mr Brookes. You, Shiza Harper, said the warrant was a combined document and you, Matthew Dean Martin said you were aware of it. Mr Brookes was not at work on the morning of Thursday 20th April.
9. That day the four of you drove in two separate cars to the council car park. Both vehicles displayed the emblem of your organisation and you wore high viz vests with emblems. You took rigid handcuffs. You went to the council offices where the coroners court was. You had an image of Mr Brookes. There is and can be no doubt that your intention was to shut down the coroners court, arrest and detain the coroner, handcuff him and take him to the police station.
10. Michelle Brown was holding a documentary inquest in Court 2. She was being assisted by Deborah Wallace. The four of you entered her courtroom. You, Mark Kishon Christopher, asked if Lincoln Brookes was there. You said that you were there to close

the court down and instructed Shiza Harper to serve notice and declare the court ‘shut down’; they were not to interfere with your sheriffs. You were asked by Michelle Brown several times to leave but you ignored her and kept asking for Lincoln Brookes. She adopted a placatory approach. Documents were thrown on the floor. She realised who you were, and was very afraid of what you were going to do. Handcuffs were mentioned as was knowing where she lived; she felt very vulnerable. She pressed the security buzzer when she could get to it and asked Deborah Wallace to phone the police, which she started doing. A security guard, Eammon McCormack, entered. There was an altercation between you, Matthew Dean Martin and Mr McCormack as he tried to usher Mark Christopher Kishon from the courtroom, you intervened and Mr McCormack ended up on the floor. The jury acquitted you of assault and damaging his glasses but there is no doubt that, in the challenge of his authority, you were asserting the supremacy of the position and powers of Mark Christopher Kishon. Handcuffs were taken out but not used on Mr McCormack. A time came when you, Mark Kishon Christopher, said the court was now seized and that they no longer had access to any shields, otherwise they “would get a home visit”. You told the officers of the court not to interfere with his sheriffs. One notice you served, headed ‘Judicial Notice’, set out a glossary of anti-establishment terms and commanded the recipient to forward the notice to all colleagues, associates and family members before declaring the Chief Federal Postal Court Judge will seek the death sentence for damage done for, among other things, insidious conduct by the Coroner/Coroner’s Court. Another notice explicitly ‘condemned’ Lincoln Brookes, Senior County Coroner, all premises and business activities directly and indirectly associated with him and all persons directly and indirectly associated with him.

11. After leaving the building, you, Matthew Dean Martin were arrested for assault and a high-viz yellow vest, a portable camera and black and silver handcuffs were taken from you. The rest of made your way to the Southend County Court to shut that down where you were arrested and high viz vests and two portable cameras were seized, and another set of handcuffs was taken from you, Sean Harper.
12. Michelle Brown, in her Victim Personal Statement made on 11 September 2024, which she read to the court today, explains she remains constantly concerned and anxious, suffers from sleep deprivation, does not feel safe in her home and when she goes out, and is hyper vigilant of her surroundings. She has minimised her social activities and gets

very withdrawn. There has been a significant impact on her work as a coroner; there was no means of exit from the courtroom or immediate security. It was, she said, an offence committed by an organised group and will impact her for the rest of her life.

13. In his Victim Personal Statement made on 21 January 2024 Lincoln Brookes said he underwent trauma therapy, has become hypervigilant, has flashbacks of events at that time and anxiety attacks, was very fearful for his family, regularly has nightmares and disturbed sleep and he fears being attacked. Both coroners refer to the negative impact of the offences on their vocational judicial role.

14. In arriving at the appropriate sentences in your case I have to assess the overall culpability for the offences of each of you and the harm caused by them, which I reflect in the in the sentences passed for the offence of conspiracy to kidnap, Count 1 on the Indictment. All other sentences will be ordered to be served concurrently. There are no Sentencing Council Definitive Guidelines for offences of kidnapping and false imprisonment. There are, however, recent dicta from the Court of Appeal and, in particular, I have considered the nine factors which are relevant to sentencing in assessing seriousness identified in paragraph 20 of the Judgment in R. v. Needham, Moors & Beeden [2022] EWCA Crim 545 as well as other features in the case: each case is fact-specific. Although there was no kidnapping and detention of the target of the conspiracies as, fortuitously, he was not at court that day, his area coroner and her assistant were in court, which was in session, and were detained there in frightening circumstances. No weapons were used but handcuffs were taken; there was a significant degree of planning and preparation; the victims of the offences have been psychologically affected by the offence, four of you were involved in the offences. Threats had been made to the Senior Coroner before the 20th April 2023 and, indirectly, were made on the day of the disruption of the court. Considerable fear was caused to the victims of all your actions on that day. In addition, I regard the fact that the intention to was take the Senior Coroner from his court, if necessary by force and the use of handcuffs in the purported exercise of non-existent powers, and endeavouring to close down a court and thereby undermining lawful authority and the rule of law as a very serious feature of the conspiracy. People in public life performing a vocational service according to law and to the best of their ability are entitled to protection and security. These were offences of high culpability. As was rightly conceded on behalf of Sean and Shiza Harper, deterrent

sentences are appropriate. The offence of sending a malicious communication with intent to cause distress or anxiety, for which, again, there is no Definitive Guideline and which carries a maximum sentence of 2 years, was also an offence of high culpability causing a significant degree of harm.

15. Mark Kishon, Christopher, you are 59 years of age and have one previous conviction in 1995 for two offences of forging an insurance document with intent to deceive and handling stolen goods. You declined to engage in the trial, no doubt on the basis that you do not acknowledge the authority of the court. I do not treat your conviction or your disengagement as aggravating factors of the offences but they do inform me as to your background and attitude. The consultant psychiatrist who was instructed by the court to prepare a report on you, to which you did not consent, was able form the view that you did not appear to be thought disordered, your mood was normal and you did not appear to be experiencing any acute symptoms of a psychotic nature or being confused or disorientated. In short, you are mentally stable. On all the material before me and having observed you throughout the 10 days of the trial and your inter-action with your co-defendants, I am satisfied that you are intelligent, persuasive, manipulative and dishonest. Your group of which you are the delf-appointed leader preys on the vulnerabilities of others, particularly those in financial difficulties and whom you are able to persuade to pay you considerable sums of money and do your bidding. You converted your co-defendants to your beliefs and to do as you directed them. Your threatening emails and letters to the Chief Coroner, copied in on many occasions to others in authority were sent over a period of a year before 20th April 2023. It was a course of conduct culminating in the events of that day with the consequences to which I have referred. Having regard to your high culpability and the harm caused and the need for like-minded people to be deterred from offending as you did, only a substantial period of imprisonment is appropriate. I have considered whether the dangerous offender provisions apply in your case but take the view that they do not and, in any event, the length of the determinate sentence I impose will provide sufficient public protection in the circumstances of your case.

16. Matthew Dean Martin, you are 47 years of age. You have a relevant conviction for having an offensive weapon but it is not in the recent past and I do not treat it as an aggravating factor. Your personal circumstances, including your relationship with your

partner and your 9 year old daughter and your current lifestyle are set out in the detailed Pre-Sentence Report dated 1st October 2024. There are clearly some good sides to your character. However, you were and apparently remain fully committed to furthering the unlawful ends of Mark Kishon Christopher. In your evidence you claimed he had saved your life. You take limited or no responsibility for your actions, have no appreciation of the impact of your offences and felt completely justified offending as you did, though in your address in mitigation you have apologised for causing your victims to feel as they did and do. You have no insight and there is said to be a high likelihood of you committing further offences. I take appropriate account of your lack of relevant recent previous convictions and your personal circumstances.

17. Sean Harper, you are 38 years of age and of previous good character. The psychological report of Dr Harry Wood dated 8th September 2024 concludes you are a highly suggestible individual who is inclined to accept information implied by others when you are not certain about something and this renders you vulnerable to being influenced by charismatic others. I take account of this. You are not an abnormally compliant individual. I have read, with care, both that report and the Pre-Sentence Report in which the circumstances causing your increased use of the internet that led you to immerse yourself in the on-line teachings of the first defendant, who exploited you, are set out, as well as the many testimonials as to your good qualities. You clearly have a good side to your character. However, you signed up to Mark Kishon Christopher's teachings and ideologies, paying a considerable sum to him in the belief that your large financial debt could be avoided by these fictitious means. You became an enthusiastic sheriff and remain committed to these beliefs. You were aware of the demands being made in your name. There is no clear evidence of remorse or appreciation by you of the seriousness and effects of your offences, though it may be that, to use your counsel's phrase, you are at the start of an awakening. The ensuing risks of harm to others set out in the pre-sentence report, if they remain, can and should be addressed in your licence conditions. I take account of but do not attach great weight to the assessments of future risk and I give you appropriate credit for your previous good character and personal circumstances. This offending was out of character.

18. Shiza Harper, you are 45 years of age. You married Sean in February 2020. You have had a university education, enjoyed a successful career in financial services and are of

previous good character, having qualities spoken of in the testimonials I have read in your case including having been a special constable. I have also considered the contents of the pre-sentence report on you dated 15th October 2024. Dr Harry Wood, in his psychological report of 10th September 2024, does not conclude that you are a highly suggestible individual. You do not consider you were coerced or pressured into becoming involved in Mark Kishon Christopher's ideology and you believed and still believe that he was helping you. You are assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm and having a medium likelihood of further offending, though I note the formal statistical risk assessment results in both your case and that of your husband. You currently remain strong in your belief that you committed no offence. As with your co-defendants and despite being intelligent and articulate as was apparent in the trial, you lack awareness of the consequences of your actions. It may be that you are taking steps towards understanding what you have done and, clearly, as in the case of your husband, your behaviour was truly out of character.

19. For the reasons I have set out the only appropriate sentence in each of your cases, taking account of your culpability and the harm caused by the offences and giving you appropriate credit for mitigating features in your individual cases, is one of imprisonment.
20. Mark Kishon Christopher, you lay at the very heart of these offences and your culpability is of the highest. You clearly recruited your co-defendants to your ideology, took a considerable amount of money from Sean and Shiza Harper and, having recruited Matthew Dean Martin, waived payments if he carried out your unlawful acts of purporting to close courts and arrest the coroner. For the offences of conspiracy to kidnap and to commit false imprisonment the sentence is one of 7 years' imprisonment. For the offence of malicious communications, the sentence is one of 18 months' imprisonment, all sentences to be served concurrently. You will be released from custody no later than two-thirds of the way through that sentence and the remainder of the sentence will be served on licence in the community. If you fail to comply with any of the conditions of your licence you will be liable to be recalled to serve the remainder of your sentence in custody. I order payment of the statutory surcharge in the sum of £228 but make no other financial orders.
21. Matthew Dean Martin, Sean Harper and Shiza Harper you each became caught up in these conspiracies at the behest of Mark Kishon Christopher and were prepared to commit

offences by doing his bidding in the role assigned to you. You still fail to acknowledge your wrongdoing and the harm you have caused by being a party to his beliefs and purposes and remain loyal to him. Taking account of your role and personal mitigation in each of your cases, the sentence for the offences of conspiracy to kidnap and to commit false imprisonment is one of 30 months' imprisonment on each count to run concurrently. You will be released no later than half way through the sentence and the remainder of the sentence will be served on licence in the community. If you fail to comply with any of the conditions of your licence you will liable to be recalled to serve the remainder of your sentence in custody. I order payment of the statutory surcharge in the sum of £228 on each of your cases but make no other financial orders.

[Restraining orders were made in respect of each defendant until further order

A forfeiture order was made in respect of the items on the list provided to the court]