



JUDICIARY OF  
ENGLAND AND WALES

**In the Crown Court at Reading**

Date: 04/12/2013

**The Queen**

**-v-**

**Colin Frederick Campbell**

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**Sentencing Remarks**

**Mr Justice Spencer:**

Colin Frederick Campbell, I have to sentence you for the brutal murder of Claire Woolterton 32 years ago in August 1981. You are already serving a sentence of life imprisonment for the killing of another woman 3 years later in 1984, Deirdre Sainsbury. Your conviction for her murder was eventually quashed by the Court of Appeal in the light of fresh evidence about the part your epilepsy may have played on that occasion. In January 1999, when you were about to be retried for the murder of Deirdre Sainsbury, the prosecution accepted your plea of guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility.

Had it been known in 1999 that you were responsible as well for the killing of Claire Woolterton, the prosecution would never have accepted your plea of diminished responsibility in relation to the killing of Deirdre Sainsbury. It is also unlikely that Dr Fenwick and Professor Fenton would have been able to support such a defence, given the content of Dr Fenwick's report dated 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013 in which he said that if you were found to have killed Claire Woolterton "the fact that he had committed two similar crimes would significantly weaken the possibility that the

factors that we determined about his epilepsy at Broadmoor Hospital could have played the central role that was suggested in the case of the Deirdre Sainsbury killing. If it is found that he was present and did carry out the earlier killing then this must raise questions about the significance of epilepsy in the second killing". I make it clear that I do not increase your sentence for the murder of Claire Woolterton on this account. It is simply part of the relevant background.

For 31 years the family of Claire Woolterton lived with the tragedy of losing her in the most shocking and distressing circumstances. The family have all been emotionally scarred, and devastatingly so. Claire was a much loved, happy, kind, generous and considerate 17 year old girl, boisterous and full of life and love for her family. She had her whole adult life before her. Her mother has never got over Claire's death and never will. She has never wanted to know the details of how Claire died, and is terrified even now of finding out. She is still haunted by nightmares and flashbacks month by month. Claire's older brother never got over the shock and trauma of her death. His life thereafter was blighted by mental health problems which the family understandably attribute directly to the murder of Claire. Sadly he died just over a month ago.

Claire's mother and step-father, and her two brothers, suffered the double agony for all those years not only of losing her but also of knowing that her killer had gone undetected and unpunished. When you were arrested and interviewed a year ago in November 2012 you had the opportunity of giving Claire Woolterton's family the one thing they must have desired most after all this time - closure. Instead you denied responsibility for this killing, hoping you would continue to get away with it, as you had got away with it for the past 31 years. The jury saw through you and, after most careful examination of all the evidence, convicted you of this appalling offence.

Only you know the true circumstances in which you came to pick up Claire Woolterton that Thursday night in August 1981 and the true circumstances in which her naked body came to be found on the path alongside the river in Windsor some 8 hours later. I am quite sure you abducted her with the intention of abusing her

sexually and, if necessary, killing her. There can be no other explanation on the evidence the jury heard.

You assaulted her sexually, overpowering her. It is plain from the defence injuries she suffered that she must have put up a fight but you were too strong for her and too determined. You rendered her unconscious by smothering her in some way, probably with your bare hands. The asphyxial changes found at post mortem would have required her breathing to be obstructed for 20-30 seconds at least. When she was unconscious you stripped her naked, just as 3 years later you stripped Deirdre Sainsbury naked. But on this occasion your victim was still alive when you stripped her. You chose to end her life in a very public place, but under cover of night and in the shadows on that path by the river. With a knife you had with you for the purpose you cut her throat from behind, drawing the blade deep across her neck on 4 or 5 occasions. Mercifully she was already unconscious. Then, as she was dying or immediately after death, you mutilated her private parts in a final act of indignity. That was done for your own depraved sexual gratification. You stabbed and slashed at her vagina and buttocks. Three years later you were to cut off the breast of Deirdre Sainsbury after you had killed her. You were and, in my view, remain a very dangerous man.

For murder, as you well know from personal experience, there is only one sentence: life imprisonment. But I am required to determine how long you should serve in prison before you are even eligible to apply to the Parole Board for release. You are now 66 years of age. It is very unlikely indeed that you will ever be released from prison because the minimum term that I must impose, despite your age, will be very long indeed.

I am required by the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to approach sentencing in your case in two stages. This is because your offence was committed before the provisions of the Act came into force. First I am required to determine, in accordance with schedule 21 to the Act, the appropriate minimum term you should serve. But secondly I am also required, by schedule 22 to the Act, to ensure that I do

not specify a minimum term which, in the opinion of the court, is greater than that which you would have been directed to serve under the practice followed by the Secretary of State before 2002 and at the time this offence was committed.

Approaching the matter in this way, the first stage is to decide what minimum term would be appropriate if this offence had been committed after the coming into force of the 2003 Act. Had you remained convicted of the murder of Deirdre Sainsbury the appropriate starting point under paragraph 4 of schedule 21 for this second murder would have been a whole life order. As it is, the appropriate starting point under paragraph 5 of schedule 21 is, in my judgment, 30 years because this was a murder involving sexual or sadistic conduct.

Next I have to consider whether there are aggravating or mitigating factors which require departure from the starting point of 30 years. There are three. First, you undoubtedly inflicted mental and physical suffering on Claire Woolterton before death. Secondly, the sexual mutilation you carried out came close to amounting to dismemberment of the body. I bear in mind that, to an extent, these two aggravating factors have already been taken into account in choosing the starting point of 30 years for the very reason that the murder involved sexual or sadistic conduct. But in my judgment these factors would have merited a further modest increase. Third, it is also an aggravating factor that you have a previous conviction for killing another woman, albeit a conviction for manslaughter rather than murder. That factor goes not so much to increase the minimum term, but to reduce the mitigation of your age and what might otherwise in some cases be regarded as the mitigation of so long a delay between the commission of this offence and the date of your sentence for it.

There is no other mitigating factor under schedule 21. Plainly you intended to kill. Plainly there was premeditation. I am not persuaded that you suffered at the time from any mental disability which lowered your degree of culpability for this killing. Despite your epilepsy you were perfectly able to lead a normal life. You had not even informed the relevant authorities that because of your epilepsy you should not be driving. You held down a job. You played competitive sport. You arranged and

revelled in social events. Your epilepsy may have made you irritable and impulsive on occasions but it did not turn you into a sexual predator and a cold blooded killer.

You can expect no sympathy on account of the delay in your being convicted of this crime and you can expect no reduction in the term you are ordered to serve on that account. In 1985 when you were interviewed by the police you had the opportunity to confess to this crime. You also had the opportunity to confess to it 10 years later when you were examined by so many psychiatrists and other doctors. Instead you painted a totally false picture of your personality and history, confident that you had been careful enough to leave no evidence of your involvement in this murder and confident that having got away with it for many years already you would never have to face trial.

I bear in mind that you have been in poor health for the last few years, receiving treatment for rectal cancer. I bear in mind that you have made something of your time in prison, and have done good works. Balancing all the aggravating and mitigating factors, including your age, I take the view that under schedule 21 of the Act the appropriate minimum term in your case would be 30 years.

Finally, I have to consider whether a term of 30 years would, in my opinion be longer than the term the Secretary of State would have directed that you serve under the earlier sentencing regime applicable at the time of the offence.

I have had the assistance of detailed submissions from counsel, based upon the statutory provisions and the decision in particular of the Court of Appeal in *R v Sullivan* [2005] 1 Cr App R 3. The relevant principles have most recently been restated in the new Consolidated Practice Direction which came into force on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013, at section N.

I am satisfied that this would have been treated, under any past practice, as a very serious case justifying a very substantial departure indeed from the normal starting point for what might be described as an “unexceptional” murder. The best evidence

of the minimum term likely to have been imposed for a “normal” murder under earlier sentencing regimes is to found in the statements of practice by respective Lord Chief Justices, Lord Bingham and Lord Woolf. These statements were made in the form of letters to the judiciary, as explained and set out in the case of Sullivan.

In his letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 1997 Lord Bingham indicated that his current practice was to take 14 years as the period to be served in a normal murder, which he noted was longer than the period his predecessor Lord Lane took as his norm 10 years earlier, i.e. in 1987 or thereabouts. The normal period then was 12 years. However, that is not to say, in a case as serious as this, that the minimum term would only ever have been set as low as 12 years. In his letter Lord Bingham identified a number of factors likely to call for a sentence more severe than the norm of 14 years. Three are in my view particularly relevant: at paragraph 3 “evidence of sadism, gratuitous violence, or sexual maltreatment, humiliation or degradation before the killing”, at paragraph 11 “macabre attempts to dismember or conceal the body”, and at paragraph 10 “a substantial record of serious violence”. Lord Bingham also indicated that while the recommendation of a punitive term longer than, say, 30 years would be very rare indeed, he did not think it right to set an upper limit. Some crimes, he said, would certainly call for terms very well in excess of the norm.

Had you been sentenced in the 1980s for the murder of Claire Woolterton, within a few years of her death, but having by then pleaded guilty to the manslaughter of Deirdre Sainsbury on the basis of diminished responsibility, those three aggravating factors subsequently identified by Lord Bingham, would have been highly relevant. They are examples only, rather than completely comprehensive, as Lord Bingham made clear. First, there was, in this murder, evidence of sadism, gratuitous violence and sexual maltreatment, humiliation and degradation before the killing. Second, there was a macabre attempt if not to dismember the body at least to mutilate it. Indeed it may very well be that you were interrupted, or feared interruption, in this desecration of the body and that you would have gone on to further sexual dismemberment, as you did in the case of Deirdre Sainsbury. It is unnecessary for me to reach a concluded view on that but it was certainly a gravely aggravating feature

of the killing. Third, on any view your previous conviction for the killing of Deirdre Sainsbury, even as manslaughter, greatly increases the seriousness of this offence. It is akin to a substantial record of serious violence. Finally I bear in mind that you would have been sentenced in the 1980s as a comparatively young man, in your mid to late 30s.

The starting point for an unexceptional murder in those days would have been 12 years, as Lord Bingham explained. For this murder I am satisfied you would have been ordered to serve at least double that figure, 24 years, but it is unlikely that the minimum term would have been as long as 30 years. The fact that you have already served 29 years in prison under your life sentence for the killing of Deirdre Sainsbury has no bearing on the assessment of the proper minimum term for this life sentence for the murder of Claire Woolterton. You have remained in prison all those years because it was not considered safe to release you.

I am required by paragraph 10 (a) of Schedule 22 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to impose a minimum term no longer than you would have been directed to serve under the practice followed by the Secretary of State before December 2002. In my view that period would have been 24 years.

Colin Frederick Campbell. For the murder of Claire Woolterton I sentence you to life imprisonment. That sentence will be concurrent with the life sentence you are already serving. You will serve a minimum term of 24 years from today which, for practical purposes, means it is likely that you will never be released.