

Pursuit & Prevention



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Towards an Understanding
of Stalking

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It Could Happen to You

In any search for a relationship you may find the companion of your dreams and the continuing support, togetherness and love to enlarge or complete your life. But, in contemplating a relationship (while happily interested, attracted and even star-struck) you should also ask yourself whether the other party would be a good risk in a relationship, especially if there should happen in due course to be a break-up. In any search, there may be pitfalls, risks with the rewards.

Someone who unwantedly communicates with another (say by monitoring, following or harassing) in a way which is intrusive and which threatens the other's well-being is now called a 'stalker' (a word formerly referring to a prowler or poacher).¹ It is a phenomenon more common than might be thought. One in five women and one in ten men are said to have experienced some form of stalking. The incidence may even be understated according to agencies who deal with it. Stalking does not always attract attention or the public eye. Often the target is embarrassed and reluctant to air the problem.

In a break up, or even where a request for a date is declined, a party who is disappointed may believe or come to believe

that, with persistence, overtures may be returned. Any lack of response or further rejection may be dismissed by the pursuer as an imagined reticence to declare a return of affection or regard. For the pursued, the persistency of the attentions can grow to cause concern.

It can also occur where the services of care givers (such as doctors, psychiatrists, nurses, lawyers, teachers, clergy) are thought by the stalker to be personal to him or her and not merely professional. It can occur against complete strangers, such as a fan to a film star or a viewer to a media presenter. Public figures and politicians also have 'an elevated risk' of being stalked.² Even an act of kindness or a small encounter may be interpreted by another as something else, a signal for a special relationship with a person who is greatly admired or is perceived to have power or influence.³ The target tends to be someone to whom the stalker admires or looks up to in an exaggerated way and who seeks involvement with the target.

The most widely publicised cases have often involved celebrities where the consequences have been severe. A well-known example is John Hinckley Jr who, being unsuccessful in his efforts to stalk film star Jodie Foster, attempted to assassinate President Reagan in order to win her affection by, in his eyes, becoming famous.⁴ There are others. But stalking is not confined to those cases where the outcome is as serious, nor as high profile, nor delusional. In a recent study, 70% of those stalked were not in the public eye. It is surprising the number of people who say that they have been stalked, once they know that you have also been a target.

Cumulatively, the attentions can cause nuisance to or harassment of the target and may include interfering with a workplace where it may have maximum impact. Often the target cannot avoid contact or move away and is trapped. It is a psychological or mental assault in which the stalker disruptively enters the world of the target with the implicit

threat: 'If you do not comply with my wishes, I will keep up the harassment'. It is a form of blackmail.

Unlawful acts committed in the process of pursuit might be prosecuted but they can seem trivial in isolation, whereas concerted activities, lawful or unlawful, may cause psychological stress through obtrusion, continuance and escalation and may extend to fear of damage to property and injury to person. Even ordinary behaviour can be seen differently and more sinister in the context of relentless pursuit, where the stalker by concerted actions seeks immersion with the target, the stalker the hunter and the target the hunted.

Where someone is seen by the stalker as an obstacle to his or her objective that person is also likely to be stalked, perhaps even more so, the stalker believing that his or her ambitions are or may thereby be frustrated. The obstacle may be in a new relationship with the target or simply someone who, in the stalker's mind, threatens his or her objective.

Stalking is not confined to any one gender, although men are more likely to cause physical harm and women a greater degree of psychological harassment. But this is probably a reflection of gender, not a difference in the nature of the stalking itself. However, being stalked more often than men, women are more likely to relate to and understand stalking from experience.

Stalking is a middleclass phenomenon, although not exclusively. Stalkers tend to be clever, methodical, researched, informed and deliberate, calculating and secretive in their activities with a high degree of subterfuge and satisfaction in accomplishment of the stalking. But anyone can be a stalker, it is not specific to race, age or occupation.

Stalking can last for many years and may become obsessive, where it seems that nothing (not even legal intervention) will deter the stalker who will not take no for an answer and will not let go. Frustrated, he or she may substitute love or regard

for hate and, if rebuffed, may retaliate or become violent, which is why legislators and Police in western countries now take stalking more seriously and with greater care.

Those who know the stalker (friends and relatives) can be incredulous that the person they know could stalk, so well disguised may be the activities. Stalkers can appear very normal – others involved in their lives can be surprised, amazed and confounded that they could be capable of such actions.

In the 1990's, dealing with stalking was in its infancy. In a number of cases (including this one), Police and Parliamentarians in England were grappling with it. There was no specific law against it and, at the time, was sometimes seen as amusing or as dogged perseverance not to be taken seriously, or simply that such attentions were a form of flattery or went with the territory of being in the public eye. Stalking became unlawful in England in June of 1997 and in New Zealand six months later, shortly after the events of this book and both influenced by them.

But even then, proof of stalking is not always easy. Often it is conducted in a clandestine way, activities such as vandalism may be uncorroborated and the identity of the perpetrator not easy to prove. It may be categorised as merely an overreaction by the target to a nuisance. Then too, the adverse effects of stalking are quite likely to be psychological, hence difficult to establish. Also, endeavours to prosecute or prevent the stalking may cause the stalker to react against the intervention and trigger escalation or retaliation in return. Further, many targets are still reluctant to complain of or report stalking because it will be alleged that they caused or encouraged it.

This is not to discourage the search for a partner – more to assist in it and to look forward to improvements – that is, towards an understanding of stalking.⁵ It is to explain the obtusive and adverse impact upon those affected and to assist those with responsibility for advising, prevention, reporting

and enforcement. Even though significant advances in its prevention have been made, it is a subject (as it was then) widely misunderstood. It is a phenomenon still largely under the radar and needs wider understanding.

In this case, many if not most of the facts and full story leading up to and subsequent to the media furore have never before been made public. They are far more meaningful than assumption and more instructive, although the retelling repeats the nightmare.

Cases tend to be fact specific and drawing conclusions from one to another may be unreliable. There can for example, in a pursuit, be a simple, even perhaps over-zealous, search for love or the renewal of a relationship on the one hand – or it could be an intrusive case of obsessive stalking which causes concern to or is harmful to the targets on the other – there can be an uncertain line between the two. Further, stalking as such raises its own set of difficulties – how to assess its impact given that it is likely to be psychological, how to bring about prevention given a strong willed stalker, and how to prevent a stalker who is frustrated in the pursuit of what he or she feels should rightfully be.

The present case (as two Sunday newspapers put it) is a 'love story' between target and obstacle, and this description of a private wedding between them is in everlasting gratitude and in praise of the Bride who was a primary target.⁶ Even though significant advances in the prevention of stalking have now been made, it is a subject which is still under the radar, often largely unknown and widely misunderstood. It is hoped this work will help to stimulate understanding.

This attempts to explain one such circumstance of stalking, but above all in a sympathetic way supportive of all those involved. It covers events where two ladies, both highly desirable, both with outstanding qualities, seek a relationship with a third party – a situation not necessarily unknown. It is

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no adverse reflection upon or criticism in any way of those involved and is with deep regret and sadness by the third party, the author, that it should have occurred at all. The events happened prior to the enactment of legislation making stalking unlawful. They happened without warning or signs in advance and by chance, seemingly by fate. It could happen to you. Or indeed to any one.⁷

1

The Wedding Feast

The Church of St James Ansty in Wiltshire is, by its distinctive double bar cross, a Crusader church. The land on which it stands was, in 1211, given to the Order of St John of Jerusalem by a Norman of noble family, Walter de Turberville. The Knights then founded a preceptory (a community of the Knights Templar)¹ in which was established the Church completed in 1230, a Manor house, stable block and hospice surrounding a large and picturesque fish pond which helped feed the occupants. St James is considered the finest example of a church of its type to have survived in England.

Ansty was part of the area which Thomas Hardy explored for his novels.² In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Tess, as a child, lived close by and The Chase (Cranborne Chase), Shaston (Shaftesbury) and Stonehenge were not far away. Of the d'Urberville gift, Hardy confirmed: 'In the reign of King John, one of them was rich enough to give the Manor to the Knights Hospitallers'.

The area had good soil which suited farming, orchards and crops. It was part of the 'cheese' of Wiltshire and not the 'chalk'. Like most other rural villages in line with the Industrial

Revolution, Ansty had declined to a small community, now of some 40 or so houses often of thatch and stone.³ Many are wisteria or rose laden cottages joined by lanes which are narrow, often one way, with high banks where the roads have been worn down over time. It still has a 1700's look about it. It is quiet and an echo of rural England. Morris men regularly dance around the Maypole on May Day morning.⁴

The Wedding

On 7 August 2008, a string quartet assembled on the grounds of the Manor by the fish pond on a warm summer's day. Arriving guests, many morning suited, were served champagne and strawberries from a large stone banquet hall known as the Commandery. Media had not been alerted, in fact the occasion had deliberately been kept very secret. It was a quiet and modest event, not a society or celebrity wedding. The guests were an eclectic mix of family and friends who had come from many parts of Britain and from overseas. The pre-wedding function was part welcome and partly a way of awaiting the arrival of all from afar, so that they could, in the words of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'walk together to the Kirk with a goodly company'.⁵

The celebrant at the wedding was a Father Mark, an Anglican priest whom one might categorise as High Church, part of the Oxford Movement which promoted formality of worship and engaged in activism to renew the vitality and practical achievements of the Church.⁶ His selection was seemingly an elegant solution since the Groom had been raised low Church Anglican and the Bride a Catholic.

After the Preface and Vows, Father Mark gave a brief Homily, naturally enough making reference to Hardy that marriages often came about 'by wonderful chance'. He emphasized the mutuality of union and, again quoting Hardy,

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said that romance grows up in ‘a mass of hard prosaic reality’, that there could be great strains placed upon the formation of relationships which the parties (and the congregation) needed to accommodate.

After the ceremony, the Bride and Groom left by car for the short journey to the Bride’s home in Ansty Coombe to await the arrival of the guests. Two friends (here referred to as the speaker and the listener) who had been at University with the Groom, leisurely walked past the tall Maypole for a short distance up the winding one-way road, passing the first house on the right (once the home of Peter Sellers) to the next. The Coombe is a spring-line settlement and even in summer there is a steady flow of water by the roadside fed by a spring which flowed for centuries into a frog pond of which only the remnants and the occasional gentle croak of a small black frog remain.

‘Frog Pond Farm’ is a thatched and tiled house assembled from Chilmark Stone and parts of Old Wardour Castle destroyed in the Civil War. It was originally a yeoman tenanted farm of 50 acres which over the years had shrunk to some 6 acres.⁷ Remnants of the farm still remained – the dairy shed, the barn, an old well and apple trees. The house now had extra rooms, modern utilities and tiled extensions to the original thatched cottage. It was well restored and kept, now with manicured gardens in the English style, with espalier, rambling roses and verdant lawn, deserving its Grade 2 status (along with the Manor and the Church of St James).

Though iconic, it was not a grand country house of which the accomplished or newly rich might buy to announce success or arrival. It was a three-bedroom cottage suited to the County set or to those of comfortable means. Indeed, most houses in Ansty answered that description and Ansty was highly desirable even in a land of countless country villages of great charm.

The string quartet, which had played for the guests prior to the service, had packed its instruments and the caterers

had cleared up and moved to the reception at the house, to a marquee, in traditional style, wedding tables and chairs set out. The quartet was playing again as the guests re-gathered. Rather crushed in the small Church, they now enjoyed the openness.

Continuing their conversation, the speaker remarked to his friend: 'Thankfully, the celebrant did not remind us of Hardy's comment that 'there is no regular path for getting out of love as there is for getting in'.⁸ The listener did not immediately respond, not fully clear as to his friend's meaning, and only vaguely recollecting Father Mark's references to the strains placed on the formation of relationships and to love and romance growing up amidst hard prosaic reality.

Recollection

They then reminisced for old time's sake, remembering that the groom, whose name was John, came up to University College, Oxford (commonly known as Univ)⁹ from Auckland, studying for a postgraduate degree in law. He had played for the University at cricket and for the Greyhounds at rugby¹⁰ and hence was a member of the prestigious Vincent's Club which, on occasions, is run down by detractors as a 'jock's club' – although John could not be described in such way. The speaker and listener were both avid cricket and rugby followers and there was a natural rapport for that reason. However, the connection was more that they, all three, shared the same notion, 'work hard, play hard', and all had graduated with some ease, great enjoyment and enlargement of their horizons.

They had come from very different backgrounds, from England, South Africa and New Zealand, with little in common otherwise, but perhaps that was the attraction. None were there for the refuge of academic life, nor privilege, nor eccentricity, but with the object of securing their futures. After the trio finished at Oxford they made their different ways. The

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speaker remained in Britain, the listener to Canada and John to Australia and New Zealand. This took their paths apart, as ambition, economic necessity and the need to concentrate on the present, separates otherwise good friends.

The speaker, who had kept more in touch, recalled that John did not start with any privilege or preferment, spending his early years in a State house in a small country town in New Zealand and at its schools, but the environment had the country virtues of being straight forward and unaffected which lasted in him. He attended Auckland University part time working to pay his accommodation and way,¹¹ steadily improving as a student. He improved at cricket as well and became Captain of the New Zealand Universities XI. Notwithstanding, he was quiet and unassuming, often overawed by his fellows. It was a surprise to everyone, and himself, when he graduated Senior Scholar in Law and was accepted by Univ for post graduate study.

This was 1963. Stephen Hawking had just completed his first at Univ when they came up and, when they left, Bill Clinton arrived. The College had had three recent Prime Ministers in Atlee, Wilson and Bob Hawke, and a host of distinguished alumni from the past who, with others, were at the forefront of affairs in Britain. A relatively small College, it was a privilege to be accepted.

All three found the unstructured atmosphere of Univ and Oxford to their liking and took the time to engage in a wider range of activities. This and exposure to the many students from different backgrounds and countries led to a wider perspective and outlook. Although not gregarious, John developed sufficient social skills to get by and this, along with natural good manners, rounded off his academic and sporting background. He was by then an 'all-rounder'.

He first lectured at Universities in England and Australia¹² and when lecturing proved insufficiently interactive with the real world, it wasn't long before he set up practice on his own

account in Auckland, the first boutique commercial law firm of which there are now many imitators. The practice thrived and, with a view to lessening his fiscal contribution to the Government, he decided upon some public service directly. The local Auckland Electric Power Board had needed an injection of new blood and, upon being elected, he became its Chairman for 12 years and then President of the Electrical Development Association of New Zealand, quickly prominent in the energy and Auckland local authority scene. Coinciding with this, he became involved in business as Chairman of innovative and established companies.¹³ He was thus able to draw on his legal experiences by adding administration and commerce, as was said of him 'speaking as it were two dialects of a common language with fluency'.¹⁴

With this background, it was not long before he came to national attention and was asked to Chair the Commerce Commission of New Zealand at an important time. There had been a plethora of wide ranging and restrictive regulations in an attempt by Government to control the economy which had become stifling and confusing. Given the desire to deregulate and the need for a substitute, he was instrumental in changing the focus of the Commission from one primarily of price control to one of promoting competition and integrity in business dealings. As was said at the time, he 'oversaw deregulation',¹⁵ the success of the Commission being an essential part of the restructuring.

As his term at the Commission ended, he was approached by a group of Members of Parliament to put his name forward for election as President of the National Party of New Zealand. Being then successful, and continuingly pro-active, he assisted the Party to be elected Government on two occasions. He was then appointed High Commissioner for New Zealand to the United Kingdom, a plum diplomatic posting based in London. It was in England that he met the Bride.

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The listener responded: 'I remember one night we were walking near Carfax from The High towards Broad Street. Balliol College was having a Ball. It had been the talk of Oxford for some time as the Rolling Stones were playing. Their early hits had made them hotter than the Beatles in the eyes of many, and the Beatles were themselves admirers.

'On the way we passed a group of couples going to the Ball, the men in Dinner Jackets and the girls in sixties dance frocks, larking a little on their way. We watched the splendour of the group with some envy. All were in the flower of youth with the spark that radiates from it. But we were open mouthed when we saw the girls, and one in particular. It was hard to believe that there could be any one more stunning. She had long luxuriant hair, a peaches and cream complexion, a willowy elegant figure, dressed in a pretty white and green dress, Laura Ashley or similar. Her escort was a fine-looking man, but we did not take much notice, such was her impact. We stopped in our tracks, never having seen any girl quite like that'. After staring, in embarrassment we turned away, looking back at the retreating couples. How could we ever aspire to her? She is not for boys from Council houses' the speaker had said, to which John had replied sardonically: 'State house actually, but I get your drift'.

But years later, by one of those quirks of co-incidence, conjunction without logical explanation, the girl whom they had seen was now the Bride. She had at 16 been accepted into St Martins in London (now London University for the Arts) the prestigious academy for arts and design and had quickly become a well-known couture fashion model whose face had also been a common sight on the billboards and television of England and Germany. She had married the partner with her at the Ball until it foundered after producing two children. She had met John in England while he was High Commissioner. They had lived together over the subsequent years at John's

home 'Akarana' in St Mary's Bay, Auckland and at her home at 'Frog Pond Farm' in Ansty, sharing their time between New Zealand and England. They had decided to formalise that and were now married.

The speaker continued: 'Maggie's knowledge, eloquence and warmth could be breath-taking. It is not quite clear how this had come about. Her Catholic schooling had been interrupted and sporadic, yet people of the highest standing and intellect sought her out, even though she was very much self-taught and from the education of life. All of this masked a deeply religious sense in her which few would have guessed from her worldly demeanour.

Maggie and John were opposites in most senses: respectively quick versus measured, reactive versus studied, instinctive versus evidence based, volatile versus calm. While opposites are not always a recipe for a successful relationship, both admired intensely the others qualities and gifts which they themselves did not possess'.

After the reception, a number of the guests remained at Frog Pond Farm, gathered around tables enjoying the English evening light and the gardens, the operatives having now gone, and John and Maggie to a boutique hotel, Howard's House in Teffont Evias. It was a glorious summer evening with a quiet stillness in the air, with the distant glimpse of the Salisbury Plain on the horizon lost in the radiance of the sun. Coupled with the remoteness of the area and the separation of the house from neighbours, they could not help but remark at the idyllic peacefulness of the scene.

The Sport of the Gods

By now the listener was intrigued by Hardy's assertion that there is 'no regular path for getting out of love' and pressed the speaker to expand. At first he resisted, it did not seem good

form to cast doubts on love so soon after a wedding, it was a time for celebration and for relaxation. But eventually, after more reminiscing, with assistance from further champagne, in such a warm, quiet and innocuous sylvan setting, he relented in small part by way of introduction.

'Tess of the d'Urbervilles (the sub-title of the book is 'A Pure Woman') is you will remember a very disturbing novel, a sad and tragic story inspired from real life. Pure and innocent, Tess leaves home and meets Alec d'Urberville who procures employment for her and uses stratagems to seduce her. She does not care for him or want his advances but he has the good fortune to rescue her after being attacked. On the way back home, in 'The Chase' in fog, hoping to take advantage of Tess in a vulnerable state, Alec meanders and feigns to lose his way. Leaving her to check his position, he returns to find her asleep. It is ambiguous whether he rapes her, but is usually (in the light of Victorian sensibility in avoiding its mention) presumed. When Tess returns home pregnant, she complains to her mother, saying she was not told by her of the pitfalls of dealing with men. 'Why didn't you tell me there was danger? Why didn't you warn me? Ladies know what to guard against because they read novels that tell them of these tricks'.

Her child tragically dies and Tess later meets and marries her real love, Angel Clare, the son of preacher parents 'of Apostolic simplicity in life and thought'. Faced with a dilemma of conscience concerning her past, Tess hesitatingly but honestly tells Angel of her pregnancy. But, taking the news badly given his upbringing, Angel sees Alec as 'her husband by nature' and departs overseas. Alec re-appears and in desire for her, 'her pretty face and shapely figure', pursues his previous infatuation. He is always around 'harassing' and paying her attention. He says that she 'haunts' him and that he is 'unhinged' by her. Again and again, she does not want his attentions, strikes him and strongly and continuously rejects

him but he is, in Hardy's words 'inexorable', 'persistent' and 'relentless' in spite of rebuff. He will not accept rejection or 'take a negative', asserting that 'I will be your master again'.

Then, Tess's mother and younger brothers and sisters (to whom she was much attached) become destitute after the death of her father, and Alec offers her family smart lodgings and clothes. Given the necessity for her family, she accepts. When Angel does return, Tess blames Alec for her predicament and for losing Angel twice, the first due to the prior pregnancy which Angel could not then accept, and the second her presumed promiscuity with her benefactor. In desperation to stop the unwelcome attention and its constancy, she kills Alec with a carving knife while he slept. Tess, then reunited with Angel, was arrested some ten miles from here at Stonehenge at an ancient altar (before the stone had been returned to upright), and she was hanged some one hundred years ago on a fine summer's day similar to this. A tear-jerking end.

Again, in Hardy's words, this served justice but it was also fate (seemingly without basis, unsought and at random) which he described as the 'sport of the Gods'. Tess was a victim unfairly punished, the injustice being not of her own ambition or making, but the result of the ambition and actions of another, who had stalked her.

The speaker paused: 'Well, few talk of the pitfalls of stalking. John should tell the story directly. But by then, the long summer evening was closing in. It was time to leave the reception and the house.'

The listener's query – that there is no regular path for getting out of love – his interest suitably whetted, still required an answer.

2

Beginnings

When the foursome met again at Frog Pond Farm a week later, John and Maggie had returned from their short break. Relaxed, on holiday and among old friends, there was much to talk about. After a while, in response to a lead, John said that Maggie had been a primary focus of the attentions and, immensely grateful for her support throughout, he had tried to understand and to make some sense of what had happened, for them both.

In sympathetic company, he opened up: 'It arose from busy pre-occupation. At the time, I was President of the New Zealand National Party which had been elected as Government and there was plenty for me as President to do – in managing the Party in support of the Caucus and in liaising on the major issues of the day. Although my home was in Auckland, this took me to Wellington where I worked for most of the week. Such absences and pre-occupations had an adverse effect on my marriage and led to separation in 1991. Though saddened, it helped that I threw myself back into my work, of which there was much.

Some nine months after the separation, sometime mid-1992 and still during the Presidency, I formed an alliance with

‘Catherine’.¹ When activities permitted, we would meet from time to time. I was grateful for the relaxation, her friendship, support and company, enjoyed by both. It also provided an ability to discuss Party issues and a sympathetic ear. It came to an end after about a year of intermittent activity in June 1993 and this triggered a series of events.

‘Catherine’ had lived in New Zealand for some twenty years, having grown up and married in England. She had trained as a nurse, working initially with patients having chronic and acute illnesses. She emigrated to New Zealand with her husband who was a doctor. Around 1981, they divorced. She had felt let down given her contribution to the practice and the marriage, and had then devoted her life to her children. As she said: ‘It has been lonely, tough and cruel at times...I so much want to find someone to share my life with...’

She had set about improving her lot, completing at Victoria University a BA (Honours) degree in social sciences and was studying for an MA in public policy. She obtained a position as a Lecturer in child and family health, public health policy and sociology. Although a worthy occupation, it seems she fretted for something of more substance and responsibility. Now with a background in economics and public policy, she applied unsuccessfully for management positions. Somewhat resentful, she blamed this on the ‘glass ceiling’.

She was hard working and ambitious, endeavouring to improve herself. She had resilience from her past experiences, and was informed on a wide range of health and feminist issues at a practical level. She was a contributor, a friendly, part of the local scene and had a number of girlfriends with whom she appeared to get on well. She was svelte and dressed well as the occasion demanded. She was not demonstrative, nor given to extravagance, nor to attention seeking, nor seeming to have any particular sensitivities. In short, she was self-improving, upwardly-mobile, capable, likeable, attractive and normal.

The National Party

I had first met 'Catherine' in 1989 in the course of my campaign for the Presidency of the National Party. The Party is essentially a group of volunteers and she a supporter and Party activist. We felt at ease with each other and had common interest in advancing the cause. 'Catherine' had been appointed by my team as my 'minder' while I was canvassing for support. At the time, I was married and there was no suggestion whatsoever of anything further.

Upon becoming President, I had to travel to Wellington to work. I was engaging with my new role and finding my way in a busy and crowded context.² Now that I was separated, I was grateful for the support and input 'Catherine' offered me as President. After some six months, at a party at her home in Wellington she invited me to stay, which I accepted. We then sometimes met in the evenings when free and gradually, she might stay the night in my hotel.

Messages from 'Catherine' would then arrive. 'Thank you for a wonderful night. I'm sure heaven wouldn't compare. In truth my darling no one will ever replace your love making'. 'Even the thought of your soft touch makes me yearn for your presence and cripple at the knees'. 'I want you to know that I do know how lucky I am. I am yours forever'. She would write regularly telling me of thoughts she felt unable to express verbally. She would follow this up by sending unexpected gifts and cards 'to the most wonderful person in my world'.

We shared holidays, to the Gold Coast in Queensland and to the South Island. In her letters there were references by her to these trips in glowing terms: 'Thank you for the wonderful holiday and for making me feel so loved, wanted and very contented. I find it hard to express how I feel in words. I can express my feelings much better in loving and holding you. I woke up each morning lying next to you feeling your arms

around me not ever wanting that moment to pass. I am missing you very much. I enjoyed every minute we spent together’.

We never lived together and usually met at best only weekly. At first she did not ask for change and seemed happy for it to be that way. However, from the first half of 1993 she increasingly asked for more time: ‘It never used to bother me not seeing you for a few weeks. I’ll try and get back to that point but at the moment I just want to be in touch with you’. ‘If you care anything about our relationship, we need to put a little more time into it. I’m not wanting to impinge on your precious freedom but for me to believe you want our relationship to survive. I just want some reassurance’.

The association was open, neither of us was trying to hide it and we were loyal to each other. But whereas I was extremely busy, she was not. To me it was very welcome, to her the relationship seemed much more. Her approaches and attentions were flattering but cumulatively made me feel uneasy. She had been friendly, supportive and helpful and never caused embarrassment. We never had harsh words. I felt warmly towards her and did care for her. It was always pleasant, but it did not seem for me to be developing as a close personal relationship should, growing with contact.

The unease was something I could not quite put my finger on. It may have been the imbalance of our feelings towards each other. It may have been that her feelings seemed sometimes to be overly expressed. Was the language she used ‘over the top’ or was it simply language that any lover might use? I was not sure. Certainly, she was looking to something permanent for the future. I was too, but did not think I had found it.

We never discussed the possibility of marriage, but recognising that she was wanting something I did not feel able to share in the same way, I gradually felt I must end the relationship. For it to go on would not be fair to her and would, eventually, mean greater heartache for us both. I took care in

ending it knowing the depth of her feelings, I explained to her one morning in June 1993 that I was sorry that I was not in love with her and that, if the relationship was not going anywhere, it was better to end it now rather than later. I said that there was nothing unpleasant or bad with the relationship but it did not have for me the passion I believed necessary for the more serious step of living together. It was not sufficient to be comfortable, a relationship needed something more. I told her that I was sad and very sorry, I had warm feelings towards her and cared for her, that I was desperately unhappy as to the outcome and had been trying for a little while to tell her.

She was quiet at the time and did not have any obvious reaction, simply one of thoughtfulness. She asked whether there was another woman, and I said that I had never had two relationships running at once and would not do so. We parted that morning with sadness and without any joy.

Reaction

Very soon it was clear that 'Catherine' took the news badly and there was great hurt. Letters came thick and fast. Over the next months she peppered me with cards, letters, photographs and telephone calls: 'I am finding it hard to believe that you want to end our relationship. OK so you don't love me, at least that is what you say...But for the first time yesterday you actually told me that you at least cared about me and I meant something special to you'.

'I spent the weekend doing a lot of thinking between floods of tears. I have a lump of lead permanently in my stomach, and ache in my heart...I love you heaps'. 'I can't think, I can't work. I can't study. I can't think about anything without always coming back to trying to understand where it all went wrong...Let's face it John you were scared stiff that our relationship was developing into something deeper and

you couldn't cope with that'.

On 7 August, she wrote saying that she had not had a break since Christmas: 'Please try and stay in Wellington...I need your arms around me'. To this, with some concern, I phoned her, carefully choosing my words: 'It is not a good idea to stay. If I continue to see you, I cannot make a new life for myself and you cannot either. I cannot two time'.

But 'Catherine' continued: On 25 August, 'I'm afraid the memories of the happy times we spent together fills me with an overwhelming sense of sadness of what I have lost'. On 27 August, 'I feel OK and in control for a few hours and then without warning I just feel overwhelmed with sadness or panic on being on my own again. I'm fed up with battling through life by myself'. On 28 August, 'I found you exiting, fascinating, attractive, kind, gentle, understanding and a great lover. I worshipped and adored you to the point where nothing else mattered. I would have gone to the ends of the earth for you'. On 29 August, 'I know that nothing I say or do will bring you back to me. Only you can decide about your life. You know that I am here to listen and talk with you whenever'. On 30 August, 'I woke in the middle of the night longing to feel your arms around me. I wish there was a quick fix or medicine to cure me of these feelings'.

Above all, she wanted to keep contact and sought my help for her state of mind: 'If you cared even a little for me it would help me to start to get on with my life'. 'You at least owe me that for all the pain and hurt you have caused me'. If I did not respond, it would look heartless, as though I did not care for her feelings. I phoned her at various times at her request to try to console and help. She replied: 'Thank you for your support over the weekend on the telephone. If I know you will help me, I'm sure I will be able to cope over the next few months'.

She kept up the pressure using different approaches: 'I know that I have some wonderful memories of our time together

but that is what makes it so painful, losing the happiness that you have given me'. 'I hope I have managed to make you feel awful!!! Perhaps you will make sure that you don't do the same thing to another woman'. 'So many things I gave up doing to be with you. So many friends I stopped seeing to make sure we had time to spend together'. 'That you could have played around with my love and my feelings so coldly appals me'.

She put a lot of effort into this process. The telephone calls would come late in the evening and early morning, crying into the phone, sometimes pleading. It was an unusually severe reaction to rejection and for what might have been.

Acceptance

'Catherine's' determination to keep up the relationship and contact caused difficulty in my mind. Not once had I written to her. While willing to be friends, I became wary more and more of contact. Being friendly seemed to me the right thing to do but it was, for her, a means of keeping the hope alive. For me, the relationship had been one of exploration and not simply of convenience, unless it had been that I had waited too long in ending it. But had it been terminated earlier, I doubt that the result would have been different. I felt guilty that she would not let go. Or perhaps it was a feeling of anxiety due to the constancy of a problem unresolved.

Becoming increasingly concerned, I consulted one of her friends, saying I had wanted to be kind but that was not working, and any kindness or consideration was treated by 'Catherine' as a platform for a continuing relationship. Her friend said she had had difficult breakups before, promised to talk to her and to her friends, and to do what they could. Shortly after, 'Catherine' came to the conclusion that all was not well: 'I still feel numb but I know that you are right and that it will get easier with the passing of each day. I have put away

my photograph of you, a minor but symbolic move'. 'I was very shocked with myself this morning (after an emotional outburst the night before) and decided that I needed to get some help for myself to get through resolving to end this relationship. I've asked a few of my very close friends if when I get an overwhelming urge to phone you and blubber...I will phone and talk things through with them instead'.

She often said that she realised the relationship was over: 'It has been hard to let you go but in spite of the incredible pain it is causing me, I know that I must do it'. 'I very much want to let you go'. It was now just before Christmas 1993, six months after our break up. I hoped that time was working. Her indications of a gradual recovery had given me some assurance.

Appointment

After nearly five years of Presidency of the National Party, a Party colleague, upon the imminent retirement of the current High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, asked whether I would be interested in the position. I had not previously given this thought but, being Anglophile, became receptive of the idea. As requested, I indicated my interest and provided a CV and resumé for this purpose. The first I knew of my appointment was when it was leaked, published in the *Dominion* newspaper.

Although at this time the communications from 'Catherine' had abated, she immediately renewed her interest and asked me to take her to England saying that our relationship had contributed to my success. When I told her I was sorry, she made out that many of her friends had asked her whether she was going. She had, she said, lost face as a result.

However, she then appeared to accept the failure to renew the relationship with some grace and dignity: 'I do share your

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pleasure and pride at being made High Commissioner. I'm sure as always you will give it 100% of your effort and produce excellent results...If I ever come to London I expect VIP treatment as I am not sharing the experience with you'. 'Please let us be friends before you leave for London. You know that I want to come with you but I accept your decision. I will eventually learn to live with it'. 'I so wish I could have fulfilled your wants needs and desires but have to accept that I could not do that. I have to find my own answers'.

Concluding: 'There is nothing more to say except that I will miss your caring arms around me, your wise counsel, your sense of humour, and most of all your laughter and fun and support'. Finally, a farewell card: 'To my friend and lover John. I will always love you. I hope that you live a happy life. You will always be in a small corner of my heart. We would have made a great team. Goodbye my love, 'Catherine''.

I duly prepared for my departure. It took time to extricate myself from many interests and I arrived in London early April 1994 as High Commissioner without a partner. As for the attentions, I felt I was free at last.

3

London

I had not fully recovered from jet lag when an expansive round of welcome functions began. The London High Commission had arranged a splendid introduction. There was a reception for about 400 people at the Ballroom of New Zealand House, another more exclusive gathering for some 120 in the Penthouse and a formal dinner for 16 at the Residence. Many well-known New Zealanders and Britons attended, facilitating the role to come.

New Zealand House is imposing and central, situated in the Haymarket adjoining Trafalgar Square. One of its great assets is the Penthouse on the 17th floor with magnificent views over London and many of its iconic buildings, including Westminster and Whitehall. British people particularly enjoy their City from there and often say how much they admire the venue. Added to this was the New Zealand Residence, then at 43 Chelsea Square. Not grand by the standards of other Missions, it was a well-situated, large private house of four stories which came with a cook, a houseman, a laundry/cleaner and a chauffeur. It provided a warm friendly atmosphere to entertain, usually of a dozen or so guests with eighteen at a

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stretch, facilitating relatively informal and intimate occasions. New Zealand was well served in looking after its interests, in promoting the country and the New Zealand/United Kingdom relationship in a manner appropriate to its size and style.

Shortly after my arrival too, were ceremonies around Anzac Day on 25 April including wreath laying at the Cenotaph in Whitehall and a Service at Westminster Abbey.¹ British people at multiple venues (Cannock Chase, Brockenhurst, Walton on Thames and others) remember New Zealanders who died in Britain in both World Wars.² Many New Zealanders had, after the First War, been transferred to England to await repatriation home due to the shortage of available vessels. They had been assigned to camps in England and many had, along with those of other nations, died of influenza during the epidemics of 1919 or of war wounds. Local people, eighty years later, still formally remembered that they and others had given their lives in the course of the defence of Britain. It was an especial tribute and, for me, a lasting memory.

Then, in May and June, the 'season' started. High Commissioners are invited to attend special gatherings such as Royal Ascot, Henley Royal Regatta, Wimbledon, and also ceremonial events such as the Trooping of the Colour and the Queen's Garden Party. There is no need to dwell on the grandeur of the functions and events in London. The British are known for ceremony, largely conducted with expertise, precision and pride by retired military officers. It is an asset the British use in their interests, in selling products and smoothing relationships. In addition to my normal role at the High Commission, I attended as many as I could in pursuance of the representative function of the office, meeting people, learning and being seen to be active.

Pre-occupation

In so doing, I experienced the huge regard for New Zealand in Britain. Its High Commissioners are especially welcomed and, while this may be attributed to politeness, I had no doubt that it was genuine. Indeed, I was taken aback by the reception, both public and private, and how welcoming and widespread it was. I wondered, if the relationship was already so good, whether there was a job to do?

My predecessor, the Hon George Gair, had succinctly drawn attention to a dichotomy in his final report a month or two before. As he said: 'There are two views of New Zealand prevalent in Britain. The first which, I am glad to say is beginning to fade, is of a country just as Britain was forty years ago. The other is one of how Britain ought to be 20 years from now. Our reforms in agriculture, in finance, in the economy as a whole, and in the public sector are increasingly being held up as models to which Britain could usefully look.' Thus, there was still in some quarters a persisting image of New Zealand as behind the times which did not reflect the innovative country with bold public sector reforms and the increasing sophistication of its products. I set about endeavouring to win that contest of perceptions, making it a theme of many speeches, to remove the old and substitute the new.

While Britain and New Zealand generally tend to think along the same lines, there were differences of significance existing. For example, Britain felt a necessity for a nuclear deterrent given its international responsibilities which did not fit easily with New Zealand's non-nuclear stance. Also, New Zealand was considering developing relationships with Asian-Pacific countries and there was a feeling in Britain that this may be against its trade interests.³ New Zealand was also considering abolishing the British title nomenclature and the Privy Council, and concern was that this was due to

anti-British sentiment.⁴ Then, looking to learn from New Zealand, Britain the free trader of Europe, sought information hungrily as to the workings of the economic reforms around deregulation and its impact in New Zealand. Further, the recent adoption by New Zealand of a new voting system (of proportional representation largely following Germany) excited interest in Britain, a First Past the Post country, given the under-representation there of the Liberal Democrats.⁵ Visits to Westminster and policy issues abounded.

Matters of perception and policy aside, the High Commissioner's role also involves keeping up contacts between New Zealand and Britain, and fostering them. New Zealand has a wide variety of relationships with Britain at all levels (public and private, governmental, business, sport and personal) a myriad of links of all kinds across nearly every field of endeavour. I was extended, researching matters on the wide variety of subjects upon which I was called on to be involved and to speak.⁶ There was plenty to do, and an eighteen-hour day the norm. I revelled in that and, with enthusiasm, threw myself into the task.

Arrival

Accordingly, there was little time or ability to think about relationships and least of all of 'Catherine'. It was now nearly a year since the break-up and the distance between us lessened her ability to make contact. But the respite was short lived. On the 10 May 1994, I received a birthday card: 'Darling John, Happy birthday to you. Thank you for the memories. One day we may be able to be friends but the pain is too much just now. One day you may understand how precious my love was for you, I will always be here for you. Find me if you need me. You are definitely the best. My love forever, 'Catherine'.

Later in May, further letters arrived with news from

Wellington and New Zealand: 'You will be pleased to hear that I am slowly recovering my composure and don't even cry when I think about you. I do still miss you very much though, especially when I wake in the night and I am all alone...I won't hold my breath waiting for a reply! I will assume that if I don't hear from you that you are happy for me to write to you. If you don't want me to write to you then you will have to put pen to paper and tell me'. But she well knew that I had never once written to her before and was not likely to do so now.

No mention was made of her visiting England. However, at that time, 'Catherine' had been discussing her future with a friend in Wellington, that her father in England was seriously ill and that she had to go there as it was likely her last chance. The friend, whom I had consulted before, knowing of the problem, asked whether she was just following me. 'Catherine' had denied that she was. But not believing her, the friend wrote to me sometime in June, warning that she was about to come to England: 'The bad news is that she has decided to come to follow you there'. I had worried for a time about the letter and had put it aside in my study at the Residence to protect its confidence.

On 26 June, without warning, a message for 'Catherine' from another friend of hers arrived at the High Commission. It was addressed to 'Catherine', c/o John Collinge, New Zealand High Commission. She had presumed to use me as a post box.

Then I began receiving postcards from 'Catherine' from different places saying that she was sightseeing. On 11 July, she sent a message to me from Hong Kong: 'Arriving in London on the 15 July 1994. I will be spending some time doing some work for the National Party. Your help would be appreciated. Please could you contact me at either of the addresses below'. Again, I did not. On 15 July, more than a year after the breakup, she turned up in London. Later she was to write: 'He was

happy for me to do it although he didn't ask me to'. It seemed that because I had not told her otherwise, I was happy for her to come.

I had, naturally, welcomed to London other people I had known in New Zealand and helped them wherever possible. My dilemma was what I should do for her. I thought about it for some time and felt that she could rightly complain if I did not show her the same courtesy as I would to others. I had no reason to be unkind to her, nor were there any feelings of ill will. I felt sorry for her in the way she had taken the breakup and did not want to appear churlish.

Renewal

'Catherine' found it difficult to obtain employment and she wrote asking me to keep an eye out for positions: 'if you hear of any job for which I might be suitable that you mention my name' and inquired whether there was a job at the High Commission.⁷ Eventually, she nursed a lady who had been rendered immobile, for which accommodation was attached, taking her regularly to the elegant and spacious Hurlingham Club at Fulham with its many facilities as part of therapy: 'I am starting to settle in and find my way around London, swimming every day at the Hurlingham Club, very enjoyable and helping to get my body back into shape'. Then: 'Just a quick note to let you know that I have moved to Fulham. I am busy unpacking and settling in but I will try to find time to give you a call. It would be nice to know that there is a familiar friend nearby'.

She requested to be included in functions associated with the High Commission: 'I would appreciate meeting other people if they are passing through London'. As a result, I arranged various introductions and contacts for her, including the London New Zealand Society and acknowledged her as

a friend, assisting her to become part of the New Zealand community in London.

As High Commissioner, I entertained at the Residence at least weekly, often to introduce visiting New Zealanders to their counterparts in the UK or to those who might be useful to them. Along with a dozen or so others, as part of normal promotion and hospitality, I invited 'Catherine' to three dinners at the Residence which involved and were for people she knew, mutual friends who were visiting from New Zealand. On each occasion, not having a hostess, in a group of a dozen or so people, I sat 'Catherine' at the far end of the table away from me at the centre so it could not be misinterpreted by her or anyone else. Disappointed, she later described the dinners as boring and presented herself as the real friend: 'You have been sucked in by the glamour of your position...I know that in six months the superficiality of it will begin to pall and you will want something a little more genuine'.

In early August, I facilitated her attendance at Newmarket on New Zealand Racing Day to which she travelled separately with a friend. Later she said she was my 'official escort'. In fact, 'Catherine' wrote to me afterwards: 'I thanked everyone else for the weekend at Newmarket except the most important person for me, you of course. I know that I put pressure on you to take me and I really enjoyed myself'.

'Catherine' continued to seek opportunities for us to do things together: 'If you are around next weekend and want to find a country pub for lunch let me know'. She provided two tickets for a concert at Hyde Park. She had friends in England invite us for drinks. None were taken up by me.

She continued the overtures: 'I'm still missing you heaps and heaps'. 'Our sexual relationship is very important to me. It is the most powerful way that we have to express our feelings for each other...If I don't get it from you, I will get it from someone else. That will fulfil my physical needs but only you

can fill my emotional needs’.

One thing led to another and we slept together and afterwards for a short time.⁸ It did not happen by design on my part, but it did happen. I had continuing regard for her. I had not had any sexual relationship for well over a year by that time, and no doubt was at the height of vulnerability. It was not a last-ditch effort to see if there was something which would make a relationship work, it was one of those things of the moment. It seemed natural enough. I had no other relationship, nor had she. It was companionship and there was familiarity.

At the time, it seemed that ‘Catherine’ had put aside her previous upset and was accepting that there was no permanent relationship, instead re-joining a friendship. I did not then sufficiently recognise that she was endeavouring to re-create a permanent relationship and the appearance of one. This became clearer from her subsequent writings, I should not have re-joined intimacy, but hindsight is a wonderful thing.

There was a vacuum. ‘Catherine’ later said in Court, through her counsel, that I was taking advantage of her and was leading her on. But, in reality, it was for her the reward for her persistence and repeated initiatives. It was something she alone had determinedly sought and it was she alone who had wanted to believe that there was a relationship. As she confirmed herself: ‘I am so much to blame for trying desperately to continue our relationship’.

Though not improper in any way, the resumption was for me a mistake, later regretted. The renewal was unwise and could lead to expectation. Upon reflection, however, the friendship and assistance I had shown her on arrival would likely have created expectation in her mind in any event. As she said many times: ‘You led me on with your wonderful unexpected welcome when I arrived in the UK’. In fact, it was in grateful recognition of our past friendship.

But by 29 August 1994, and again on 5 September 1994, she confirmed in writing that there was no commitment: 'I have no more entitlement to your time than anyone else. Please, please give me some of that time. We have no commitment of fidelity to each other though in my dreams I wish it was so'.⁹

Hilda

Sometime afterwards, in the later part of 1994, I met a lady who shall be named Hilda¹⁰. In due course, we formed a close attachment and I escorted her to a number of functions, engaging with people outside the official diplomatic circuit. We visited her grand homes, explored some of the stately homes of Britain together and we holidayed in Sardinia.

One evening I visited her London house at her request. She showed me an envelope. In it there were two condoms and a note. The note said that I was a homosexual and advised her to use the condoms. It was in very irregular handwriting which I did not recognize. Dirty and false tricks I had been aware of from politics, but could not think who would have done it.¹¹ I did not suspect 'Catherine', seeing her as her letters portrayed as an innocent who had loved too much and who had suffered as a result. 'Catherine' though, was the only person with a motive and, not believing that it was her, I confronted her with the note. She denied that it was her and the mystery was left at that.¹²

Fortunately, Hilda accepted my assurances that the claims in the note were false and the relationship continued for a few months. As to 'Catherine's' reaction she wrote: 'I know that (Hilda) is the main woman in your life at the moment but until you tell me you have fallen in love with her I will assume she is performing the same function that I did, which was to fulfil your sexual needs...I don't believe she is entitled to exclusivity of you because she can't fulfil all your needs...I did want to tell

you that I am seeing someone as well’.

Around Christmas 1994 there was a change in Hilda’s demeanour. She began asking questions about my medical history and exploring whether I was seeing other women (which I was not). I sensed in her a reticence in the relationship but was not sure why, and the relationship came to an end.

‘Talk’

Some time afterwards ‘Catherine’ wrote to me: ‘I will be in London on Wednesday so we can arrange an appointment. I would prefer to see you in your office at the HC as this will keep the meeting formal and professional’. At this meeting, she told me that she was having difficulty living with the fact that it was she who had sent the note to Hilda. She said that, after being challenged, it had worried her and felt that she had to get it off her chest. I told her that I was shocked that she would do such a thing.

She explained it in letters to me shortly afterwards: ‘I know you don’t want to see or hear from me again and it is highly probable that this letter will be fired straight in to the rubbish bin which is what I deserve. I don’t know how to make amends for what I did to you. I cannot live with myself knowing what I did. You know that it is not normally in my nature to do something so awful’. ‘Yes, my anger got the better of me and I will spend the rest of my life having to live with what I did to you. All I can do is ask that one day you might be able to find it in your heart to forgive me... To know that you had forgiven me would make my life more bearable.’

Until that time I had never contemplated ‘Catherine’ as someone with the capacity to do something of that sort. But with the revelation that she had sent the note to Hilda I avoided her as much as possible. Notwithstanding, the apologies kept coming. She wrote: ‘You know that you have punished me

over the last few months, knowing you were so angry with me caused me a great deal of pain and heartache. Not a day goes by without thinking of you in some way. I can't explain what it is I love about you I just do. You can control me with the crook of your little finger'. 'Sackcloth and ashes is the only thing left for me to show my sorrow for my behaviour towards you... There is a dark cloud hanging over me and it will not go away until I have made my peace with you. I beg you to allow me to do this and that we can both put the past behind us'.

Being very much taken aback by 'Catherine's' behaviour I endeavoured to avoid her as much as possible. Of course, she might attend Commission functions, and, on one occasion, she barred my way as I was temporarily alone leaving a function at New Zealand House. She said she had to talk to me and made it clear that she would make a scene if I did not see her tomorrow. At the further meeting in my office, she explained that she had only sent the note to Hilda because she loved and respected me so much. She repeated the abject apology in her earlier letters and said that it would not happen again. She had admired me enormously and that it would mean everything to her if I would at least continue to talk to her again. Though nervous, I felt that it was simply not possible or practicable to avoid or ignore her completely since she attended expat functions at the High Commission. Not wishing a scene, I reluctantly agreed to talk to her, without saying I accepted her apology.

There was no doubt that 'talk' meant, in the context of the discussion, for her to be an acquaintance. 'Catherine' seemed in no doubt either. On 23rd January, 1995 she wrote: 'I can't help the way I feel about you but I have learnt to get on with my life and keep my feelings under more control. I hope we can continue to be friends and see each other occasionally'.

Following on, although there was no close communication between us, she asked me for an invitation to enable her to

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attend a New Zealand Society Dinner on Waitangi Day, 6 February 1995. She said she was unable to obtain a ticket for the occasion and asked for one. I had a ticket for a guest which I allowed her to use. Her view was very different: 'You then asked me to the Waitangi Day dinner as your partner. I felt very privileged to be at your side at such a function'.

Accordingly, at that time, in early 1995, 'Catherine' knew and acknowledged that we did not have a mutual relationship. But she had my agreement that I would 'talk' to her and she knew that she could still obtain my assistance (such as providing access to a function). She had had a victory in relation to Hilda – she had seen her off. She knew that, if she persisted long enough, she was able to upset a relationship which I had formed with another woman. By persistent attentions and pleas, she knew that she could get back into my life.

Although I did not realise it at the time, it was the most dangerous knowledge she could have.

Maggie

Bude is a small sea-side resort town on the northern Cornish Coast. It has two beaches with broad sands and, facing west to the Atlantic, its rollers can make for good surfing. Indeed, the Bude Surf Life Saving Club was the founder of British surf lifesaving and, on 28 April 1995, the Royal Surf Life Saving Society held its major meeting of the year there. The Guest of Honour, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, attended as Patron as did the New Zealand lifesaving team and myself as the New Zealand representative on the Society.¹

At the Review, a beach parade, not having seen ‘Catherine’ for a little time, I had a God-given opportunity to meet a lady. She was suggesting to another guest that NZ1 must be a New Zealand car and, being nearby, I was immediately able to confirm that it was, introducing myself to Margaret Postlethwaite (Maggie) in the process.² We struck up, in Maggie’s words, ‘an instant rapport’. I was immediately taken with her beauty, her flowing hair, her superbly smart and elegant appearance, and her friendly and approachable manner.

The luncheon proceeded and I sat at a table of eight people

with the Duke who was on good form showing his clear interest in the subject matter of the visit. His very considerable charisma was at its best when encouraging practical outdoor pursuits of real meaning to the community. It was something he took to be worthwhile and it showed.

After lunch, I sought an opportunity to talk to Maggie again. Her looks and manner were backed by sparkling conversation and depth of knowledge. She was particularly vivacious and interacted well with other guests. Somehow, I fumbled out a request for a contact saying that I hoped we would meet in London and was gratified to be given phone numbers, not only for London but also her country home in Wiltshire (about a two-hour drive from the city). Unbeknown to her, I watched her depart until she could no longer be seen.

Having plucked up sufficient courage, I rang her at her country home the following week. We arranged to meet for lunch at a Chelsea restaurant when she was next in London. Over the following three weeks, at my request, I took her to the Chelsea Flower Show to which I had been officially invited with a partner. At her request, I visited the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children which included a tour of the wards talking to the children and staff. Again, I had been impressed at her knowledge and sociability. As we got to know each other better, I developed a very real respect and affection for her. Complementing her beauty and bearing, she was very much at ease and was wonderful company.

I learned that she had, from St Martins, engaged in modelling, her face and figure being commonplace on British billboards and television. She had made many commercials in Britain and in Germany including, among others, for Fiat, Fanta, Ford, Pavisini, Triumph, British Steel, British Rail, Rothmans and Halifax Building Society. She had been in couture shows for Christian Dior and Pierre Cardin, as well as other modelling jobs. She had been involved in costume

design for various productions, in play and film making. She had played the Baroness in 'Mary Ward' a German British co-production by Hermes Films and had done voice overs for documentaries. She retained her varied interest in the arts, painting, writing and poetry.³

She produced and organised various charity concerts, shows for children and pantomimes. For many years, she had taught and encouraged drawing and painting to severely ill and disabled children for two of the leading hospitals (Great Ormond Street and the Queen Elizabeth), and she was a Trustee of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children.

I learned that she and her former husband were known as a glamorous couple of great sociability. Their two children had been educated at prestigious boarding schools, allowing the couple an active social life in London and elsewhere. Perhaps as a result, her ex-husband's conviviality and a liking for alcohol had caused the marriage to break down. Maggie, now single, was, in Hardy's descriptive words, 'one whom a hundred men might covet'.

Although I had not thought myself particularly disadvantaged in the role of High Commissioner, of not having a wife or partner, I could not help but reflect what an asset she would be in that role. But that played no part in my decision to court her as well as I could. In short, I flipped for her and could not imagine a more perfect wife.

Intervention

Some four weeks or so (on 28 April, 1985) after our first meeting, Maggie received a telephone call out of the blue at her London address. The caller used the name 'Catherine' and said she had had a five-year relationship with me, that the relationship had had its ups and downs, and that they were going through a bad patch but were still 'very much a

couple'. Maggie had no idea who the caller was, she had never met or known of her before. Taken aback at the intrusion, she managed to say politely that her private life was her own business.

Maggie had by then visited the High Commission Residence in Chelsea several times but we had not commenced a relationship, we had never even kissed apart from greetings and were friends of short acquaintance. After wondering for three or four days about the unwelcome call, she eventually broached the subject with me. I was surprised and mortified. Immediately, without thinking, I told her the background as far as I then knew. It was someone with whom I had had a relationship and with whom I had broken up some time ago. There had, I said, been similar conduct before and that she had undertaken it would not recur.

I was devastated and upset that 'Catherine' had contacted Maggie since I was already feeling that it was Maggie for whom I had been searching. I said that I was deeply sorry and that she was the last person I would have wanted to receive such a call. Unwittingly, this was my first, involuntary, expression of regard beyond that of a simple friendship and felt that I had made an oblique and probably clumsy overture.

We departed, each knowing more than before, but each with a question mark. Maggie, because she had now to make a judgment as to whether to continue to see me, and for me to find out how it had happened.

I searched for the paper at the Residence on which I had originally written Maggie's phone numbers and could not find it. There was no other source from which 'Catherine' could have obtained the information as the telephone numbers were unlisted. It seemed that she had, unbeknown to me, a key to the Residence. I was upset. It was now obvious to me that she had a clear agenda. She had followed me to England of her own volition and I now saw her conduct as part of a concerted

plan of action, in the guise of friendship and support, to dash my hopes for a serious relationship with anyone else, to have a relationship with her whether I liked it or not.

Immediately I contacted her by phone and told her that she had come to Britain to ruin any relationship I might have. She had done it again. On the previous occasion, though floored, I had remained civil when she told me of her note to Hilda. Now, for the first time, I was upset that she had subjected Maggie to this behaviour. 'Catherine' was tearful. However, even then, she did not seem to take it in that I was rightfully angry. I asked for the key to the Residence which I did not know she had and it was quickly returned saying she had been given it by the housekeeper and 'did not take it without permission'.

Reaction

Shortly afterwards 'Catherine' wrote to me of the incident: 'Yes, I did phone Maggie. Why should I be the only woman who knows that they are sharing you with several others. I did not say I had a relationship with you for 5 years but that I had known you for 5 years'. 'You cannot deny leading me on by your behaviour when I first arrived in England'. 'If you had told me the truth, that you had met someone else it would have made sense how you were behaving towards me'. 'The scar on my mind is the brutality of the way you ended things between us'.

She explained: 'Someone told me that you were seeing someone else. I'm sorry but you cannot imagine the pain that caused me. It was the final act and made me want to hit back and make you feel some of the pain you caused me. And the pain continues, knowing that you do not go to social functions alone any more, are happy to take someone else to those same things but you would not take me. That makes me feel

worthless and has destroyed my self-esteem and my ability to achieve anything’.

She expressed loss and loneliness: ‘No words I can write could express my desolation and emptiness. No one will ever replace you, I still think of you every day’. ‘I have been incredibly lonely and miserable because I have to do everything alone’. ‘I can’t help being angry with you as I see you not having the pain and loneliness that is all I have’.

Then a sense of exclusion: ‘At the moment it is easy for you to attract a certain kind of woman because of your position. At the end of your term who will be there who can share the experiences and memories with you. You have excluded me from sharing any but the most trivial occasions...but as with Ascot, for some reason I cannot understand, you did not want me. I still cannot stop loving you’.

Although I had not dated anyone other than Hilda and Maggie at separate times, ‘Catherine’ branded me as a careless womanizer: ‘Being seen with a variety of women at your age does lead to particular comment. You are making a laughing stock of yourself’. ‘I can’t resist repeating some bitchy comment that has been made about your latest woman friend by a person who works closely with you “you can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear”.’

She offered her services: ‘Try a little lateral thinking...I could be an asset and 100% supportive, but the choice is yours’. ‘You need some really good PR if you are going to survive in London. The comments from New Zealand are equally as damaging. I could turn all this round for you, my help you will certainly need, otherwise things will just get worse’. ‘Far better to have me on your side than against you, especially for some of your future goals’. ‘Believe me you will never get there if you make an enemy of me. I expect civility from you in public’. However, I suspected it was she who was creating a problem and then purporting to solve it.

‘Catherine’s’ tone became more ominous: ‘In my anger towards you I want to destroy you and your life as you have destroyed my life. I could easily do it as I have the material to create a scandal for you’. ‘However, I know that I would regret doing it just as I have in the past for interfering with the other women in your life. I know you find that what I have done is unforgivable but it is pretty typical female behaviour and I am surprised that you are so surprised by it’. ‘There is no anger so powerful as that of a woman scorned. Obviously, no woman has ever loved you enough before’.

Continuing: ‘I want to know that I can talk to you and depend on you as a friend not as a lover...I do not want the anger to be around anymore. I want to get on with my life but all I have is a recurring memory of you yelling at me...Please don’t hurt me any more by denying me a chance to finally start to get on with my life...You cannot deny you owe me this’. Once again, her ability to get on with her life depended upon my friendship, communication and assistance continuing. We had been down that road before.

For my part, I was not aware that we had a relationship, nor one which required me to advise of a new interest – I was wary of her after her false note to Hilda. And part of my role as High Commissioner was to be sociable to all – it was nothing more.

Subsequently, ‘Catherine’ then used various stratagems to make contact, for example, she called the housekeeper and said she had left her glasses and a book at the Residence and would call to pick them up. I searched thoroughly but could not find them. When she arrived, she said that this was the anniversary of our breaking up in New Zealand.

Later still, she wrote: ‘As I have heard on the grapevine that you are committed to a long-term relationship with Maggie. I would ask you that you return all the...gifts, books and pictures that I have given you over the years. I am sure that you will be glad to get rid of any memories of our time together’. ‘I

feel insulted that you have never given any material gift to me'. I arranged for these to be at the Residence and she called on the Housekeeper. When she saw them, she reportedly looked sad, she took some but not others.⁴

In the meantime, I saw Maggie regularly and more and more often. She had continued to be so delightful that it confirmed my resolve to take the matter further if I could. In due course, I visited her home in Wiltshire and, on the second occasion 'with a frisance of fear and furtherance' (her words) we became lovers. From this point on we were inseparable, and she accompanied me to many of the functions I attended, both official and unofficial. When I entertained, Maggie was not only my guest, but my partner, consort and hostess.⁵

Maggie was also of the view that I could no longer afford to see 'Catherine'. Far better to ignore her in the hope that she might end the contact in time. Being friends with her had clearly not worked, it was time to sever myself from her completely. If I continued to see or talk to her, even on a friendly basis, she could treat that as a relationship. I now felt that she might. There was never a fight between two people, only a relentless pursuit by one of the other. There was no conflict between us, only that she would not let go.

Action

Following 'Catherine's' call to Maggie, a campaign of action began. 'Catherine' wrote: 'It is wicked of me to torment you, yet I cannot help myself. My offence goes by the name of jealousy'.

There was vandalism to our cars. My newly purchased twelve-cylinder Mercedes S600 was scratched all over by a sharp instrument which looked suspiciously like a surgical knife so deep were the scratches, and it happened on two separate occasions. Maggie's Saab, when outside the Residence,

was scratched in a similar way on two occasions also, and her windscreen was so bent out of shape on another that it had to be replaced. There was no doubt in my mind that it was 'Catherine' on each occasion, but no one had seen the incidents, there was no proof. From then on, by ensuring that both vehicles were garaged, vandalism of this nature did not recur. NZ1, often an easy target when parked outside Chelsea Square, did not receive any damage, the attacks were against private and not public property.

On 2 July 1995, 'Catherine' signed my name to a cheque, somehow obtained, for GBP1,952 pounds in favour of her Visa card. It was clearly a forgery because it was not the style in which I signed my cheques, it was more like my normal signature. It was immediately picked up by my bankers, Coutts & Co, and notified to me. On checking, it did not appear that any further cheques had been stolen. I asked them not to honour the cheque and instructed that I did not want any action taken. The attempt had not been successful and there had been no loss. The last thing I wanted was a proceeding against a friend. However, if she had taken such a step, what else might she do? With unease, I let the matter rest.

'Catherine' later explained this on the basis that I owed it to her: 'I will need money for my fare, shipping of effects and to pick up the threads of my life in Wellington'. Later, she offered to pay me back if I would loan her the funds. However, I felt under no obligation. Coming to the UK was entirely of her own doing. I had been sympathetic towards her on her arrival, but that feeling was wearing thinner. I thought that she might use any such payment to suggest that I had asked her to come to England and might use this to dissuade Maggie from our relationship. Later she said: 'You have missed the opportunity to get rid of me. I will now have to stay in England as I can't afford to return for another twelve months...I still swing in my feelings from hating you intensely to still loving you very

much'. 'Damn you I'll succeed in spite of you and without your help. Maggie is welcome to you'.

Still, her messages were mixed. On 7 October 1995, she wrote: 'I look at the decisions I took... I know that you must think I was totally out of control and you would be right, as you were about so many things. I know that you were trying hard to tell me things that I could not accept and also do it in the kindest possible way'. 'Thank you for all your kindness and please forgive my bitchiness towards you, but at the time it was the only way I could deal with my feelings'. 'I am responsible for the choices I made and the risks I took and I lost all round'.

'Talk' again

Nevertheless, she continued writing and her demands to 'talk' became increasingly frequent: 'The more you ignore me, the more I will demand some attention from you. If you want me to stop embarrassing you, all you have to do is talk to me with some civility when you see me. The solution is in your hands'. 'I can see in your eyes that you are frightened by the unpredictability of my behaviour towards you...Until then nothing will change'. She blamed Maggie: 'She is determined to make sure that I have no contact with you'.

Given 'Catherine's' actions, I could by then see that, unless her campaign and her repeated behaviour stopped, something more serious might happen. Her activities showed no signs of diminishing, just the reverse. Reluctantly, I felt I had no option but to attempt to solve the problem even though she would see it as verification and that the harassment was working. My role as High Commissioner made me vulnerable to such pressure and I did not want anything to happen which would mar my time in London. She knew of my concern and was using it against me. 'Catherine' herself wrote to me: 'The great irony

is that I have all the freedom, and you are as trapped as ever’.

Accordingly, at my request this time, I saw her again in my office asking what would make her conduct stop. She repeated what she had said often before that she had admired me so much and would have done anything for me. She understood that I did not want a sexual relationship, but that she did want to remain friends and that we must ‘talk to each other in public’. I said that, if it would stop the harassment, I would talk to her in public and on this basis we departed amicably.

However, the following week I received a ticket to Wimbledon from ‘Catherine’ who asked me to accompany her there: ‘I have a spare ticket for Wimbledon on Friday the 28th June. These tickets are very hard to get...It is by way of a small peace offering. Love, ‘Catherine’’. That had not been discussed earlier. I did not understand that I had to accompany her anywhere. ‘Talk in public’ did not extend that far. I now had a steady relationship of some standing with Maggie and could not accompany ‘Catherine’ anywhere without compromising that. Accordingly, I returned the ticket straight away, with regrets and saying that this was not possible.

That was the end of the brief accord. ‘Catherine’ wrote and remonstrated with me for returning the ticket: ‘I really thought we had made some progress after talking last week. I was shocked to hear you say that you would not be seen in public with me. Nothing has really changed because you did not take me to any official social functions anyway’. However, it was not a matter of being seen in public with her, it was that I could not escort her publicly and thereby create the appearance of a relationship. We had heard too, independently from two sources, that she had claimed a relationship with me when that was not the case. ‘Talk’, in her mind, seemed to me, for me to be her escort, to create the appearance of a relationship and to prejudice my relationship with Maggie. It was too great a price to pay.

MAGGIE

Maggie's behaviour in this was exceptional. She did not retaliate or respond to the abuse and actions, behaving with great dignity and decorum. This only increased my regard for her and my resolve more firmly.

Pursuit and Privacy

In October 1995, there was something of a respite from 'Catherine' as Maggie and I visited New Zealand for the events surrounding the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Because of the influx of so many visitors to New Zealand at once, it was necessary to have all hands to the wheel and I was assigned to escort and look after the British delegation led by PM John Major. It was the first to New Zealand by a British Prime Minister since Harold McMillan and there was an official bi-lateral (UK/NZ) meeting in conjunction with his attendance.

Also, HM the Queen was to attend CHOGM as Head of the Commonwealth and a Royal Tour of New Zealand had been arranged in conjunction. It was important for the Royal party that the tour proceed smoothly. There was unease, at the time, given republican sentiment current in New Zealand and Maori agitation over land claims. The arrangements were even tighter than usual to minimise the chance of unseemly events.

Likewise, John Major's visit. A difficulty was that he was in New Zealand on the 11 November and was concerned that it would not look good for a British Prime Minister to be out of

the country on Remembrance Day. In recognition, a special service was arranged at Arrowtown, at which a number of Heads of Government attended. The publicity shots of his attendance at the service in the magnificent backdrop of Queenstown benefitted both him and New Zealand alike.

I was delighted along with many others at the success of the visits for the NZ/UK relationship. I had taken Maggie to New Zealand to help with the social side of these roles and, so that she might see New Zealand for the first time, arranged to take leave in conjunction with the visit. Afterwards, we set out for a tour of the South Island walking the Milford Track via Te Anau and continuing to Queenstown, the Southern Lakes, Akaroa, Christchurch, Kaikoura and Marlborough before motoring up the North Island via Taupo and Rotorua returning to Auckland. We had a wonderful holiday and met many people in New Zealand, cementing our relationship and our mutual high regard for both countries. When we returned home, relaxed and happy, reality resumed when a letter arrived from 'Catherine': 'To know that you went back to New Zealand with someone else has deeply shocked me'.

Resumption

A week or so after our return, in December 1995, 'Catherine' phoned the Residence. Unsuspecting, I answered. She said that she wanted to talk to me about 'a new relationship'. Off-guard, I replied that I did not think that was a good idea but, not wishing confrontation, said I would think on it, again a mistake. The following day she turned up unannounced at the Residence in Chelsea Square on a quiet Saturday afternoon. At home, were Maggie and three friends visiting from New Zealand. When 'Catherine' was not admitted, she created a disturbance outside the Residence, shouting to be admitted entry. When one of the friends (a Member of the

New Zealand Parliament) who was visiting opened the door to ask her to go, with frenzied energy she put her foot in the door and obtained entry. She then sat in the hall and would not leave. Eventually, the Chelsea Police were called, and she left only after the Police, or more precisely two of them, asked her at my request to go. It was a traumatic experience for all inside.

It was the first time I had called the Police to help. There was no other way of dealing with the situation, a demonstration of her resolve to create a scene. She might do it again at any time. Advised to do so by the Police, I started compiling and recording her activities.¹

Waitangi Day on 6 February² is, in England, traditionally celebrated at the Church of St Lawrence Jewry in London. ‘Catherine’ was at the front door of the Church handing out the order of service on behalf of the London New Zealand Society when Maggie and I arrived. The officiating chaplain, by co-incidence had formerly been the Chaplain at Univ, and pre-occupied with the greeting and again off-guard, ‘Catherine’ kicked me on the shin as we went into the entrance. It hurt but I managed not to show it and we proceeded with the Chaplain into the body of the Church, hoping that it went unnoticed.

At tea and scones afterwards, with many to acknowledge, we managed to avoid her. But when we arrived home at the Residence there was a note pinned to the front door: ‘I can’t believe what you did today. To flaunt that woman in front of so many people who know my feelings towards you was the most callous behaviour and dishonourable on your part’.

‘Catherine’ then wrote to Maggie: ‘You are doing all the things with him that I dreamed of doing. Yes, I am bitter. I still love him very much in spite of all the hurt he has caused me. I will never have another man in my life...I’m sure that you love and worship him in the way I do but the difference is that you are reaping the benefits of all my hard work with him. He

used me and I let him because I loved him so much. I absorbed all the hurt and pain. I have to hurt him back to make the pain bearable'. 'I've had enough of watching someone else's dream. I hate you for what you have done to me'.

Continuing: 'I may have lost John to you but I'm not sure that you will see in the end that my loss is not your gain. Forewarned is forearmed'. 'And by the way, are you going to be around for the 'Hospital Run'. On a health rating scale his prospects aren't good...he has a few health problems he hasn't even told you about'. 'So you see Maggie, he might not be such a good catch after all unless your expectations are so low'. 'I do not want another woman to be taken in by him in the same way. He is romantic and charming and he will wine and dine you and give you the impression that he is madly in love with you. Don't be fooled. It's lust pure and simple'.³

Messages would regularly be left, often on Maggie's car: 'Back again bitch. You must be desperate for a meal ticket'. 'Come for your sex and social life whore?' 'John had a good time without you. He just can't work out how to get rid of you'.

She made much of Maggie's entitlement to be at the Residence and living with me. She wrote to Maggie: 'The New Zealand community in London does not approve of the High Commissioner moving a tart into the High Commissioner's Residence'. To me she wrote: 'I am very angry that you would not let me stay at Chelsea Square and you are letting this woman gain an advantage from the New Zealand taxpayer'. 'I don't think the NZ taxpayer wants to pay for your British tart'. Maggie was not, of course, being kept by the New Zealand taxpayer, I paid all the normal non-official outgoings such as food, telephone calls, and so on.

But abuse and accusations aside, at this time 'Catherine's' strategy against us both was primarily one of pursuit – by surveillance, by telephone and by following.

Surveillance

It was easy to keep the Residence under surveillance without being detected by obtaining access to Chelsea Square Gardens immediately opposite. Although a key is required to get into the Square, it was a simple matter for an agile person to obtain entry. Because the lights in the street illuminate the front of the Residence, the house was very visible from there. From the Residence however the Square was surrounded by trees, a dark void. She could be there and watch the Residence without being detected.

'Catherine' would come by often on her way to and from work. She would deliver the letters, few of which had a stamp or a stamp which was cancelled. If someone was at home she might phone from a call box nearby, leave material or knock on the door. It was easy for her to then vanish.

It even included rifling the rubbish bins, seeking to know the detail and minutiae of our lives. As Maggie wrote: 'A note I had written to John and left on his pillow when he had the flu and which I threw away was stolen (she must have untied the polystyrene bags deep in our dustbin to get it and discovered paperwork)'. 'Catherine' then sent the note she had found to her with a message: 'See how much he loves you, he threw away your notes'.

'Catherine' seemed to be hovering around. We had suspected for some time that she watched the house. Certainly, we had seen her occasionally as had staff. She seemed to know our movements. Her activity was most frequent when we were both at the Residence together, letting it be known that she was keeping us under close watch. As 'Catherine' wrote: 'I will not go away no matter how badly you treat me...I know your every movement and can report your behaviour to anyone who might be able to use it'. A note, which expressed it all very succinctly, was left on Maggie's car on 4 September 1996.

Echoing Princess Diana, it said 'There will always be three in this relationship'.

The telephone

'Catherine' had used the telephone as a means of contact before, but now her efforts doubled and she used it as a weapon. She would regularly make calls at all hours. Often they were from phone booths in the vicinity of the Residence, usually late at night, often silent. Another popular device was early morning calls, she was trying to disturb our sleep. There were also calls to the domestic number, thus on 9 September 1996 there were some 20 to 30 calls altogether, she was capable of being a nuisance to the staff as well. The calls, recorded on ansaphone, progressively became abusive especially to Maggie.

Both Maggie and I signed phone tracing orders. For example, on 24 May 1996, there was a call at 10.18 pm from a call box 171 584 1212. Then followed a series of calls at 11.03 pm from 171 352 1280, at 11.08 pm from 171 352 3651, and at 11.19 pm from 171 351 4320. All were from call boxes close to the Residence, she was moving from one to the other. Fifteen minutes after the last call, she rang the doorbell for some 10-15 minutes. I called the Police, but when they arrived she had faded away.⁴

British Telecom also recorded a number of calls from her home so that there was proof that some came directly from her. However, the fine for making nuisance calls was of the order of twenty pounds per conviction and there was little point in taking a prosecution. A conviction would not have solved the problem which was to stop the overall harassment and any such proceedings would give her a platform to embarrass us. We decided to change our telephone numbers so this form of nuisance was no longer open to her. In all, Maggie changed

her number three times and myself once. In a letter to me 'Catherine' wrote: 'Changing the phone makes no difference. Damn you, don't you understand I still love you'. 'There are so many bugs in the house that changing the telephone number makes no difference'.

She had obtained Maggie's new telephone numbers by ringing her London apartment under an assumed name and pretending that she needed to contact her. I could not understand how she got my new numbers. The High Commission had a rule not to give them out without consent. 'Catherine' had hinted that she had contacts inside the Commission who were providing information to her, thereby placing suspicion upon officers. But her boast could simply have been an attempt to unsettle and I did not pursue the matter further. She had somehow managed to obtain them and that was that.

Following

'Catherine' resorted to following NZ1, the official car. Sometimes to follow me to work, on others, when I went to pick up Maggie from her apartment near the Boltons. The chauffeur of NZ1, a former Policeman, was adept at avoiding her but it was not always possible. She would also follow Maggie's car when I was not with her.

On one occasion, I had an official visit to the Potteries and Maggie came with me. Although the visit should not have been known to 'Catherine', she was waiting for us in her car outside New Zealand House in the Haymarket. She followed NZ1 for about two or three hours, close on its tail. She was obviously enjoying it, being seen by us, drawing herself to attention by waving and flashing her car lights, waving and grinning. After an hour or two, when it appeared that she might go all the way to our destination, worried that she might be planning to spoil the official visit and to interfere with the

greeting party, I called the Police who advised the driver to try to shake her off provided he complied with speed limits and they promised to send a car to intercept her. However, just before NZ1 reached Stoke on Trent, 'Catherine' took another road to Liverpool. When we arrived at the hotel in Stoke, there was nothing for the waiting Police to do. Her later explanation: 'I stayed with an old school friend in Southport (Merseyside), I just followed you for some of the way because I knew it would annoy you. The more you ignore me the more I will demand some attention from you'.

A weekend later, she followed me while I was driving NZ1 from London to Wiltshire, a two-hour drive. I took a route rather different from normal. I left exits until the last minute but still she followed. I speeded up where it was prudent to do so, but she speeded up also. I stopped and then moved off at speed but she still followed me. I tried to lose her round the tortuous and un-patterned backroads in Wiltshire but she stuck to me there also. Knowing that I was soon to arrive at Ansty and knowing I could not shake her off, I stopped and told her not to continue but she would not. However, at Chilmark (15–20 minutes away) she flashed her lights and drove her car in front of me at a junction. She said that she was nearly out of petrol and could I help. She then went into a phone booth nearby, presumably for the purpose of telephoning to obtain fuel. Relieved, I moved on to Ansty without being followed.

Finding the retreat

So far we had been free of the attentions of 'Catherine' while at Maggie's country home. We appreciated the cottage as a retreat for the peace and quiet it brought as an antidote to London life. We had used it in the weekends when possible, to relax from the busy schedule. At this, 'Catherine' had felt disadvantaged. She wrote: 'I'm afraid I fail on all counts. I'm

not English enough...heaven forbid, I come from the North of England so that meeting Royalty would be out of the question...But, worst of all I don't have a country cottage for you to escape to at the week-ends'.

We were under the impression that she did not know the address of the cottage, she knew of its existence but not necessarily its whereabouts. As far as we knew, she had not been successful in finding it. 'The Hundred' in the upper reaches of Ansty Coombe was unmarked and I had thought that following me was her way of finding the address. However, my relief at not being followed all the way was short lived. After the car chase, no doubt after she had obtained petrol, the next morning we found a message in bold capitals on NZ1 which had been parked at Ansty overnight: 'I WILL NOT STOP UNTIL YOU MAKE SOME KIND OF PEACE WITH ME AND TALK TO ME.' It was a further jolt to us. It meant that our haven was no more, a huge invasion of the privacy which we both valued.

When she did find 'The Hundred' she would appear in the dead of night, often after midnight in the small hours of the morning when it was pitch black. She left notes on both of our cars when they were parked on the property. She would drive her car up and down Ansty Coombe, where any vehicle is a rarity, and blink her lights at the house. She would throw gravel at the windows. Sometimes she would shout abuse. The Police in nearby Tisbury were sympathetic and said they would keep an eye out for her, but she was never apprehended.

Maggie was very attuned to the sounds of the woods and her home, with the foxes, rabbits, owls, pheasants, field mice, the honeysuckle leaves and the gurgle from the pipes and gutters. Knowing these sounds, she was very aware of other intrusions. On hearing an alien noise she wrote: 'So it was with a feeling of dread that I tip-toed to my bedroom window in the dark. There she was like a dark beetle scurrying round our

PURSUIT AND PRIVACY

cars and then back past the dustbins to the Lane, and shortly after the sound of a car engine’.

Maggie was sometimes at the cottage on her own and was apprehensive. Notwithstanding, she showed great fortitude. As she said: ‘I was determined that I would not allow someone else to dictate my life or friendship with another person’. But ‘Catherine’s’ discovery of ‘The Hundred’ was worrying and another watershed occasion. It was as if there were no lengths to which she would not go to follow us both. Our sense of invasion of privacy was very strong indeed.

6

Search and Seizure

The intrusions continued. On 11 March 1996, the Commonwealth Day Service (a multi-faith service celebrating and promoting the Commonwealth at which the Queen, the Secretary General and High Commissioners attend) was held at Westminster Abbey. While safe in the dedicated New Zealand pew, at the conclusion of the service Maggie and I exited through the iron-gate outside. We said farewell to the Australian High Commissioner and turned towards NZ1. 'Catherine' blocked the way and, when we moved in another direction, she blocked that way also, three or four times. She hissed at Maggie and called her 'bitch'. Not wishing a scene, we retreated into the congregation.

Having in time successfully avoided her, upon arriving back at the Residence, we found a copy of my medical records pinned to the front door. On the back of one of them, 'Catherine' had written that copies had been 'faxed to all names on a list'. It was unexpected and a major setback for another reason. It hit me like a bombshell. My heart sank because I realized immediately that these records must have been taken from my private papers held in my Study which only I used.¹

The documents

Straight away, remembering the key returned some nine months previously, I went through the papers to see what else was missing. The letter I received from 'Catherine's' friend warning that she was pursuing me to London and the note from 'Catherine' to Hilda warning her to use the condoms were not there. To extract them would have involved sifting through a mountain of documents and correspondence.²

Remembering also 'Catherine's' prior threat that she had 'material to create a scandal for me', I found she had taken papers relating to my time as President of the National Party, in particular an unsolicited letter with attachments addressed to me personally by the fundraiser contracted by the Party. It was in the form of a final report of fundraising efforts for the 1993 election outlining a summary of who had funded the Party, the amount of the donations and comments from the donors.

Allegations had previously been made in the media concerning donors to the Party, that donations came with strings attached, and I had brought the report, with other papers, to England for their security and to have them at my finger-tips if issues were subsequently raised. As President I had been careful in accepting donations only on the basis that there were no pre-conditions and no favours offered. I had personally made this clear to canvassers and donors and had written internal guidance rules, circulated to all for this purpose. But that was not the point media would be likely to take, all they would have been interested in was: who were the donors, what amounts did they give and whether any preference could be imagined or contrived.

The sensitivity of the communication for Party and politicians alike was obvious, this being prior to Regulations which required public disclosure of political donations in

excess of a stipulated amount. At the time, donations were received and accepted on the basis of confidentiality for the donors.

From as early as September 1994 and from time to time thereafter, 'Catherine' had made a number of threats: 'I don't want to hurt you but I do have ability to cause you great embarrassment and career damage...I am not sure now if I can stop myself...I will leave it to you to contact me if you want to sort things out between us. Otherwise, I cannot be responsible for the ensuing events and actions if you won't face up to talking to me and helping me'. 'I would strongly advise you not to call my bluff. I don't want to hurt you but I will if I am pushed'. 'Ignore me at your peril, you need my help which you can negotiate with me'. 'Some people are ready to contact the media unless they can be dissuaded'.

She explained: 'I sometimes cannot imagine that it is me behaving so badly and doing these silly things. What drives me is the thought of not being able to see you and to talk to you. I lie in bed thinking about the stupidist things that I could do. John, I don't want to do these things but I can't stop unless something changes between us'.

It was now mid-March 1996 and it was election year in New Zealand, to be held around September or October. If published, especially in the context of a political campaign, the papers had the potential to be embarrassing to the Government and to be the subject of misinterpretation and innuendo. I knew that I had a duty to protect the interests of the Party, its politicians and of the donors, to protect their confidentiality.

I searched further. Nothing else appeared to have been taken. How 'Catherine' had managed to obtain the documents was unclear. Diplomatic premises have security in order to protect the occupants and the New Zealand High Commissioner's Residence is no exception. Externally, it was one of the safest places they could be. Internally, they were in my private study.

‘Catherine’ could only have obtained the papers by having access to a key to the Residence. She had already returned a key, so it seemed that she may have searched through and obtained the papers some time ago, hence the early threat.³

Next week, on 19 March 1996, an ordinary unfranked envelope arrived for me, left at the Residence. In it was the top part of a single page letter and the bottom part, both of which were torn from the rest of the page. It was clear that it was addressed to me and from which company it had come. I recognised that it had been received by me in the course of my legal practice prior to becoming High Commissioner. Written on a note attached to the two parts of the letter: ‘I don’t want to do this but you are giving me no choice. You have acted abominably. I have enough information to continue the pressure. John I don’t want to do this you are forcing me to behave in this way’. ‘I won’t give up until we can put our relationship onto a different footing’.

I believe that the contents of this letter would not cause undue embarrassment, but being in the course of and related to my legal practice, such records are confidential and not to be exposed by a legal practitioner without consent of the client.

I was distraught at the extent to which she would go, at the theft of private and sensitive papers, at the repeated threats and the realistic possibility that she might follow through. There was a danger that the National Party, its politicians and its donors might unwarrantedly suffer from misuse of the information. For Party and politicians, the sensitivity of the communication was obvious. There was now good reason to lay a formal complaint with the Police.

It took a little time to come to grips with this predicament and to decide what to do. The threats periodically recurred and, by July 1996, I became more and more concerned with the further threats, their accumulation and the increasingly antagonistic tone of ‘Catherine’s’ letters. The material she had

was fodder for the media and the elections in New Zealand were approaching. It seemed that, given her actions to date she might be willing to carry out her threats and to use the fund-raising reports for that purpose. Hesitatingly, but feeling responsibility for the Party and donors, I felt I had no option but to take action.

Entry

I had already compiled a chronological list of 'Catherine's' activities and communications for the Police and now another to bring it up to date. In the summary, addressed to the Police, I said that '(Catherine)' had followed me to England with a view to renewing a previous relationship and to participate in the life of the High Commissioner which she felt was her due. She had on two occasions attempted to spoil my relationship with other women. She had threatened to ruin me unless her objectives were met. It was now becoming a question of when all this will end, and possibly whether this will escalate to something worse'.

I first approached the Diplomatic Police, a section charged with security in relation to diplomatic missions. Upon consulting with them, probably because of the theft, they referred the matter to Detective Sergeant Ball, an officer based at the Kensington Police Station. I provided him with the letters, notes, cards, calls, papers from 'Catherine', together with the lists.

DS Ball was very helpful. Maggie and I attended several meetings with him and others at the Police Station, canvassing her activities. In addition to the Diplomatic Police keeping a routine watch for 'Catherine', he said that the Kensington and Chelsea Police would keep an eye on the Residence and environs as part of their patrols. He advised us to continue to keep records.

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The Police, realizing the sensitivity of the stolen papers took the matter seriously. A plan of action for their return was developed. They suggested I lay a complaint of theft of the papers which enabled them to use their power of entry and seizure. As a result, I laid the complaint and shortly afterwards, based on this authority, the Police raided 'Catherine's' residence.

This was carried out around 2am in the morning, I was told. They did not warn her in advance for fear of alerting her. Obviously, had she been alerted she might have copied the papers or placed them elsewhere. The principal ingredient of the success of the raid was surprise and hence it was in the early hours.

Four members of the Force, including a woman police officer, went to the lodgings where she was staying. Upon entry, they found a room they described as a 'shrine' to me. The Police said to me that on the walls were photos, articles, newspaper clippings, all related to me or to me with 'Catherine'. They found many notes to me which may or may not have been sent. Among them, they found the medical records, papers belonging to me and, above all, those relating to the National Party funding. 'Catherine', they said, became hysterical at the seizure and the officers told DS Ball that they were very glad that they had brought a woman police officer with them.

Shortly after, at the Police Station, I identified the papers relating to the fund raising for the 1993 election and took them back into my possession. There was no evidence to suggest that 'Catherine' had copied the originals. With great relief I received them back and checked to see that they were all present and correct.

DS Ball then asked me whether I wished to prosecute but I quickly decided not to lay charges of theft as the objective of protecting the papers had been achieved. I did not want to run

the risk of their disclosure in any way. I hoped that 'Catherine' had had a sufficient warning and that it might put a stop to her harassment. DS Ball thought that it might do so too, given the trauma of the occasion for her.

Warning

I was told by DS Ball, that 'Catherine' was taken to the Police Station a day or so afterwards for a formal warning in respect of the harassment and theft, and was told that serious consequences might follow if her conduct did not cease. She was warned by the Police not to contact either myself or Maggie.

Subsequently, 'Catherine' said that all women read their partner's mail. She blamed me for the episode, saying it was unnecessary in her eyes and was shocked that I would do this. She said I had not needed to do so as she would never have leaked the information to the media, implying that this was merely for the purpose of leverage against me: 'If you believe what I have written in my letters to you then you will believe anything...don't you understand I still love you'.

Continuing: 'The Police thought your complaint was a joke. The Police thought you were at fault'. 'You will be home quickly. Your time here will be short. Your star is fading fast. The enemy increaseth every day. Don't assume you will be here until April'. 'I don't care if I go to Court and to prison, I will drag you with me while ever that woman is around so will I be'.

She took the view that her efforts were required because of my behaviour: 'You shattered my dreams and broke my heart, and callously used me until you found someone you could use instead to advantage your career'. 'Yes, I admit I have behaved badly over the last few months but with some justification. Many of my hopes and dreams of how I thought my time

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in London would be spent were shattered'. 'I have always forgiven you but you have never forgiven me'.

Reflecting on the episode, a potential disaster had been averted. But whether this would solve the underlying problem had yet to be seen.

Retaliation and Escalation

The hope that the seizure of the documents would rectify the problem was soon dashed. The Police warning that 'Catherine' desist from her conduct had no legal standing. There was no power in the Police to enforce it. It was, for them, a useful tool but more in the nature of a marker, the conduct being noted in the hope that it would cease.

'Catherine's' round of activities continued. Newspapers would be missing from the Residence. The surveillance and the nuisance telephone calls continued and the letters kept coming.¹ Catalogue and other mail for her would arrive at the Residence. She gave notice that the harassment was likely to continue: 'If you had treated me more kindly, none of this would have happened. Until you accept some responsibility for what you have done to me destroying my life, I will not forgive you'.

Once again, the allegation of 'unkindness' was unspecified and, given her protestations of love, seemed to refer to the fact that there was no relationship between us. Of course, that I would not 'talk', 'meet' or escort her to functions was due to her endeavours to spoil my relationship with Maggie.

By then, September 1996, Maggie and I knew that we had

an adversary of exceptional persistence and that 'Catherine' was prepared to expend considerable time, forethought and effort in pursuit of her goals. As Maggie wrote: 'One evening, she followed us home from a function, she was wearing her usual long black or brown blazer, calf length gathered skirt and heeled shoes. She returned later in combat gear – sneakers, dark trousers and anorak'.

The formal warnings by the Police had no effect. The raid and seizure of the stolen documents did not deter her. Nothing seemed to give her pause in her quest to spoil our relationship. We did not know what was coming next. The conduct showed no sign of abating. Her activities had continued with impunity.

Prospect

We had for some time been in regular contact with the Kensington Police, who by now also had a large file of their own based on their dealings. In discussions with them as to what might be done, apart from routine surveillance by the Diplomatic Squad and by the local Police, they could not justify extra security. Being under financial constraints, resources had to be allotted to crimes with serious consequences, of which there were many.

At the time there was no law against stalking as such, only against individual offences which by themselves can seem relatively trivial. Some initiatives had been made to Parliament on the subject and an official inquiry into a law change was underway, there having been a number of high-profile cases of stalking in Britain. DS Ball told me that our case had been reported to those involved with the inquiry and that he was awaiting guidance.

There was the possibility of a civil suit by us against 'Catherine' for her activities, essentially for nuisance. There were several such suits before the Courts at the time but

these took a long time and were fraught with difficulty, for example, where a male stalker took days to cross examine the complainant, thereby subjecting her to contact through the Court process and to the stalking all over again.

Another course was for the Police to proceed for breach of the peace. This can occur where harm is done or likely to a person or property through assault, riot, unlawful assembly or some other form of disturbance. The action is better known for concern to protect public order generally, but it might also conceivably be used to protect private individuals who, by stalking, have had their lives disturbed and have suffered distress. The result of a successful action is to bind a person over to keep the peace and to be of good behavior. It is only when such order is breached that a penalty can be imposed.

Of course, any Court action would have brought publicity, not only because I was a High Commissioner but because women stalkers were rarer than men. If the matter became public, even if it was accepted that we were the victims and even if the harassment was not seen to be aimed against my public life, it would be clouded by accusations with the result that we could also suffer and my role as High Commissioner adversely affected.

Proceedings would also give 'Catherine' the chance to carry out her threat to embarrass us.² I was aware too that the thought of a Court case in England was increasingly beginning to trouble Maggie. Accordingly, it seemed that the best course was not to take legal action at this time and the Police accepted the reasons why.

A Different Approach

To date, now eighteen months after I had met Maggie and some six months before my term ended, 'Catherine' had steered clear of significant overt action against us at public

functions and of damage to public property. Apart from the one occasion which had occurred largely unseen on a quiet weekend outside the Residence, she had not made an obvious public scene. She had usually accosted us when we were alone or were leaving functions. Her activities had seldom been obviously visible to hosts or guests or to the general public, and were known to few only.

No doubt realizing that her efforts in attacking our private lives had not had the impact she wished, 'Catherine' began a different approach. It seemed that in retaliation for the seizure of the documents, she escalated her efforts, trying her luck at disruption of our lives in public – by distributing prostitute cards; by circulating critical posters; by disrupting official functions; by physical and verbal attacks; and by intrusions upon my official role.

The prostitute cards and smears

On 18 September 1996, 'Catherine' placed some 30 prostitute cards on the front steps of Residence. These were cards left in phone boxes advertising a wide variety of services of that nature. They are often attached by plasticine. She had removed them and similarly attached them to the Residence. It became a common pattern of conduct. Cards were placed on the Residence on at least 20 occasions. While she had not been observed so doing, her letters had been peppered with references to prostitutes and the cards were consistent with the smear campaign she had been conducting. She had the history, motivation and turn of mind to do such a thing.

On 26 November, prostitute cards were left on the front door of the Residence. We removed them. They were replaced within half an hour, discovered and again removed. A third time, after 1 am, they were put there and again removed as we did a routine check. This was repeated on 10 December, they

were found at 5 pm, 12.30 am and 1.05 am. We were watching on the final occasion and saw 'Catherine' place the cards on the front door, amazed at how swiftly it was done. She hurried down the Lane alongside the Residence, darted into the front doorway, placed the cards and disappeared.

Also, printed notices 'The Whore Postlethwaite' were left at the Residence and at Maggie's London address. Then they were distributed at the Hurlingham Club where Maggie was a long-standing member and regular visitor. The Secretary, who knew Maggie well, was horrified, removed them with alacrity and promised to keep watch.

On one occasion tomato paste and whipped cream were spread over Maggie's car which was parked outside the Residence spelling out the word 'Whore' in cream. Tomato paste and cream were also smeared over the main door of the Residence making quite a mess, quickly cleaned up.

On 12 March 1997, 'Whore' was sprayed in white paint outside the Residence and immediately removed after the Police had seen it. The next day, the words 'The Whore Maggie Postlethwaite' were painted in red paint on the driveway at the side of the Residence, this time in larger letters. It was impossible to remove the paint from the roadway, it had to be painted over in order to disguise it.

During this time, 'Catherine' produced a further weapon. They were small pieces of paper, about 2" by 3" of a flimsy thickness. On it she had printed the words 'The Whorehouse, Chelsea Square, Madam: Maggie Postlethwaite'. She would drive her car around Chelsea Square and scatter handfuls from the window as she drove, and also in the streets adjacent to the Square. In self-defence, we extended our efforts to pick them up, the effect being that of confetti, scattering widely in any wind.

The posters

In December 1996, 'Catherine' began placing notices on the front door of the Residence: 'THE HOME OF A DISHONOURABLE MAN'. It was of A4 size with the words in bold letters, readily visible from a distance. Then another A4 poster appeared with the words: 'A LIAR AND A CHEAT' also in bold letters. These posters were left regularly on NZ1 and around the Residence, posted on the front door or spread around the walls or left on the footpath outside. The reference is not at all original, 'A Liar and a Cheat' was taken from the Guardian's description of a British politician who had sued it for defamation over cash for questions and had then withdrawn the action. It was, no doubt, a notice which she felt would have maximum impact because it attacked my integrity.

Later, on 21st February 1997 and afterwards, the 'Dishonourable Man' and a 'Liar and a Cheat' notices re-appeared except that they now contained a copy of my card as High Commissioner with name and address and telephone numbers, so that it was now quite clear to whom the notices were referring.

All such notices were quickly removed from the Residence. But the distribution became wider and we found ourselves on evening walks picking up notices all around Chelsea Square and adjoining roads such as Manresa Road and Old Church Road.

Copies of the 'Dishonourable Man' posters were also left in the foyer of the High Commission itself on two occasions. The security cameras were checked by officials but it was inconclusive as to who had placed them there. The reference to 'liar and cheat' when referring to me was never explained.

Disruption

When the Minister for Northern Ireland, Sir Patrick Mayhew, visited the Residence during the Troubles, and when HM the Queen and Duke visited,³ much effort was made by British security officers to ensure their safety. On such occasions, officers thoroughly 'swept' and vetted the premises, Chelsea Square and surrounds prior to and during the event, and they checked and cleared the security credentials of the guests, including Maggie. Their presence was sufficiently obvious over several days on each occasion to deter incidents. On neither of these occasions was 'Catherine' sighted, nor were there any of her usual activities.

'Catherine' had not previously sought to disrupt the official dinners which I regularly gave at the Residence. However, on 6 September 1996, during a formal dinner, she repeatedly called the domestic telephone number of the Residence until the phone was left off the hook. After the dinner, I was showing out the first guests who were leaving early when uprooted plants (two kowhais) had been thrown, soil and all, onto the front steps, hastily cleaned up before the remainder of the guests departed.

On 16 September at 11 pm, she took to banging on the front windows of the Residence, she was trying to disrupt the evening. Immediately I called the Police as instructed by prior arrangement but, when they arrived some 10 minutes later, she had disappeared. After the Police had gone, she later returned. Confronted by us this time, she retired on threat to call the Police again.

The next evening, she tried again, as she had got a reaction the night before. This time she caused a disturbance by shouting outside the Residence, ringing the doorbell and vanishing. The Police were called and again failed to apprehend her, it was easy for her to fade away across the Park.

When she returned the same evening, we saw her and raised the alarm. This time the Police took her by surprise, and she was apprehended. Somehow she had cut her hand and it was bandaged by the Police. I told the officer that the matter was in the hands of DS Ball and that it would be best to leave any action to him. I had the window mended myself. The Police report was duly sent to DS Ball and added to the now voluminous file.

One morning, two rubbish bags which staff had put out for collection were upended on the front porch. Lettuce, eggshells and all manner of rubbish were scattered so as to create the maximum amount of mess. It was discovered as I left for work in the morning at 8.30 am and immediately remedied, but workers next door had seen it and reported it to NZPA. Its reporter rang me and, not wishing to disclose that it was a matter which the Police were investigating, I said that there had been some trouble with schoolchildren (in itself correct) and that I was not involved in domestic matters.

On 17 October, cooking oil was poured on the front porch of the Residence. Again, it was immediately cleaned up upon discovery, but the steps remained slippery and potentially hazardous to those using them until it was fully removed by successive applications of detergent.

Vitriol

'Catherine's' messages to Maggie became more spiteful: 'Your dress sense is appalling. But you did manage to cover the large hips and the flat chest so I suppose 3 out of 10 for effort'. 'Which silly hat are you going to wear for Commonwealth Day?' 'Don't wear your best clothes (to a function in the Penthouse) just in case some red wine gets accidentally upset next to you'. 'Why don't you pay for a good haircut, it really is a mess'. Maggie did not return the insults.

At this time too, the threats against me continued: 'I will be seeing lots of people in New Zealand and giving them all the gossip from London. I leave it to your imagination what I will tell them about you'. 'No doubt one day I will get my satisfaction. I have no aspirations for any public office but I imagine you still do?'

'Catherine's' communications to Maggie were hateful but, to me, alternated between love and hate. Notwithstanding the criticisms, the expressions of love never stopped: 'I loved you more than life itself and you know that I worshipped you. I have not stopped loving you for one moment in the last 18 months'. 'Underneath all the hurt and anger is still an enormously passionate attraction for you which I know well will always be there'. On the other hand: 'I still swing in my feelings from hating you intensely to still loving you so much'. And on a card: 'You know that when I hate you, it is because I love you to a point of passion that unhinges my soul'.

Attack

On 22 July, 1996 she menaced and pinched Maggie at a London Connections function at the High Commission. Around the same time, she also kicked Maggie at a Conservative Bow Group evening at Christies. Maggie said later to a reporter that she just winced: 'I have been kicked by horses before and that's worse'.

When we were walking in Chelsea Square Park after dark exercising Maggie's small dachshund, 'Catherine' suddenly appeared from behind bushes as if from nowhere and, before she could be prevented, pushed Maggie and abused us both.

This caused Maggie to be reticent about venturing outside the Residence, particularly when alone. Sometimes 'Catherine' would appear suddenly and menacingly from behind a parked car. On one occasion, on 15 February 1997, thinking it safe,

Maggie took her dog for a walk. She looked to the right and left of the front door and the coast seemed clear. She had only gone a few paces when the dog began a low grumble and to bark. 'Catherine' ran across the road towards her and grabbed at her throat in a fury, leaving bruise marks on her arm. Maggie called out but the street was empty. Then a man appeared and 'Catherine' ran off. After a chase down the road she was apprehended by a passer-by at Maggie's request, and the Police were called. Again, a full report was made by the officer to DS Ball.

On one occasion, a young Policeman happened to be in the vicinity, near the Chelsea Art College, when 'Catherine' was sighted. She looked so respectably ordinary wearing a jacket and a long skirt and low-heeled shoes, that the Policeman did not believe Maggie's request for protection upon complaint that she had been following, threatening and harassing her.

Intrusion

Just before Christmas of 1996, the messages were more plentiful than usual but of a different kind. There was a Christmas card 'Much love from ('Catherine')'. Presents were also sent to me under a different cover, it was a dressing gown purchased from Simpsons in Piccadilly together with a box of chocolates, immediately binned. Included with the presents was a message 'You are still my sky, sea, star, earth, moon...'.

After Christmas, Maggie and I went for a two-week holiday to Spain, Portugal and Morocco, and revelled in the fact that we did not hear from 'Catherine' once for a fortnight. But on returning to the Residence we found letters from her: 'You absolute bastard. It was the holiday we planned'. 'You know how much I wanted to go with you to Spain or Portugal. It is so hurtful to know that you have gone with someone else. I have been so lonely and miserable because I have to do everything

alone'. 'She has done all of the things I dreamed of doing with you'. I was not sure how she had obtained the information that we were holidaying there.

On 6 February 1997, at the Waitangi Day Dinner at the Savoy, 'Catherine' abused me while I was talking to another guest, a senior British civil servant, who clearly knew that I was being attacked.

Around the same time, 'Catherine' poured what looked like motor oil on the front steps of the Residence. She must have been disturbed in the process, because there was a 'Monsoon' shopping bag containing a receipt in her name. An empty can of oil was left also. The Police were called and they took the material away for fingerprinting and testing.

On 5 March, staff found a pot of white paint emptied outside the Residence during an official Dinner, found by staff. All the guests would have noticed was a whispered message to me by the Houseman, a hurried exit, an unflustered return and clean steps.

Then 'Catherine' somehow obtained a copy of my Official Itinerary, a list of public engagements prepared by my Private Secretary. She had access to the Commission as a member of the Committee of the New Zealand Society or it came from a mole. She had obtained it somehow. Copies of the Notices calling me 'A Dishonourable Man', 'A Liar and a Cheat' were sent to people whose addresses were listed on the Itinerary. Two hosts who received the Notices advised me so that I was alerted. In a letter to Maggie, 'Catherine' confirmed: 'I know John's entire programme and diary until the day he leaves, so I'll be seeing you around over the next few weeks. Have fun, I'll be enjoying the next few weeks'. Finally, to me, on 22 March, she wrote: 'And who will want to know you after you say goodbye to the Queen on Monday'.⁵

Role's End

Reflecting on her activities over a period of nearly two years⁶, 'Catherine' in a letter to Maggie remonstrated with her: 'You have ruined my time in London and I know I have spoiled John's time'. 'I love John very very much and no matter how much he hurts me I will still love him... You may have had his body but I have still been there in spirit for all the time he has been in London'.

By this time, given the escalation and nature of 'Catherine's' conduct, and especially her attacks on Maggie, the Police were increasingly concerned. On 18 March 1997, confronted with recent events, 'Catherine' denied them and told them that she thought I had gone back to New Zealand. Annoyed at this response, DS Ball told me that they had asked her to the Station with her solicitor, otherwise they would arrest her.

At this time there had been much to do in terms of packing, shipping, in saying farewell and this occupied my attention until departure on 31 March 1997.⁷ Maggie and I had no clear plans for the future. It was a period for consideration before such a significant step. Maggie needed time to reflect. I knew that it would be a big upheaval for her to join me in New Zealand.

I fervently hoped that she would but, given her quintessential Englishness, I knew that it was a decision to be made by her alone.

8

Perception

To achieve her objectives, 'Catherine' had latterly sought leverage in public. This had the capacity to consume my time, create a climate of gossip and an adverse public perception. She claimed that, in associating with Maggie, I was attracting the disapproval of politicians and officials in both England and New Zealand. And she claimed that I was 'too busy having a good time to do my job properly', a view later repeated by others and perpetuated by media.

Fortunately, in so far as we were aware, 'Catherine's' activities were known to a few only, largely 'in-house', and had no known impact on matters of substance or public concern. Nevertheless dealing with 'Catherine' took place in a full and busy context. Based upon unsolicited written endorsements from a wide range of independent sources I believe I was able to do my job properly notwithstanding. The intrusion associated with the stalking did not impact upon my role, nor upon public perceptions.

The Role

The role of the High Commissioner is to represent New Zealand, to promote its interests in Britain and, in particular, to foster the NZ/UK relationship. It involves policy, legislative and administrative matters in Britain which could be influential upon New Zealand's thinking at home. In Britain especially, a non-career diplomat is often appointed, to foster political influence with Westminster.¹ Influence at official level is also important, but that is primarily the role of the career diplomats in support.

At the time, there were many issues mutually affecting New Zealand and Britain, and considerable interest in Britain in positions adopted by New Zealand. Sometimes the interests of the two countries did not necessarily co-incide (such as nuclear testing; New Zealand's pre-occupation with Apec; and New Zealand abolishing the Privy Council and British titles). Sometimes Britain was seeking information and guidance from New Zealand (such as the de-regulatory economic reforms; the lowering of frontier barriers and free trade; and the reform of the voting system to one of proportional representation).

There were also international matters of mutual interest, such as the genocide in Bosnia (where New Zealand soldiers supported the British effort); and such as (the Troubles in Northern Ireland (where New Zealand supported the moves for an accord); there were secondary trade barriers in the EU (the imposition of EU restrictions on New Zealand products); and in agriculture (the outbreak of mad cow disease in Britain, the consequent slaughter of stock and the implications for and assistance from New Zealand); and of course others.

Apart from matters of general interest, the High Commissioner is a focal point of the overall New Zealand effort in Britain, of which foreign affairs, defence, debt management,

trade, immigration, customs and tourism tend to be the most visible. An aspect of the role is to ensure cooperation and coordination of these various efforts, to assist them working together as part of an overall New Zealand team.

Another part of the role involves matching New Zealanders with UK counterparts, the maintenance of current relationships and the building of new ones in order to forge links, to have contacts to get things done when needed, and to promote New Zealand's position on issues which might affect its interests and reputation.

Also, the High Commissioner participates, for New Zealand, in many non-governmental organizations, such as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Imperial War Museum and the Royal Life Saving Society. There are also others, mostly to do with the Commonwealth, to which New Zealand contributes, fostering aid to and support of member countries.

The role also extends to encouraging private endeavours which assist New Zealand. There are many businesses promoting New Zealand products and services; a myriad of New Zealand organizations in Britain associated with sport and culture (jewellery, textiles, poetry, novels, music, art and so on), and, naturally, Maori interests, such as cultural events and the repatriation of human remains.² In addition, a large number of New Zealanders live and work in Britain and there is a constant flow of visitors from New Zealand.

The links between Britain and New Zealand are seemingly endless (governmental, administrative, business, sport, cultural) in fact, in every field of endeavour. To foster these, I threw myself into a hectic round of visits with relish. I had long recognised and shared the rapport between both countries and pursued its continuance with enthusiasm and vigour.

In addition, I was asked by the Secretariat of the

Commonwealth to be the independent Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Criteria for Commonwealth Membership upon which New Zealand was separately represented, and was duly appointed Chair by a group comprising the leading countries of the Commonwealth.³

I was in my mid-fifties. For me, the appointment as High Commissioner was not a retirement role and certainly not a sinecure. Eighteen-hour days were not unusual as were some ten functions per week in addition to the normal work of the Commission. Advancing New Zealand's interests across the board and furthering the NZ/UK relationship occupied most of my waking time. There was a significant work load and role to fill and this was my pre-occupation.⁴

Recognition

Without canvassing the details of my term, overall I am grateful that it was acknowledged in writing by high praise and recognition from the most eminent and pertinent sources in the United Kingdom.

The Palace thanked me for all I had done while I had been in London, and wrote that 'relations between New Zealand and the United Kingdom could hardly be better, fostered as they are by someone who could be described as the highest common denominator'.

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs responsible for British relations with New Zealand, Sir Jeremy Hanley, in hosting a farewell lunch for me at Lancaster House, is recorded as 'effusive' in praise of my 'exceptional effort in promoting good relations between the two countries' and that we two enjoyed 'exceptional rapport'.

The Prime Minister John Major wrote thanking me for 'all you have done to contribute...to the special relationship' and 'close co-operation at its many different levels'.⁵ Alastair

Goodlad (Chief Whip, later Baron Goodlad), like the PM a cricket enthusiast, hosted a reception and dinner for me in the Long Room at Lords.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Sir Patrick Mayhew referring to NZ's strong and visible support of the peace process, wrote saying that he and all of his colleagues 'have appreciated the close relationship which has developed over the past few years'.

Senior Law Lord and President of the Privy Council, Lord Goff, wrote that 'you have been an admirable ambassador for your country, and established such excellent relations', and the Lord Chancellor sent his 'warm congratulations on a very distinguished term of office'. Lord Cooke (previously the New Zealand Chief Justice), in England as a member of the House of Lords, also endorsed by writing my 'successful service as High Commissioner'.

The Master of the Butcher's Guild, closely associated with the New Zealand meat industry, wrote of the 'very high standing in which we all hold you in' and said, of all the High Commissioners since Sir Thomas McDonald in 1963, 'my most cherished memories will be of the special accord I have enjoyed with you'.

The Chairman of the Royal Society of St George, which promotes England and fosters its relations with other countries said that, of all the High Commissioners and Ambassadors during my term, I was 'the best'.

Judith Hanratty, Chairman of the Commonwealth Trust, wrote that 'The extent of the networks that support the relationship of the two countries is quite amazing. You have undoubtedly contributed substantially to ensuring that those networks at all levels are in good working order and working well to everybody's benefit. Congratulations on a job well done.'

Sir William Purves (Chairman of HSBC) commented in a

commercial context, that ‘New Zealand is now being seriously listened to and its standing on a higher plane than it did a few years ago, describing my contribution as of the greatest importance.’

The Master of University College, Oxford, Dr John Albery, hosted a formal Dinner in Hall for me followed by an evening revue performed by the Martlets, around the theme of the ‘Glittering Prizes’, at which there were many invited Univ guests, past and contemporary.

There were also letters of appreciation from New Zealand societies in Britain which foster UK links. The Chairman of the London New Zealand Society writing of my ‘accomplishments over the past three years’ and support for the Society said: ‘New Zealand owes you a debt of gratitude for the tremendous work you have undertaken during your time as High Commissioner’. The Waitangi Foundation also thanked me for my ‘positive support’ and ‘success of the Foundation’ and London Connections wrote: ‘congratulations on your valuable input and commitment’.

Various Commonwealth organisations (eg the Commonwealth Institute, the Royal Commonwealth Society and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies) thanked me for my ‘advice’, ‘support’, ‘contribution’ and ‘guidance’, as did the Royal Life Saving Society and the British Red Cross.

Career diplomats from the United Kingdom were also supportive. The First Assistant Marshall Diplomatic Corps, in charge of the overseas diplomats in the UK, wrote to me of ‘how much all of my colleagues have enjoyed our close association and co-operation with you’.

From the New Zealand Government, the Minister of Foreign Affairs & Trade (later Sir Don McKinnon) wrote upon receipt of my Valedictory: ‘I wanted to say simply that the achievements of you and those of the High Commission under your leadership speak for themselves’.⁶

The New Zealand Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Richard Nottage, was also complimentary, writing: 'As you shoulder your bat, I did not want you to leave the London post without letting you know personally how much I and the Ministry have appreciated the hard work you have put in over the last three years to promote and develop New Zealand's relationship with the United Kingdom...For that you have my and the Ministry's gratitude.'⁷

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (NZ) wrote to me: 'Congratulations to you and all High Commission staff on the successful completion of the New Zealand House letting campaign. It is a real achievement in a very difficult and competitive market.' New Zealand House then made a profit but to my mind the presentation and promotion of New Zealand counted for more.

In trade in the 1996–97 period New Zealand exports to Britain increased by 17.5% and to Ireland by 17%, and I was acknowledged by three major exporters, the Meat Board, the Dairy Board and ENZA, for 'developing a more permanent awareness of New Zealand products within the United Kingdom.

In commercial matters, the Deputy Chairman of the NZ Earthquake Commission, Trevor Roberts, after an official visit to England, was reported in the New Zealand media as saying: 'John was extraordinarily helpful and effective in rendering assistance on commercial matters of no small significance to New Zealand' and that, in his experience, I was 'warmly regarded by the commercial community, the various Governmental authorities and diplomatic colleagues'.

The NZPA correspondent in England at the time, Simon England, in a dispatch from London, writing on my background in Britain, reported in conclusion that I was 'comfortable dealing with the Oxbridge types who still largely run Government and industry in Britain': 'Put him in a pin striped

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suit and Mr Collinge is the archetypal English city gent'.⁸

Maggie had attended most of the functions with me over a two-year period. She was thus known and highly regarded for her friendly, personal and untiring support of New Zealand. HM the Queen had written of her 'fond memories' and thanks to us both for hosting the dinner at the Residence and for 'all we did in making her and the Duke feel welcome'. Normally, at that time, the Palace did not recognise unmarried couples, but Maggie's contribution was acknowledged and protocol overlooked when she was personally and expressly invited to accompany me on my farewell visit to the Queen, even though we were not married at that time.

Accordingly, based on the unsolicited written endorsements from a wide range of independent sources, I believe that we were able to do our job properly notwithstanding the attentions. The intrusion associated with the stalking had not impacted upon the role, nor upon public perceptions.

9

The Court

During April 1997 Maggie and I each proceeded to put our respective affairs in order. I departed to revive my legal practice which had lain dormant for three years and to rejoin life in Auckland and New Zealand. Maggie was busy completing extensions and renovations to Frog Pond Farm.¹ Now that I was no longer High Commissioner, we both hoped that 'Catherine's' attentions would cease.

We had been more fortunate than most, in having the ability to call out the Police, in having the ongoing surveillance of the Diplomatic Protection Squad and in being able to summons help through the red panic button at the Residence. By the front door, the button was some two feet above the ground, an intriguing height for small children. Maggie's granddaughters aged about five and three naturally experimented. Fortunately, the Diplomatic Squad rather appreciated the callouts, remarking that they had had similar difficulties at the Palace. Yet even with this assistance, the stalking would not be stopped.

Since the first complaint, the Police had been regularly informed and had in their possession the cards, letters, notices,

posters, papers, tapes and graffiti deposited by 'Catherine'. From these, 'Catherine's' pattern of conduct and motivation was clear. There was intent, also a mountain of circumstantial evidence relating to those events not personally witnessed and there was no one else it could possibly be.² The Police also had substantial reports of their own. It had become clear to them that this was no prank, nor humorous revenge. Their experience with 'Catherine', the number times she had been apprehended and her failure to comply with Police warnings weighed heavily with them. They were concerned that her behaviour might lead to something else and worried aloud to me.

Maggie had been the butt of 'Catherine's' attentions and hate mail. She became the focus of Police concern, no more so than when a letter to her from 'Catherine' arrived at Ansty, dated 21 April 1997, three weeks after I had left the country.

Although a Bill to prohibit stalking was before Parliament, the Police considered they should now proceed under the existing law for breach of peace. Once they so decided, prosecution was very much in their hands. It was they who laid charges, prepared submissions and evidence. They had, of course, previously obtained initial statements and evidence from us both, but we had been advised that, if the Police were to bring a case against 'Catherine', it was for them to conduct. This was not unreasonable but meant that we were not consulted in the lead-up. In fact, I had not spoken with the Police since mid-March 1997 and did not know of the prosecution, nor of the hearing on Wednesday 25 June 1997 until told by Maggie the day before. Nor had I spoken to the Police, nor to its Counsel, about a prosecution. Maggie had been advised of the hearing at short notice and did attend. Neither of us were parties or witnesses, nor were we separately represented at the hearing.

Report of the hearing

That day a report of the proceedings in the Kensington Magistrates Court (as it is now called) was filed over Reuters by a reporter who frequents Courts for such purpose. The report outlined a 'bitter wrangle' in a 'fatal attraction' scenario involving 'former New Zealand High Commissioner to London, Mr John Collinge, his beautiful new lover Margaret Postlethwaite and his 'jealous' ex-girlfriend' ('Catherine'), 'the nurse who loved him and lost him' and who 'was accused of stalking the former top politician'. It said 'Divorced mother of two 'Catherine', 49, started a two-year hate campaign after Mr Collinge used her for his consort at official functions and then dumped her for attractive socialite Margaret Postlethwaite'.³

Counsel for the Police, Mr Timothy Cray prosecuting, said that 'Catherine' had bombarded 'the couple with phone calls and letters, sprayed graffiti on the walls of the High Commissioner's London Residence in Chelsea Square, and had allegedly poured oil over the doorstep, and scattered abusive notices on the street'. 'She also sent prostitute's visiting cards to the House in Chelsea Square, scattered some in the street outside and sent more to Mrs Postlethwaite's prestigious club, the Hurlingham in Fulham'.

The Magistrate, Mrs Rosamond Keating SM, questioned whether the Court was being told that the purpose of this was for people to draw the inference that the High Commissioner was inviting prostitutes to his house. Confirming this, Mr Cray 'showed the Court a pile of notes and other material distributed by 'Catherine' which read "The Whorehouse of Chelsea Square, Madame Margaret Postlethwaite".'

Mr Cray also produced and read from an eight page letter written by 'Catherine' to Mrs Postlethwaite (Maggie): 'Those of us who are not pariahs, whores, prostitutes or parasites in

order to live, have gainful employment and win self-respect and the respect of other people through hard work . . . Maybe you will just go back to stalking the corridors of the Hurlingham Club looking for the next opportunity to be a whore’.

Defence counsel, Mr Dan O’Callahan, who was engaged privately by ‘Catherine’, told the Court: ‘One hesitates to call this a “fatal attraction” case because here it did not get that bad’. Interpolating, *Fatal Attraction* is a film starring Michael Douglas and Glenn Close. After a brief affair, her character pursues his, a successful lawyer, by calls, surveillance and other forms of stalking, including damaging his car. He tries to break the affair off but she threatens to tell his wife of her alleged pregnancy. When he does tell his wife the stalker pursues her also. Finally, the stalker attempts to kill the wife, the obstacle, using a knife. In the climax to the film, she herself is killed in a final desperate scramble.

Mr O’Callaghan continuing: ‘What she (‘Catherine’) did was very unpleasant for the people involved. She accepts that what she did was inappropriate but she felt that she had been used and felt extremely let down by the man she did love’.

The report of the hearing then said: ‘‘Catherine’ . . .pleaded guilty to sending Mrs Postlethwaite an offensive letter to cause the couple distress or anxiety in February of this year, and to depositing the prostitute cards’. The prosecution withdrew additional charges of common assault and of criminally damaging the High Commissioner’s Residence by pouring oil on the front doorstep.

Mr Cray, for the prosecution, described the matter as ‘a sad case’. He said that mother of two, ‘Catherine’, who spent much of her adult life in New Zealand (after having emigrated from England), started a relationship with commercial lawyer Mr Collinge there in the early 1990’s: ‘Mr Collinge divorced his wife in February 1994 . . .and two months later, was appointed High Commissioner in London. Later that year, ‘Catherine’

returned to England and there was a resumption of the relationship. It seems that Mr Collinge did not want to continue with that. From the time that Mrs Postlethwaite and Mr Collinge began their relationship, it seems that 'Catherine'... began a campaign against them, which involved making telephone calls, sending letters and appearing at the address where he was living. The charges before the Court were specimen counts. The campaign was obviously born out of jealousy, Mrs Postlethwaite having replaced her in all senses, spending time at Mr Collinge's address and going to official functions with him'.

Mr Cray told the Court that 'Catherine' had sprayed the words 'Whore Postlethwaite' on the road outside the garage at the Chelsea Square house. 'So everybody, all the neighbours, knew precisely who she was talking about' commented the Magistrate. 'Most disturbing for Mrs Postlethwaite was that the prostitute cards were distributed at her club' said Mr Cray.

In 'Catherine's' defence, Mr O'Callaghan responded: "Catherine' is of impeccable character. She is a cultured, educated woman, who at the time when she met Mr Collinge was working as a lecturer in New Zealand. The relationship lasted from 1989 to 1994. It was Mr Collinge who contacted 'Catherine' after she returned to England. They then had a relationship for a few months...' Catherine' became his partner, attending functions such as Royal Ascot and functions at the High Commission. What 'Catherine' feels is that she was very much used during that period'. Mr O'Callaghan said that 'to give a flavour of the man' he would quote his statement to the Police in which he said: 'After contact was made, we had a brief relationship. It wasn't a proper relationship. To be blunt, she threw herself at me. I ended it'.

'After the couple split, 'Catherine' was still attending the functions and Mr Collinge had met her by agreement, even after he started seeing Mrs Postlethwaite' said Mr O'Callaghan:

‘She was left with the impression that there was something to be hoped for as far as the future was concerned. As she told me outside the Court today, she did love this man and still does. ‘Catherine’ now accepted that the relationship was over and there was no likelihood of further offences as Mr Collinge had returned to New Zealand in April of this year’.

The Magistrate, Mrs Rosamond Keating told ‘Catherine’ ‘Ever since time immemorial, jealousy and rejection and the effects of rejection have caused a person who is rejected to become obsessed. You have misbehaved yourself and caused a certain amount of distress and harassment to the new lover’ adding ‘I won’t say anything about the High Commissioner’. She bound her over to keep the peace for one year and, hence, conditionally discharged her. The Magistrate added: ‘I accept what your solicitor has said that you have already suffered enough. One can only hope you will forget him and look elsewhere’.

After the Hearing

The Reuters report continued: ‘Brunette ‘Catherine’ said after the hearing that it was absolutely terrifying to have to face Mrs Postlethwaite across a Courtroom’. But at the conclusion she was ecstatic: ‘I still love John but the relationship is over. I am just delighted and relieved that the Court case is over and I shall be celebrating tonight’.

At the conclusion, Maggie sought refuge in the Court building. The reporter (whom she described as a character from ‘central casting’) sent messages that he would not leave until he had an interview and photograph. Maggie then pleaded from the lobby where photography was not permitted for him to desist: ‘Please don’t, it has been a dreadful experience and most distasteful’, but the reporter said ‘he would stay as long as it took’. Maggie described what followed: ‘The Police,

understanding and kind, tried to smuggle me out of the back door, but like a ludicrous game of hide and seek, he dashed to the back door. We returned to make a run for it out of the front door, but he scuttled round the building, body bent forward camera thrusting, focused and determined’.

Eventually, after about one and half hours, having to drive back to the country, Maggie left the building and, being confronted, was reported as saying: ‘This woman has unremittingly subjected both of us to a terror campaign of real danger. It has been an absolute nightmare for the last two and a half years. This was never a love triangle, that’s absolute rubbish. John had only a brief relationship with her long before he met me. It is very distressing to be hounded in this way. It was a nightmare campaign of physical, verbal and written abuse. The woman was out to ruin John, not that she will. She has sworn vengeance’.

Comment

It appeared that ‘Catherine’ had initially pleaded not guilty to all of the charges and that there may have been a number of adjournments. Reportedly, she then changed her plea to guilty to the charge of malicious communication in relation to the letter read in Court and to posting prostitutes cards. Accordingly, there was no need, in the eyes of the Police, to bring evidence or to pursue the other matters since they had achieved the primary objective of a guilty plea. And, because the matter was no longer being defended, the prosecuting counsel who the Police had engaged pulled out of the hearing and, at the last minute, another was substituted in his place.

For ‘Catherine’ to have defended the charges risked detailed correspondence and activities being brought to the knowledge of the Court and a more complete and a fuller description of the nature and extent of the activities over two years might

have been known. Instead, she pleaded guilty to the specific charges and denied the rest. As a result, her Counsel was able to pass the matter off as one where a respectable woman took revenge, by sending an abusive letter and posting prostitute cards, the wrongs for which she had suffered, and had been punished enough already.

It was little wonder that, after the hearing, 'Catherine' was triumphal. She was reported as saying that I had used her for my own convenience and hurt her much, but that I had damaged myself even more. She had not split the relationship but, by virtue of her unchallenged allegations, had public revenge for her alleged suffering and wrongs. She was admonished and, by the conditional discharge, was effectively told to go and sin no more. Though she had failed in her objectives, she had got off scot free, she was simply not to repeat the conduct for a year. She had, in her estimation, achieved a victory.

The defence

Based on Counsel's submissions, a number of claims had appeared on behalf of 'Catherine', for example, that I had had a five year relationship with her; that I had taken the initiative to contact her in England; that I had created an expectation of a relationship; that I had used her as my consort and then 'dumped' and replaced her; that I had wronged her in a love triangle; that I had continued meeting her after my relationship with Maggie had begun; that I had been callous and had 'let her down'. There had been no opportunity in Court to cross examine, deny or to respond.

In fact, 'Catherine' had previously in correspondence said that she did not have a relationship with me for five years. In a letter to me she acknowledged instead simply that 'she had known me for that period'.⁴

As for the claim that it was I who contacted 'Catherine'

after she returned to England, instead it was she who came to England of her own accord, and had admitted in writing that 'he didn't ask me to come'.

It was claimed that I had created an expectation that there was something to hope for in the future', but it was she who solely and persistently sought to continue the relationship. As she herself admitted in correspondence: 'I gave up my job, my career, my political career to be in London with you. I did it because I wanted to be with you because I loved you so much'.

'Catherine' was not my consort and my partner as alleged. In fact, to the contrary, she was a friend and I was being kindly towards her in recognition of her past assistance and friendship. She was never my hostess, nor was she 'Mrs High Commissioner' and we never had a 'live in' relationship.

There was no 'love triangle' of myself, 'Catherine' and Maggie. Maggie said so publicly to the media after the hearing and as early as September 1994, 'Catherine' was in no doubt either, confirmed by her on 23 January 1995, some three months before I met Maggie: 'I hope we can continue to be friends and see each other occasionally'.

It was claimed that I had met 'Catherine' by agreement even after I started seeing Maggie. When I did meet her, once only at my request, it was in desperation to find a way to end the harassment.⁵

As for 'Catherine's' Counsel's allegation that she had been 'used' on her arrival in England, to the contrary, the invitations and assistance accorded to 'Catherine' were in recognition and appreciation of her past assistance and friendship to me, not then appreciating sufficiently at the time that she may have been seeking much more for the future.

As to whether I had been callous to her as alleged, 'Catherine' had previously written confirming otherwise and thanking me: 'I know that you were trying hard to tell me things that that I could not accept and also to do it in the kindest possible

way. Thank you for all your kindness’.

‘Catherine’s’ plea in mitigation was, broadly, that she was in love and at the time of the hearing was still in love and this explained and either impliedly justified her actions or ameliorated responsibility. However, any relationship depends upon mutuality. To decline a relationship is a right, and a man has a right to say no just as a woman does. And Maggie should have the right to accept a relationship without being harassed and threatened.

The Magistrate did not test ‘Catherine’s’ submissions and allegations, and did not need to do so given the guilty plea. However, in indicating that ‘Catherine’ had suffered enough, she appeared to take them at face value. Had the situation been examined in any depth, or had ‘Catherine’s’ correspondence and activities examined, a different version might have emerged.

The eight-page letter

The Prosecutor had selected the letter of ‘eight-pages’ from ‘Catherine’ to Maggie read in Court as a specimen. The letter was postmarked 16th January 1997 and addressed to Maggie at her country home. It arrived with the message: ‘To add to the collection’. It was delivered to the Police along with many others unread. It was full of invective and made colourful reading.

Again for the purpose of rebuttal, the relevant parts of the letter were: ‘You had better start looking for a replacement for John among the new diplomats... Just a few more official functions and off he’ll go back to New Zealand... Those of us who are not pariahs, whores, prostitutes or parasites in order to live, us who have gainful employment and win self-respect and the respect of other people through hard work... the times I sat at the dining table, I was bored to tears. The best times

were when JC wined and dined me and then made love on the dining room table, you can remember that next time you sit down and eat from it. In fact, we made love in most rooms in Chelsea Square... Maybe you'll just go back to stalking the corridors of the Hurlingham Club looking for the next opportunity to be a whore'.⁶

'Catherine' has not, at any time, in Court or otherwise, then or now, to the best of my knowledge, claimed the allegation of sex on the dining table was true. It was not claimed in Court by 'Catherine' or her Counsel, as is incorrectly assumed. The letter was presented to the Court by the Police Prosecutor for a serious purpose, for the Prosecution to establish the charge of a malicious communication 'which conveyed a message which was indecent or grossly offensive for the purpose of causing anxiety to the recipient'. It was read to give a flavour of 'Catherine's' mindset and her intent to cause anxiety. And, of course, 'Catherine' pleaded guilty to sending it as a 'malicious communication' and did not contend that it or any part of it was true.

The letter became a focus for the media, endlessly repeated as true. However, to the contrary and in fact, the words from 'Catherine' (that we made love on the dining room table) were expressly and on their face an attempt to place her 'scent' at the Residence – to discourage Maggie from dining and being there. As it expressly said to Maggie: 'you can remember that next time you sit down and eat from it'. Further, the letter was introduced by the Police to prove its case – as an example of malicious communication – not that it was true. Neither was it alleged or affirmed in Court that the allegation was true. The letter was written as part of and in the context of a campaign of intimidation, which made statements in it unreliable. And the allegations of prostitution against Maggie (scurrilous and untrue) should have cast doubt on any other statement made in conjunction – to conclude that sex on the dining table

was true when the allegation of prostitution was not is to be illogically selective. In fact, sex on the dining table would not have been easy to accomplish – a Housekeeper and Houseman lived full time at the Residence and had unrestricted access to the Dining Room at all times.⁷

‘Catherine’ and I had not, of course, had sex on the dining room table or, indeed, ‘most of the other rooms’. The table was a delicate antique with many detachable and flimsy partitions of ill fit. It had already been scheduled to be replaced by the Ministry as not fit for purpose.⁸

The Magistrate’s decision

The order to bind ‘Catherine’ over to keep the peace for a year was appropriate given the guilty plea in the hope that the harassment would cease. It was effectively a judicial warning replacing those of the Police, except that this time it was enforceable. The Magistrate dismissed the other charges, given that they were withdrawn and not necessary to be proceeded with.⁹

The Police indicated to Maggie that while they were happy to have obtained an order, they were concerned that the seriousness of stalking may not yet have become apparent. Though not applicable to this case, nine days before the hearing an Act outlawing stalking had been enacted.

The Media

I first knew of the outcome of the hearing when Lucy Hockings, then a young reporter from New Zealand Television One, not having made a prior appointment, appeared early on my doorstep in Auckland with a Reuters report and *Daily Mail* article. The *Mail* headline was Public Revenge of a Diplomat's Spurned Lover, it began 'A spurned lover took a very public revenge when the New Zealand High Commissioner dumped her for another woman the Court heard yesterday'.

Television One

Quickly glancing the report and article, recognising the spin (revenge for wrongdoing and not victimisation through stalking), I responded as best I could: 'I was bombarded with love letters, unsolicited gifts, and the like. Of course, one does not like to take immediate action, but it became clear that the activities were so obsessive that really we had no alternative but to talk to the Police and they, after arresting her on so many occasions, felt that they had no alternative to take action, in her interests'. Reporter: '*Your companion was subject to similar*

sorts of abuse? ‘Oh yes, she sent her abusive letters, abusive telephone calls, and so on’. ‘*Graffiti?*’ ‘Yes, all of those things. She made out that my companion was of bad character, when nothing could have been further from the truth’. ‘*So this is just an ordinary set of circumstances that has gone horribly wrong?*’ ‘This is a nightmare. It happens, of course a lot overseas, not so much in New Zealand, and a lot of figures in Britain have had this problem’. ‘*Did she give you any indication when you were with her that she had this character flaw?*’ ‘No. This behaviour did not become clear at the time’.

The reporter had not advised me that Mark Sainsbury, the *TV One* representative in London, had filed a story which was later billed throughout the day as a ‘sex scandal’. It turned out to be about a ‘two-year hate campaign’ against us, described as ‘a bitter campaign of revenge’. It showed Maggie and I together on an official visit and also the Residence with lights blazing, reporting: ‘It was Margaret Postlethwaite’s relationship with the then High Commissioner who often accompanied him on official occasions that led to a bitter campaign from John Collinge’s former lover...seen here campaigning with the Prime Minister when she stood as a National Candidate...who wrote to her love rival, accusing her of inveigling herself into Chelsea Square, the High Commissioner’s Official Residence’. ‘She also revealed details of their love life at the Mansion, describing how they used the dining room table, as well as most rooms’. ‘The letter, which was read out in Court, boasted what ‘Catherine’ called an effective campaign against Mr Collinge. It was one that included sending prostitute visiting cards to Mrs Postlethwaite’s home, and leaving notes around the High Commissioner’s private Club, describing Chelsea Square as a “whorehouse”’. Being the lead feature on prime-time TV, it had immediate and maximum impact.

The following evening ‘Catherine’ was interviewed by Sainsbury in London, re-enforcing her allegation of public

revenge for wrongdoing and a sex scandal. He continued: ‘The woman jilted by a former Kiwi diplomat has spoken out... Last night we revealed the scandal involving John Collinge... The media here are making a meal of the Court case and her letter to Mrs Postlethwaite detailing what they got up to on the dining room table at the High Commissioner’s Official Residence’. Sainsbury invited ‘Catherine’ to reply: ‘All I actually ever wanted from John was an apology...that he would apologise for the way he had treated me, because I did think he treated me rather badly in the way he ended the relationship’. Sainsbury: *Would you accept that maybe some of your behaviour was extreme?* ‘Yes. Yes, I would. I would say it was an ex lover’s argument that got slightly out of hand’. *What then would you think was the lesson from all of this?* ‘Keep men at arm’s length’.

That we had sex on the dining table and most rooms was repeated as fact – not as a lie to discourage Maggie from the Residence. It enabled ‘Catherine’ to claim that her activities were revenge for my bad behaviour and failure to apologise – an ex-lover’s tiff, not a campaign of intimidation over two years for her own ends. In advising the public to keep men at arm’s length, it seemed that ‘Catherine’ was the pursued not the pursuer. There was no opportunity to reply, nor to counter the claim of ‘sex scandal’ when there was nothing which could properly be so described.

The television coverage led to a media frenzy making much play of sex on the dining room table. Much effort was expended on dining room table jokes, sniggering at ‘Sainsbury’s saucy servings’. The damage was done.

New Zealand Herald

Immediately, this was re-inforced by the *New Zealand Herald* which, having the largest print circulation in New Zealand,

latched on to the story on its front page: 'Our man kept busy at his Chelsea pad' it was headed. 'The political sex scandal capital of the world has caught our man in its steamy glare'. From this, it was quite clear how it was going to go on: 'His jilted lover, ('Catherine') landed him there with revelations of sex on the dining room table and of love making sessions throughout his plush Chelsea pad'. A further and fuller account embellished the headings in a way the London tabloid press, well known for fictitious and florid reporting and imagined sex scandals, would have been proud. I was described as 'debonair', Maggie as a 'socialite' and the Residence 'plush'.¹ 'Catherine' had become more a victim rather than the perpetrator and the defendent in the action.

The NZPA

On the same day, Simon England of NZPA in London also wrote of 'a love triangle' widely re-published. He reported 'Catherine' as saying of me: 'He had ended the relationship but he did not tell me. He was seeing both of us for several weeks but it was only later that I found out he was doing that'. She said I had given her the impression that I was head over heels in love with her: 'If he told me I want you to come to London to have a good time, fine. But he never told me that. The problem was that he wanted me and all the other women too'.² However, before meeting Maggie, I had no close relationship or attachment of that kind with 'Catherine' – indeed after her note to Hilda with the condoms I was very wary of her.

She then turned her attention to Maggie: 'It was significant that the issue had arisen in Court after Mr Collinge's appointment had ended. This was the fifth time it had gone to Court but the charges had always been dropped. He agreed to drop these charges when he left, but she was the one who

wanted to take it further, she insisted. I didn't decide to take it public, she (Maggie) did. I no more wanted to ruin John than I wanted to fly to the moon. This has damaged both our reputations, and it is unfortunate that that has happened. I have not hit out at all against him'. In fact, I had not asked for or consented to or known of the prosecution taking place. It seemed that 'Catherine' appeared to continue her goal of resuming a relationship with me, blaming Maggie for the Court case and the resultant adverse publicity. For 'Catherine', it seemed that it was she and I against Maggie.

Holmes

Holmes was a television programme often accused of 'infotainment' (entertainment under the guise of news). Living up to that reputation, it repeated and revelled in a 'sex scandal', provided graphic pictures of the Residence and presented the sex on the dining table allegation as true whilst ostensibly canvassing why some women are driven by jealousy to seek revenge. An expert from Canterbury University was interviewed. He said he had not had an opportunity to investigate this matter, but made some constructive general comment on jealousy, that the hurt can be magnified in circumstances where there is the absence of a sufficient support base. He said that the community often tended to treat cases of revenge as a matter for some humour, especially where there was retaliation, but made it clear that rejection could be extremely serious and hurtful and was certainly no laughing matter. However, the programme was entirely from the perspective of the perpetrator and not the victims. It did not canvass whether activities might be unwarranted, intimidating and cause distress and fear to others, the very reason why the Police brought the Court case.

The Listener

The *Evening Standard* in London had commented that I was 'no Adonis' and questioned what was it that had caused this adulation. In an article headed 'Girls, girls, girls!' it said that 'Catherine' was 'fresh, fragrant and wonderful' and that Maggie was 'lovely and a picture of elegance', whereas I was 'a rubicund, bespectacled old codger of 58': 'Is he the Casanova of the dullest little country on earth?...Another example of the touching truth that charming, beautiful women are prepared to throw themselves away.'³ This was taken up in the *Listener* by its columnist Jane Clifton, who asked what made one woman menace me with her attentions to the point of alarming the Police and what made another to withstand heinous allegations and to follow halfway round the globe to pose for photographs with me.

Clifton opined that I was not an obvious 'homme fatale' and outlined the theory she said was circulating political circles in Wellington, that it was power which was the aphrodisiac, instancing a number of alleged cases in New Zealand. She said that it seemed to be generally accepted that MP's, with long hours away from home and flattering attentions, were at risk of messy entanglements. Political groupies were available and that 'status bonking' (as she put it) was quite commonplace.⁵ But, here both 'Catherine' and I were single and each looking to find a permanent relationship with someone who was unattached.

The Sundays

To date, the overall impression from these and many other articles in similar vein was that I had spent my time having sex on the dining table and elsewhere at the Residence with 'Catherine' and that she had campaigned for revenge for being

'let down', that is, two timed and badly treated. In the midst of this, Maggie arrived in New Zealand to join me on the morning of Saturday 28 June 1997.

The Sunday newspapers, the *Sunday Star-Times* and the *Sunday News*, had been left out of the 'fun' and took a different line, heading their stories 'Lifetime Relationship' and 'Love Story' respectively. They recorded that we 'were very much in love and wanted to spend our lives together', that I said 'it was love at first sight and that my feelings hadn't changed...I think she's wonderful for sticking by me' having endured such 'vile behavior'. 'When she arrived at Auckland Airport, my first thought on seeing her was that it was worth it for us to have resisted the threats and harassment and to have suffered the major media emulating the gutter press'.

In answer to various questions, Maggie spoke of 'Catherine' laying in wait outside our homes and that she came at her out of the darkness one night: 'pounced on me and started grabbing at my throat. I pushed her off and she ran on'. She spoke of 'how she ('Catherine') kicked her from behind at a function at Christies'. She said that 'Catherine' followed them to her 300-year-old house in Wiltshire and was seen loitering in the woods and the trees: 'She wanted to destroy what private life we had...'. 'The trouble began with a phone call out of the blue from 'Catherine' informing her that she and Mr Collinge were very much together. Obviously, I had a sort of uneasy feeling then, but it went from bad to worse... The stalking had caused great strain on our relationship. Friends, who thought that I might be in danger, wanted me to end the relationship. But I was not going to be put off my feelings for John'.

Woman's Day

Woman's Day then took up the matter on behalf of 'Catherine' with the heading 'Diplomat Sex Scandal'. It was entitled 'John Collinge's Lover Speaks Out'. She was described as 'the fiery ex-lover'. She was not mad or obsessed and that, if so, she could not have held down two jobs. She said that 'words were her only weapon' and denied the assaults and other claims. As to her reasons for her campaign of revenge, she said: 'I wanted to remind him I was still around and wasn't going to just disappear like he wanted me to. I had put up with so much'. She was very angry at the end of the relationship and struck back with a campaign of revenge, taking guidance from the hit film *First Wives Club*.

This film was one of first wives, whose husbands had left them for younger women. Because they felt that their husbands owed them, they cooperated to 'let them have it', calling it, not revenge, but justice. They gathered information by theft of documents and were able to control their husbands by threatening to expose them to felonies. Its message was 'Don't get even. Get plenty'.

She continued: 'A big part of their attraction was their sex life. He just liked sex. He was very passionate and he would often scoop me up and throw me on to the bed and we would make love. We made love in saunas, in spa pools, all over the place...I can see why this woman is hooked on him...She ('Catherine') had fallen head over heels for him in the early nineties after he had separated from his wife and started romancing her. He was National Party President and she a hopeful MP attracted to his intellect but also by his immense charm, and the lifestyle he offered...He gives you his whole attention and makes you feel special and important, and this is what I found so attractive...We became very close and it was obviously wonderful. He was obviously head over heels

in love with me too’.

‘I remember the first Christmas we were together. We went on a holiday to Australia and it was the first bit of fun I had had for a long time. I came back with stars in my eyes. It was all wonderful. Basically, I had been leading a tough life bringing up two kids as a solo parent, and this guy just came along and swept me off my feet...John’s public persona is very different from his private persona. He has this wonderful sense of humour that no one sees. They see this serious boring man, but he has a really dry humour and in private he is really romantic’.

She told of being really devastated when he was going to London alone: ‘The relationship broke up amicably the first time around. It was when we met again in England that the bitter downhill spiral between them began’. After he had left New Zealand, there wasn’t much to keep her in the country and she returned to England where she had grown up, planning this before meeting him: ‘Inevitably, they met in London and began sleeping together...But things weren’t as they were the first time. John said that I had misinterpreted their relationship and that he never meant to be unkind to me. He had dumped me when he met Maggie. I thought he’s doing it to me again. Something just snapped inside me and I thought the bastard’s not getting away with it a second time. I had forgiven him and forgiven him, you know I was totally in love with the guy’.

The report continued: ‘For the next twelve months she saw John at various New Zealand functions and bombarded him with letters asking him to acknowledge her and saying she wanted to talk. Silence from him sparked her campaign which lasted about eight months. She did things like put a note on Maggie car saying ‘There will always be three in this relationship’.’ She said she sent ‘hundreds and hundreds of letters and scattered prostitute cards outside the official Residence’ and phoned them ‘often late at night when they

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were in bed'. Her 'aim was to remind him how much he had hurt me...Here was this wonderful guy, living a wonderful lifestyle, and having the time of his life. He gave the impression that he wanted me to be his partner. There I was living in a grotty flat with no money and struggling to survive'.

Concluding, 'Catherine' said: 'I think I ran a very effective campaign, rather like an election campaign. Persistence was the key and not letting knock backs turn me away from my goal'. She still feels angry but is trying to get on with her life and put it all behind her: 'Now I'm getting on with my life. It's over. Yes, I did do some of those things. Yeah, I still do care about him, but I know it's over. Good luck to them both'.

Media Frenzy



Quite apart from this selection of reports, I was bombarded with calls from a wide variety of other media (print, television and radio) seemingly endlessly. It pushed the 1997 Budget off part of the front page of the *Herald*. A cartoon showed the Treasurer, the Hon Winston Peters, looking disconsolate and bemoaning his luck. Having announced the First Coalition Budget, he had been removed from centre-stage in the Nation's newspapers.

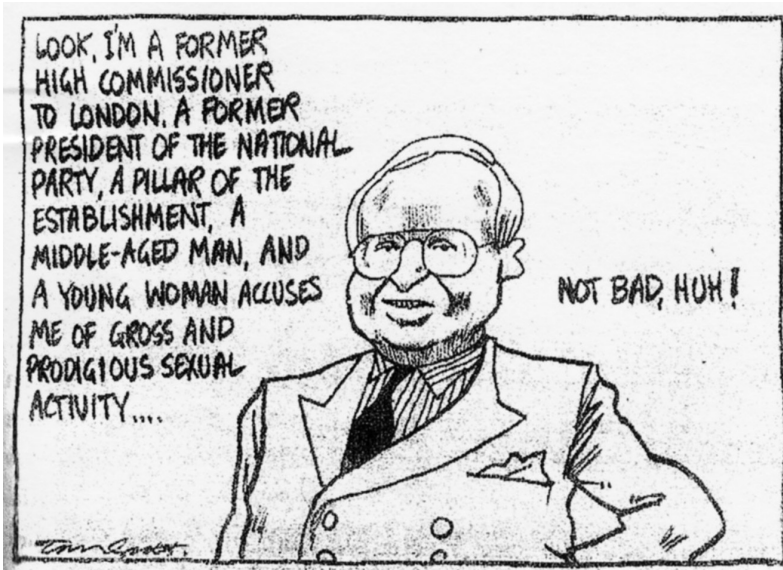
A principal interest of the media was that 'Catherine' and I had sex on the dining table at the Residence and in every other room. I had hoped that the allegations were transparent and would not be taken seriously. When it appeared otherwise, I wrote many letters of denial to the media. But it became clear that that was the last thing they wanted to hear – that would have spoiled the fun. I wrote denials on more than 20 occasions, including to NZPA, the *Herald*, *Metro*, *Woman's Day* and the *Dominion*. They were hardly ever published, though some media, possibly fearing suit, began to refer to 'an alleged incident'. In response, I received three replies addressed to me purporting to justify their stance.

Published denials can be counted on one hand and were massively overwhelmed by the allegations of dining table sex repeated over and over again. It would be a laborious task to do a head count of the false statements compared with the small number of denials. Overall, the balance was well expressed in an English saying (given that London was built largely of bricks) that it was the equivalent of 'London to a Brick'. Everyone we met (including journalists) thought the allegations and the dining table incident were true. The media had created an 'urban legend', when it was in reality a myth.

The result

The activities outlined and the overwhelming impression created said it all ‘Diplomat Sex Scandal’, ‘Campaign of Hate After Diplomat Jilted Lover’, ‘Public Revenge of a Diplomat’s Spurned Lover’. This was compounded by various other impressions: that ‘Catherine’ had been wronged and jilted, that there had been a love triangle, and so on. It seemed that I had spent my whole time in London fornicating at the Residence. Tom Scott, not unkindly, cartooned a drawing of me saying: ‘Look, I’m a former High Commissioner to London, a former President of the National Party, a Pillar of the Establishment, a Middle-Aged Man, and a Young Woman accuses me of Gross and Prodigious Sexual Activity...Not Bad Huh!’. Even this reinforced the overall impression.

In fact, the media were simply accepting without test ‘Catherine’s’ statement to Maggie that we had sex on the dining table at the Residence and in most other rooms as true, and her other allegations likewise, succumbing to the temptation to subvert the truth and emphasise prurience. For



the media it was a story too good to miss and to exploit. It took aim at top office, it was an opportunity for political attack⁷ and to be salacious. Being dependent upon profit and being read, truth and balance can be the casualties.

This was then compounded. Occasionally, as in this case, a media frenzy can develop, where the whole of the media (all the print, TV and radio stations) treat a subject in a way which is all-pervading and excessive. When this happens there can be such a flood of false and offending material that effective response goes by the board.

The media provide a constitutional balance on behalf of the public against the excesses and errors of officials. The issue is not the right to publish, it is that the truth be published with balance and care taken in so doing. While the media working under time pressures can make unwitting mistakes, in this case over a considerable period it did not check the truth of the facts or statements or question them. This was so, even though 'Catherine' pleaded guilty to the letter being malicious, that it was made in jealous pique to dissuade Maggie from the Residence, and even though it was on its face suspect. It was shoddy journalism, justified by a puerile guffaw and pecuniary gain. The responsibility of the media is to take reasonable steps for reporting which is considered, objective and correct. Otherwise it no longer serves the function of providing information (rather the publication of 'fake news') – and it can become an instrument of oppression.

While the pursuit of objectivity is elusive, apart from the Sundays there was little attempt to see the matter from the perspective of those adversely affected. Maggie wished they would 'state what really happened' and wrote to her sister in England afterwards: 'What is so heartbreaking is the way that the lies for which she ('Catherine') was arrested and pleaded guilty have been published here as the truth. I find that very hard to bear...she is clearly not telling the truth or anything

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resembling the truth'. Disregard for victims shows a lack of balance.

The difficulties of taking on the media are many. There is the fear of retaliation and the power of the purse if they do. For many there is the uncertainty, the expense and the delays. Pursuing a legal solution can be daunting in practice. There is a sense of powerlessness among those adversely affected.⁶

In effect, and in the result, this media, not including the Sundays, allowed the stalking to continue and, indeed, to be fostered by constant repetition.⁷

Legislation

Nine days before the Court hearing and some ten days before the media furore which followed, the United Kingdom Parliament enacted for the first time a law against stalking.¹ Individual offences, such as a malicious letter or the posting of prostitutes' cards, can seem relatively trivial on their own. But when viewed overall, a concerted course of conduct, even including otherwise lawful actions, can be much more sinister and intrude upon the well-being of those affected. It was this which the new law sought to redress.

Background

For some time prior to the enactment of the new law, investigation and study into stalking had been conducted by senior civil servants in the Home Office and the Lord Chancellor's Department. The Police officers involved in this case had monitored progress of the study for the purpose of seeking advice. Being conscious of the obligation to protect overseas diplomats, they had communicated details of the case to the relevant officials and had liaised with them.

There had been high profile cases of stalking in the United Kingdom, against Princess Diana, Steffi Graf and others. In America too, in the 1980's, there had been well-publicised cases of stalking, including for example against David Letterman and Madonna. But probably the best-known case of stalking in the United Kingdom was not against a celebrity.

For three years Evonne Von Heussen had been stalked, receiving, among other intrusions, silent phone calls, photographs of herself and her two young daughters, pornographic literature, underwear, bouquets of dead flowers left on her doorstep or on the top of her car, and so on. She first knew who the stalker was when he turned up on her doorstep and she recognized that she had attended his psychology lectures as a medical student. She had only met him once, when he bumped against her on the stairs and he had apologised politely.

Three years after the initial silent calls and other unwanted attentions, three years later he had forced his way into her house. She was rescued when a neighbour, hearing her screams, called the Police. However, the matter was dismissed then as a 'domestic incident' and the attacker let off with a caution. Thereafter, the phone calls increased and became more obscene. Evonne moved away from London but her stalker found out where she was, and the letters and gifts continued. Eventually, she left the country to live in America. Then, her daughter aged 21 was stalked for three years by a different man.²

Frustrated at what the stalkers had done to her life and that of her daughter, Evonne founded the National Anti-Stalking and Harassment Support Association (NASH) and lobbied Parliament for legislation. In particular, she would call Members of Parliament on behalf of victims living in their constituency to complain and to press for action.

In June 1996, a year before the enactment, the issue had

come before a Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry. The Chairman, the Rt Hon Elfyn LLwyd, commenting on the absence of a law against stalking, concluded that 'the attitudes of many working in the criminal justice system and society towards stalking remain in the dark ages'. In that year too, a Stalking Bill was presented to Parliament by 65 Members. It failed because it did not have Government support at the time and because the focus of the Bill was on the means used for stalking (which can seem relatively innocuous in themselves) rather than the harm to victims. Finally, an anti-stalking measure became Government policy under Prime Minister John Major. Evonne was widely credited with the resulting legislation, The Protection from Harassment Act 1997, and was awarded an MBE for her efforts.

Some five months later, on 1st December 1997, New Zealand too passed a law against stalking, the Harassment Act 1997. It was not unusual for New Zealand to follow British precedent to take advantage of experience there. However, the media frenzy surrounding us in mid-1997 made it impossible to ignore and officials and influential people in Wellington close to the political scene were by now well aware of the allegations of stalking. Given the media saturation and the Government knowledge of the case, it is likely (by then I was no longer President of the National Party) also to have been a central and triggering factor in New Zealand's enactment of the Harassment Act as well.

Legislation

The law against stalking had proven difficult to draft. The problem was to distinguish between behaviour quite ordinary but yet which could become sinister in context. It was said that stalking was ambiguously located somewhere between crime and conformity. In a love interest, it is not always easy

to describe where the cut-off point between proper advances and stalking lies, there is an invisible line between what is appropriate and what is too far. In this respect, the essence of the offence is that the concerted conduct and activities create a reasonable fear of distress or detriment to another. Behaviour which is merely unwelcome or annoying is not in a legal sense, stalking.

The Protection from Harassment Act of the UK provided criminal remedies for stalking, making it an offence where a course of conduct causes a fear that violence will occur judged by what a reasonable person would think of the conduct. It also gave the Court power to issue restraining orders whether the person was convicted of an offence or not and penalties (fines and imprisonment) for infringement. A target (without involving the Police) could also obtain a restraining order to stop the acts of stalking and/or obtain damages for loss.³

In New Zealand, the Harassment Act 1997 was similar in intent. It became an offence if a person engaged in harassment by a pattern of behaviour directed against another on at least two occasions in a twelve-month period which caused a person reasonably to fear for his or her safety or the safety of a person in a family relationship. Acts of stalking were defined to include watching, loitering, following, stopping, accosting or making contact by any means. It specifically, and pointedly, included 'sending or placing offensive material' (ie prostitutes' cards) so as to bring them to the attention of the target. A restraining order was available when the activities merely cause distress.

Thus, there must be a series of acts which need not be in themselves illegal, a pattern of conduct directed against another. These acts must be likely, when viewed reasonably, to cause that person alarm or distress, or fear of violence or safety.⁴ The actions do not require proof of intent or malice, they may be simply for love or to establish a relationship or they may be borne out of admiration or ambition, for example. It is

an objective test, what a reasonable person would think of the effect of the conduct. It is sufficient to show that the stalker ought to know that the course of conduct is likely to have the stipulated effect upon the person against whom the activities are directed.

Implementation

In practical effect, the legislation gave the Police explicit authority to deal with stalking and to take it seriously. To this end, they may now have specialist teams available for this purpose and can offer advice, support and guidance. Very often those being stalked will be young and in need of assistance.

The Police may be helpful in identifying the stalker, especially where the activities are covert. They may assist in monitoring the activities so as to create, from many acts which are otherwise relatively harmless, an overall picture more sinister than individual actions.

The Police are also likely to be useful in making it clear by notice to the stalker that there is to be no contact with the target to provide proof that the attentions are unwanted. It is necessary that stalker clearly knows this, otherwise (not wanting to hear the word 'no') it is possible for them to say that they did not understand that there was to be no communication. Such notices in England are called PINS (Police Information Notices).

Importantly, nowadays, the Police obviate the need for a target to deal with or to make personal contact with or communicate with the stalker. Any approach or response by the target is likely to be treated by the stalker as progress and provide encouragement. If the target tries to let a person down easily, it risks misinterpretation and he or she can be the object of further unwelcome attention. If a target resists for say 20 calls before responding, this means that the cost of

getting a response is 20 calls and will usually be a price which stalkers are prepared to pay. If stalkers get a response, they will be reinforced in their view that their strategy is working and possibly an indication that the target really does love or want to see them. Contact by the target is likely to encourage the stalker, not to sate.⁵

It is not always easy to avoid contact, nevertheless, there is no shame in the target being proactive, in diverting calls to an answering service, in using alternative routines, in changing phone numbers, in improving security, in seeking refuge if possible, in taking steps for personal safety, and so on, thereby lessening the ability of the stalker to make contact. In fact, this may often be the preferred strategy. But sometimes (especially in connection with a workplace) avoidance is impossible.

If Police action and warnings are not successful, the legislation centres around penalties or a restraining order from the Courts prohibiting contact with the target and/or family of the target. Either the target or the Police can apply to the Courts for an order that no contact by the stalker is to be made and that he or she remains at a specified distance.

Although it is often not easy to know when stalking starts, the Police should be approached as soon as the target or obstacle feels uncomfortable and threatened by the attentions. Once stalking develops, it is best for the target to take action early, keep a close watch, avoid the stalker, keep records of contact, retain evidence, advise friends and approach the Police.⁶

Outcome

The new legislation had its detractors. It was said that it could lead to unfounded accusations. It might be used simply for revenge or to curtail the movements of a former spouse or partner, such as where a husband or wife seeks a restraining order to prevent attendance at functions or places they might

previously have attended together. Or it might be used to hinder contact with the children of the marriage. However, these are matters of judgment in common with many other offences and judicial care is necessary to prevent abuse.

The legislation was also criticised for being too broad and 'overly flexible', saying that it allowed mere irritation to be criminalized. It was said it would catch say sending twenty bunches of flowers to the target. Again, the judgment as to whether the conduct, superimposed on previous conduct and in the circumstances, is likely to cause distress or fear needs to be made in the context. Courts need to be informed as to the nature of stalking, preferably with trained personell or expert assistance.

Importantly though, the legislation provides a legal avenue for resolution of issues around stalking. It removes the temptation unwisely for targets to take the law into their own hands in order to solve the problem. It substitutes for the old-fashioned self-enforcement – say when the family of a girl in older times sees off a male by physical means for example. Likewise, assisted intervention. Maggie was talking to a security guard for an owner of one of the houses near the Residence, he had noticed the stalking behaviour and intimated in the mid-1990's that for GBP1,500 pounds the problem might be overcome. Surprised, and not wishing to explore what he meant or to take the matter further, she broke off the conversation.

Whatever is said of the legislation⁷ and the possibility that it may be abused or ignored, it was clearly a 'landmark' and, judging by its not insignificant use, overdue.⁸ It recognized that targets and obstacles were likely to suffer as a result of stalking. It was and is important in that it recognised stalking as an offence in itself and that a complaint could be made as a victim and not as the alleged cause of the stalking. It lessens the ability of a stalker to act with impunity.

LEGISLATION

There is now a clear legal right to accept or reject a relationship without being stalked, a right which before had been illusory.⁹

Revival and Respite

The Court Order, that 'Catherine' not breach the peace for twelve months, expired on 16 June 1998, but even then it applied only to conduct in Britain and not to conduct in other countries.

On 17 September 1997 (two months after the hearing) a blank postcard from Italy arrived at my apartment in Herne Bay, Auckland. Another arrived on 23 September. They were in 'Catherine's' barely disguised hand-writing, she had sent postcards from Italy (where she had relatives) before. Then, in March 1998, a letter for me arrived from Aggie Grey's Hotel in Western Samoa, this time with a card from 'Catherine's' UK consulting group company saying 'It would benefit you to contact me on (an Auckland phone number). Regards, 'Catherine''. I did not respond.

Upon her arrival in New Zealand via Samoa, 'Catherine' travelled to Wellington. On 26 March 1998, I received a phone call from there, from the friend who had also warned me of her arrival in London. She said that 'Catherine' had called at her office and wouldn't go until they had 'talked it through'. 'Catherine' said to her that it had all been Maggie's fault in

breaking up her relationship with me, and mysteriously that Maggie and I had split up. 'Catherine' said that she had not made contact with me but that I had tried to contact her. The friend told 'Catherine' that it was she who had always been the pro-active one and that the problem was of her own making. 'Catherine' had replied: 'John had said no to a relationship, but not with his body language'. The friend reported that 'Catherine' 'cannot be finding it easy' and was concerned for her.

Soon after, in early April 1998, another letter for me arrived, this time from New Zealand: 'Dear John, I wouldn't put your head too far above the parapet as you might get shot down again! Regards, 'Catherine'. Hope you have a supply of candles'. In explanation, on 19 February 1998 there had been a catastrophic failure of the cables which fed electricity to the Auckland Central Business District with a resulting blackout lasting for some six weeks. Hence the need for a 'supply of candles'.

Everyone was united in their condemnation of the worst power failure in New Zealand's history, estimated to cost as much as \$60 million per week. It caused havoc among businesses and the daily routines of those who worked in or visited the City. It resulted in considerable controversy and public interest and I was latterly centrally involved in the very public aftermath. Subsequent to the failure I had been appointed a director of the lines company to help get the power back on. Hence the reference to not having my 'head too far above the parapet'.

'Catherine's' letter followed an in-depth article on the crisis entitled 'Blackout' in the *North & South* magazine written by David McLoughlin, an experienced and savvy energy reporter. When it appeared, 'Catherine' called the author to indicate that she had 'dirt' on me which he could use, which is the reference to my being 'shot down again'.

'Blackout'

The 'Blackout' article concerned the power failure. As for the background, prior to my term in London, I had been Chairman of the Auckland Electric Power Board (AEPB). Around 1990, the Government restructured the Board into Mercury Energy Limited so that the Board's operations would be run as a business rather than as an arm of local Government. The Labour Government appointed the Board of five directors, of whom I was also Chair, and the board had been asked by Government to recommend a constitution for the new company.¹ In response, four directors proposed that the Board's lawyers would hold 25% of the shares but have 60% of the voting rights and the right to appoint a majority of directors, whereas a Trust (The Auckland Energy Consumer Trust) on behalf of consumers would own 75% of the shares with only 40% of the voting rights and the appointment of a minority of directors.

I had opposed the proposal, warning that this meant the entity was being 'hijacked' from the public (who previously had owned 100%) to the personal unsupervised control of the directors. At a public hearing into the restructuring, I said that the lack of accountability to the public and consumers meant that 'the safe reliable supply of electricity to the local community' would be placed in jeopardy. This was ignored in spite of a considerable public outcry in support. In his article, David McLoughlin explained what happened:

'For decades the AEPB kept Auckland's lights burning, its air conditioners chilling, its office lifts moving and its stoves cooking. The main opposition (to the proposal) emerged in the seeming unlikely form of the mild-mannered quietly spoken John Collinge.² It turned out that Collinge was a minority of one on that board and when he became aware of the restructuring plans he went public. News reports of the

day hailed him as a “white knight”. Grey Power supporters cheered him and stomped their feet in applause when he spoke at public meetings. He became the toast of talk back radio.



‘For his opposition, Collinge was first sacked as Chairman by his four fellow directors (in late 1992) – seen here walking the plank at the instance of pirates led by the Minister of Energy, John Luxton, in shark infested waters. In mid-1993, at the last board meeting before it became Mercury Energy, Collinge was ousted from the board altogether. Collinge appears to have been the only person to have realised the implication of the new company’s constitution. In a public statement in December 1992, he noted that the five board members who would control the board were self-appointed and answerable to nobody but themselves. If there was no share float they could keep appointing themselves indefinitely. Jim Macaulay (the new Chairman) labelled his comments as ‘scurrilous’. In fact, they were almost psychic’.

McLoughlin continued: ‘Macaulay (the new Chairman) says that the five directors are not chosen by Russell McVeagh (the Board’s lawyers), they are chosen by the directors themselves.

Russell McVeagh's role is limited to rubber stamping the names put forward by the five board members. But hang on a moment, this is exactly what John Collinge predicted would happen in 1992, a self-appointed, self-perpetuating board of directors, outnumbering the trust appointees five to four but answerable only to themselves.'

Notwithstanding, this structure was still in place six years later. During that time electricity consumption was up 40% and staff had almost halved.³ Subsequently, in February 1998, four underground cables which fed the Auckland CBD from the National Grid failed one by one leading to a massive blackout. Unfortunately, Mercury had flown too close to the sun and, like Icarus, got badly burned.

The conclusion might be drawn that the controlling directors of Mercury Energy, pre-occupied with cost cutting and profit to maximize a possible share float,⁴ took their eyes off the provision of a safe and reliable supply of electricity.⁵

Threat Squad

In calling David McLoughlin to offer him 'the dirt' on me, 'Catherine' appears to have taken exception to the favourable tone of the article. To his credit, the reporter advised me of the approach and I asked him to contact the Threat Assessment Squad of the Auckland Police, which he did.

In charge was Detective Sergeant David Tomoana assisted by Detective Maria Hope. I was immediately impressed at the Threat Squad's depth of knowledge of stalking, it was clear that they had other cases of a similar nature and were familiar with the syndrome. DS Tomoana said that Police normally get at least two new complaints every three months of celebrities and public figures being stalked – it may take place more often in New Zealand than is commonly thought or publicised.

I referred them to Detective Sergeant Ball (who had handled

the matter in the UK). He provided detailed information of previous matters and the New Zealand Police advised us on security aspects. We were given emergency contact numbers to call and the Senior Sergeant at the Ponsonby Police Station was notified to keep my apartment, not far away, under surveillance.

As a result of the deliberations and inquiry, on or about 9 April 1998, Detective Maria Hope spoke to 'Catherine' in Auckland for about an hour, saying that she had consulted the English Police and knew of the background. 'Catherine' responded that she hadn't done anything. The Detective was then able to show her copies of the letters I had received in New Zealand and the record of her communications with David McLoughlin.

She then delivered a warning to 'Catherine' that the conduct was to stop, advising her of New Zealand's Harassment Act which, for some three months, was now in force. She warned that 'Catherine' should have no contact with journalists, that she was now in Police records here and would follow up by advising the British Police of her activities in New Zealand.

'Catherine', reportedly in tears, asked if there would be Police waiting for her upon arrival in England. She was told that they would not as the events were in New Zealand only. She then asked how the Detective 'knew of this' and whether the complaint had come from Maggie. The Detective said that it had not and that it had come from me. Shortly afterwards 'Catherine' flew back to London.⁶

'Catherine's' renewal of contact in New Zealand and the intervention of the New Zealand Police were not made public to the media. Maggie was worried that the previous furore (now having abated somewhat) might be re-incarnated with repeat adverse publicity.⁷

Cessation

Subsequently there were further communications. On 1 September 1998, an envelope in 'Catherine's' hand writing arrived at Maggie's home in Ansty with a chain letter of the type that, if you do not send it on you will incur some misfortune (in one example the recipient died when she did not do so). On 7 January 1999, a post card to me in her hand writing arrived in Auckland which simply said: 'Hello from Hahei' – a holiday spot. Neither was in breach of any Order being more than a year on. Possibly she was reminding us that she was still there.

There were a considerable number of calls to our phones in Auckland and Ansty, but, not having traced them, none of these could be ascribed to 'Catherine'. Nevertheless, the longevity of stalking and its recurrence was by now well known to us and we continued to take precautions to avoid any possible contact with her. We used chaperones when I was not available to allow Maggie to attend functions in England at which 'Catherine' might conceivably be present. But from January 1999, neither I nor Maggie received any communication which we could attribute to her.

It seems that 'Catherine', seeking sympathy for her actions among her peers in Wellington, may have found that she did not have support. Further, whereas she had previously been able to deny activities, Detective Hope was able to produce evidence to the contrary. Then too, for the first time, 'Catherine' had shown concern for her own position, the possibility that the Police might be waiting for her when she arrived in England – she may not have wished to face the prospect of a charge of breaching the Order which then had two months left to run. Also, she was told by Detective Hope that it was not Maggie behind the complaint but that it was me, and this may have helped dispel any misapprehension. Finally, she may have learned that Maggie and I were formally engaged.

After the media frenzy had died-down we had announced our engagement in New Zealand and this had received media coverage at the time.

Whatever the reason, or more likely reasons, the stalking stopped or appeared to have stopped early 1999, not that either of us knew it at that time or since. The communications had lasted intermittently from June 1993 (from the rejection) for some five and a half years. That the stalking and her seeming sense of proprietorship towards me ceased is a credit to 'Catherine'. After a deeply felt and long-standing disappointment, she was able to put it aside.⁸

*In retrospect*⁹

Reviewing the matter, 'Catherine' had previously said, she would get her revenge. Although she failed to split the relationship between us, and although eventually after some years the adverse reputational damage was mitigated by successful legal action, nevertheless there is little doubt that the stalking, with the aid of the media, was in part successful – in that it impacted upon the perceptions of Maggie and myself in ways which can only be speculated.

Nevertheless, I had felt throughout considerable sympathy for 'Catherine' – particularly for her feelings and that she had taken the rejection so badly. It seems that it hurt her more deeply than I had imagined. She may have seen it as a loss of face to friends and acquaintances, awakened when I was appointed High Commissioner – emphasising the loss. Following me to England and the failure of her attempts there to renew may also for her have meant a further loss, as did the subsequent appearance of Maggie. Upon reflection, in my wildest dreams, in exploring a relationship with 'Catherine', I had never envisaged such a reaction nor such an outcome.

My sympathy for 'Catherine', for her past support and in

sorrow for her rejection, were rightly her due and were at all times genuine. There was even grudging admiration for the persistency of the pursuit, which was of course mitigated by her conduct against Maggie. I was and still am at a loss to reconcile the continued feelings of gratitude and respect for 'Catherine' with the hurt and distress caused to Maggie, conscious that I could not satisfy both.

I have no reason to suspect that 'Catherine's' stalking and pursuit, though vigorous, was in any way disordered or psychotic. Indeed, to the contrary, her actions though extreme were lucid, well-thought out and constant in seeking love and a relationship. At a time when stalking was not itself specifically unlawful, she seemed to be using it as a tactic – as a lever to achieve her goal of a relationship with me and as an outlet for expressing her disappointment.

I do not ameliorate any inadequacies in my dealings with 'Catherine'. It may be said that in endeavouring to assist her handle in the breakup in New Zealand; by the assistance and friendship upon her arrival in London and afterwards; and in succumbing to her shortly; that I brought the attentions on myself. Were Maggie to be out of the way, it seemed that it might give 'Catherine' hope that a relationship would be renewed.

'Catherine' made me feel guilty – it gave her an opportunity to claim that she had been ill-treated where there had been no such action or intent, only sympathy and regard for her throughout.

'Catherine's' objectives were legitimate – to resume a relationship by pursuit and expressions of love and also to participate in my life as High Commissioner. As she wrote: 'I used to dream one day you would invite me to share some of the public social occasions with you, going to a Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey or watching you lay a wreath in Horse Guards and Whitehall on Anzac Day. I would

have been so proud of you'. And she had gone to extraordinary efforts to achieve her goals.

As indicated, stalking was not of itself unlawful at the time of the events in question, and 'Catherine's' objectives were legitimate and flattering – to secure a relationship and to have involvement. However, though lawful and though effective in securing attention, the use of stalking and harassment was inappropriate in that it caused anxiety and apprehension to those affected – including concern that it might interfere with my official role as High Commissioner. Nevertheless, the wider community outcome was that stalking is now happily and rightly unlawful.

For 'Catherine', as the Police Prosecutor properly acknowledged in Court, this was for her 'a sad case'. Nevertheless, 'Catherine' is remembered by me throughout very warmly – with the utmost respect, kindness and affection.

An Urban Myth¹

I was grateful for the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade during my induction as High Commissioner and for the excellent assistance from the staff at the High Commission in London during my term there. Nevertheless, I sensed a coolness from some (but not all) senior members of the Ministry. Of course, the long-standing animosity of professional diplomats to political appointees is well enough known and, at the time, was advanced by a 'Union' (the Foreign Services Association of New Zealand) which promoted the appointment of career diplomats and lobbied Governments for that purpose. Political diplomatic appointments are usually (but not universally) limited to the key English-speaking posts, London being the special plum. The Union made no secret of their preference for top postings, and particularly London, to be filled by career diplomats.

It was therefore not surprising that my appointment aroused the Union's ire and attention. It was leaked to the *Dominion* newspaper before I had been advised of any decision to appoint me. In accompanying comment, the Union claimed that I did not have any qualifications for the

position² and that my appointment was one of 'jobs for the boys'. And because I was President of the National Party, there was the special ability to paint the appointment as cronyism. There was no opportunity given to me to respond at the time and, in any event, I could not as I had not yet been appointed. When it was announced later, an Opposition politician, Winston Peters, published a long list of 'crony' appointments with mine as number one.³ It did not seem appropriate for me to respond to this either, given that it was clearly a political attack.

Then, during my tenure as High Commissioner, when my successor, a career diplomat, was appointed, the *Dominion* said his appointment was 'welcomed' and noted that the post had usually gone to political appointees. It said that my successor's appointment was a rejection of the 'jobs for the boys' approach and that the present appointee (that is to say me) was, without giving a reason, 'not regarded as having been a successful High Commissioner'. The *Dominion* continued, again without attribution, that there had been a strain in my relationship with some senior officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. To add insult to injury, the Executive News Service, on behalf of the Ministry, on 4 March 1997, relayed these allegations to all members of the diplomatic service, including to me.⁴

There was no respite later either when, on 5 February 1998, an article appeared in the *New Zealand Herald* headed 'East tipped to miss out on post'. It reported that the Attorney General, Hon Paul East, would not be offered the position of High Commissioner to London, and that a factor in the Government's reluctance was because of the embarrassment caused by 'former High Commissioner John Collinge who returned to New Zealand last year amid a luridly detailed sex scandal involving a former lover who he claimed stalked him after he ended their relationship'.

Then, the Regional Property Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Nigel Allardyce, said in the *NZ Truth* that the Ministry had stepped in to spare the blushes of my successor and his wife by removing the dining room table that I had ‘scored on’. He said: ‘It would be a matter of national embarrassment if the table were to stay at the High Commissioner’s Residence. Obviously, we can’t expect Mrs Grant (my successor’s wife) to entertain people around that table, guests would naturally question whether the much-publicized events took place where they were seated’. ‘The table had done its fair share of work and is to be replaced’. ‘Such items would normally go up for auction but maybe we should sell this table as a curiosity. We’d probably get more for it’.⁵

The Union (made up of career diplomats in the Ministry) had engaged in a campaign to advance its cause by seeking to undermine political appointees and, in particular, me.

Diplomatic Ladies

The highwater mark of such attacks came years later when Joanna Woods published a book called *Diplomatic Ladies*.⁶ She was the wife of an experienced senior career diplomat and thus a career diplomat insider, already, in her own right, a published author. The book was published by the Otago University Press, a publisher of serious works. It had a Foreword by the ‘Rt Hon Sir Don McKinnon, ONZ, GCVD’, who for nine years had been Minister of Foreign Affairs and who also spoke at the launch of the book.⁷ With such pedigree, the book had an authoritative aura.

The Chapter in question was titled ‘Conduct Unbecoming’. It had a photograph of me holding the *Daily Mail* headed ‘Public Revenge of a Diplomat’s Spurned Lover’ dominated by a full-length photograph of ‘Catherine’

‘the spurned lover’. It traversed my appointment as High Commissioner, meeting Maggie, ‘Catherine’s’ conduct, the Court case, the ‘eight-page letter’ and the sex on the dining table allegation. It was a personal attack, particularly that I should not have been appointed, had misbehaved and had let the professional diplomatic service and New Zealand down. An outline of the Chapter is repeated here for the purpose of rebuttal only.

The tone was set when it opened: ‘Even diplomats and their partners sometimes behave badly and New Zealand’s envoys are no exception’. It described ‘the damage done to New Zealand’s reputation’ by ‘the antics of a later envoy (me), whose indiscretions were broadcast in every major broadsheet in Britain, as well as all the leading papers in New Zealand. The story has never been forgotten and fifteen years later it still elicits smirks and sniggers at the expense of the country’s oldest and most historic diplomatic mission in London’.

It continued: ‘(“Catherine”) undertook many of the duties of a diplomatic wife. Described variously as ‘mistress and lover’, she accompanied him to official functions including such high-profile occasions as Royal Ascot. She also acted as hostess at parties and dinners at the elegant three-story house in Chelsea Square that serves as the High Commissioner’s Residence... Once the novelty of playing “Mrs High Commissioner” had worn off she found many of the official functions deadly dull, especially the dinners at the Residence... Consumed with jealousy, she was deeply suspicious when Collinge, quite correctly, placed her on the far side of the table rather than beside him’. To the contrary, she had, prior to my meeting Maggie, been invited as a guest at three dinners when friends of hers from New Zealand were visiting, being placed at the far end of the table away from me at the centre to show that she was not my hostess, nor “Mrs High Commissioner”. In fact,

‘Catherine’s’ reason for being aggrieved seemed more that she was frustrated in her endeavours to create the impression that she was my consort and hostess.

Mrs Woods again: ‘Seizing on the ambiguity of the term “model”, she (‘Catherine’) accused Margaret point-blank of being a prostitute and scattered the pavement outside the Residence with notes reading “The Whorehouse of Chelsea Square. Madam Margaret Postlethwaite”. She also sent prostitutes visiting cards to the exclusive Hurlingham Club, of which Margaret was a member. To Collinge, however, Margaret always seemed such a perfect lady...’. Thus, she referred to ‘Catherine’s’ branding of Maggie as a prostitute without the qualification that this was untrue and, indeed, left it open that it might be true, if not implying that it was.

Mrs Woods then recited ‘Catherine’s’ claim that I had for a couple of months ‘managed to field both women’ and had thereby ‘treated her rottenly’. But she failed to mention Maggie’s published comment after the hearing that this was ‘absolute rubbish’, and that ‘Catherine’ had, prior to my meeting Maggie, written to me admitting that there was no relationship although she wished it were so.

Mrs Woods again: “‘Catherine’s’ attempted assaults were ludicrous rather than dangerous’. But, to the contrary, the physical assaults against Maggie (kicking, pinching, shoving and punching) were deliberately intimidatory, especially in the context of ‘Catherine’s’ repeated invective and threats against Maggie. And the English Police thought so too.

Describing the Court case, Mrs Woods said: ‘When (‘Catherine’) entered the Court, accompanied by her lawyer, Margaret must have eyed her with interest...apart from the scuffle at Christies and their night time encounter in Wiltshire, the two women had never met. Only Collinge was conspicuously absent. His posting had ended in April and he had returned to Auckland, leaving ‘Catherine’ and Margaret

to slug it out on their own'. In fact, the prosecution against 'Catherine' was not by me nor by Maggie, but by the Police based on their apprehensions and dealings with her over a year or so and their consequent concern for Maggie's safety. Maggie was an observer at the hearing at short notice. I only learned in New Zealand of the prosecution the evening before the hearing.

Mrs Woods then proceeded to outline what she described as by far the most sensational evidence, found in the 'eight page letter' that 'Catherine' had sent to Maggie shortly before my departure. As she wrote: 'Much of it was mindless ranting... The best times were when JC wined and dined me and then made love to me, once on the dining room table. You can remember that next time you sit down and eat from it. In fact, we made love in most rooms in Chelsea Square'. Thus, even though Mrs Woods herself thought that much of the letter was 'mindless ranting', the allegations of love-making on the dining room table were, in contrast, treated by her as true. She also omitted material facts, namely that the Police prosecutor had used the 'eight page letter' to establish the offence of malicious communication and that 'Catherine' had pleaded guilty to sending it as an offensive letter with intent to cause distress.

Mrs Woods continued: 'Within 24 hours of the hearing, Margaret was on a plane to New Zealand. Their photographs were splashed across the Auckland papers, with Margaret in a dainty Chanel style suit and pearls, cradling a bouquet of flowers. She had brought her walking boots and her paints with her. After all, what would be there to do in the "dullest little country on earth".' Thus, Mrs Woods disparaged New Zealand using the words "dullest little country on earth" as if Maggie had said them, when in fact she had said nothing of the sort. They were words previously quoted by Woods herself from a comment made by a journalist in the English *Evening*

Standard. Maggie had, in fact, previously walked the Milford Track and the boots were included for such purpose.

Mrs Woods then continued with an attack on political appointees: ‘Diplomatic misbehaviour always makes for good copy...The general public saw no distinction between political appointees and career diplomats and as further headlines poured in from the press, New Zealand and the Diplomatic Service became the laughing stock of London...Meanwhile back in London, Collinge’s successor (who for once happened to be a career diplomat) was left to cop the flak, the sly asides, sniggers and the smirks. It was a nightmare he told me, and he preferred not to talk about it’.

Concluding, Mrs Woods said: ‘In 2001, the house in Chelsea Square was put on the market...As soon as the news became public, the *Dominion* published a rehash of the affair under the headline “New Zealand to sell notorious London House”... But, to the best of my knowledge, he has never denied that he and ‘Catherine’ once made love on the dining room table...’. Again, to the contrary, nothing notorious had occurred there or anywhere and there had been many such denials, a small number of which had been published in the media.

Legal challenge

I was taken aback by so many falsehoods, insinuations and the tone of the Chapter. Previously, I had hoped that the allegations would not be taken seriously and, when it appeared they were, I had endeavoured to deny and explain to the media, albeit without success. In *Diplomatic Ladies*, many of the false allegations were assembled together in a narrative and, in exasperation, I had had enough and at last took legal action. I claimed defamation against the author and the publisher, alleging that the various statements in the Chapter were false, that they were calculated to damage my reputation by accusing

me of anti-social behaviour, of being unfit for the position of High Commissioner and of bringing the diplomatic service and country into disrepute.

Overall, the Chapter was false, belittling and derogatory, written by a person unknown to me. But, being defamatory, could be justified if Mrs Woods and the Otago University Press could show the statements in the Chapter were true or were honest opinion or fair comment. In actuality, there was no basis for saying that they were true other than by reference to media reporting which was wrong, misleading and itself tabloid. And 'Catherine's' written communications, which I had retained, contradicted the account.

Once the claim of defamation was made, Mrs Woods and the Otago University Press (OUP) were represented by Queen's Counsel. After a flurry of exchanges between lawyers, claim and counter-claim, they capitulated. Mrs Woods sincerely and unreservedly apologized to me in writing for the Chapter and its contents. The OUP regretted what had occurred and for the distress it had caused me. In the result, they agreed to the withdrawal of all unsold copies from sale and to remove the offending Chapter in its entirety from all future editions. The terms of this, how this was to be achieved and the financial aspects of the settlement were to remain confidential.

I was given the right to rebut the allegations Mrs Woods had made in the Chapter. In response to a question from TV3 News, I was able to say in return that 'the contents of the Chapter were grossly false and defamatory of me' and that 'they were also damaging to the diplomatic service and did not reflect well upon New Zealand'.

Reviewers

That was not quite the end of the matter. When the book was published, a number of media, by way of review and

comment, had repeated aspects of the defamation.

The *New Zealand Herald*, referring to the book, wrote of my 'escapades' and 'the now notorious dining table incident'. Upon challenge, it also apologised, saying that its records had not been updated to electronic form. It immediately published a denial from me in the letters to the editor column. It then followed up with an article headlined 'Table Sex Claims Put to Bed', which commenced: 'Former High Commissioner to London John Collinge hopes that a legal victory which has seen the recall and destruction of copies of a book claiming he enjoyed a table-top romp at his official residence will put the urban myth to bed once and for all'.

Next was *The Listener*, which had also published a review, referring to the 'unedifying behaviour of John Collinge and his two girlfriends' while High Commissioner in London. Being challenged, it too published an article called 'Turning the Tables': 'For many years, ex National Party President, John Collinge, has been dogged by a rumour he hopes will now be scotched following legal action and the publication without its offending content'. In the article it said that '*The Listener* has accepted that comments made in its review, based on the book's content, were in error and has apologised'.

The book was also reviewed in the *Journal of the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs* by Professor Stephen Hoadley. Somehow he mixed up the participants. The third to last paragraph of his review read: 'Less to New Zealand's credit are accounts of how...Margaret Postlethwaite (previously known by her professional name of Maggie O'Grady) famously liaised with John Collinge on the dining room table in the UK High Commissioner's residence while both were stalked by jilted lover ('Catherine')'. In response, a letter was received from the Hon Sir Doug Kidd, its President, tendering the sincere apologies of the Institute, regretting the publication of the paragraph, and indicating that a formal written apology

would follow in the next Edition of the International Review. Headed 'Apology and Retraction', it read: 'the review contained comments about John Collinge and his wife that were both inaccurate and without foundation. We retract the statements made in that paragraph without reservation and offer our sincere apologies to Mr and Mrs Collinge for any distress it has caused'.

The Outcome

Non-career diplomat appointments may be subject to opposition from career diplomats. But while it is one thing to promote a cause or a position, the attacks by Mrs Woods took on the look of a campaign of unjustified and personal disparagement – to categorise my conduct (by a non-career appointee) as scandalous and, thereby, to foster the cause of career diplomats.

Mrs Woods (an author), the reviewers and responders (who were experienced journalists) and others were all repeating and perpetuating an urban myth⁸ which had been created by a media frenzy. Mrs Woods had, in essence, repeated claims made by the media, without questioning and due care, without due inquiry, without exercising responsibility for the truth and without any rider or qualification, even though the nature and motive of the allegations were such that they invited scepticism.

The successful legal action, the apology received from Mrs Woods, the removal and withdrawal from shops of the unsold books, the recall of the book from libraries and lending institutions,⁹ the pulping of the unsold remainder, the deletion of the Chapter in its entirety in future editions and the retractions and the apologies from leading media all recognized that the Chapter and its tenor was false.

While the legal proceedings and the resultant publicity

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have helped remedy public perceptions, there is still a residue of adverse remembrance which lingers. But, above all, long after the Court case and the media frenzy, the legal action contradicted the urban myth.

An Epithalamium

Later, in 2013, at a Univ Re-Union at the College, fifty years after their matriculation, the two friends (the speaker and the listener) and John and Maggie met again. Though living far apart, to a greater or lesser extent they had kept in touch. The friends were aware that the strong bonds of loyalty between John and Maggie had been sorely tested.

With the celebration completed, the Speaker sought to recollect and reminisce: ‘Since the Court case and media furore, John and Maggie continued together strongly with a sense of being jointly wronged. They had enjoyed immensely their time during his term as High Commissioner and were proud of what they had achieved, but the pursuit and harassment, had caused invasion and disturbance to their lives, greatly enhanced due to their feeling of responsibility for New Zealand and concern for the success of his tenure. It was not so much the campaign of attack against them, but that it had been comprehensively misunderstood and publicly miscast. Subsequently, they did their best to put this aside, but it was impossible due to a multiplicity of constant reminders from all and sundry, the allegations seemingly believed’.

Thinking back to their discussion of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, the listener responded: 'For Tess, the relentless attentions of Alec d'Urberville disrupted her love for and loyalty to Angel Clare to the point of desperation.¹ For Maggie, it was the stress suffered over some two years described gently by her 'as a great sorrow for me' – it was the harassment and ridicule to her and her good name from someone intent on ending her relationship with me. Maggy had no prior involvement or connection with the stalker whatsoever and, like Tess, had no part in or blame for the relentless pursuit which followed'. It seems that in stalking no one wins and that the innocent also lose, caught in intrusions beyond their control, reflecting too Hardy's notion that romance often involves hard prosaic reality'.

Seeing the process of evaluation in his friend's mind, the speaker responded: 'But here, there is also an epithalamium – a nuptial story in praise of the Bride. The listener began to search his memory of Latin, long forgotten, but then recollecting that an epithalamium was a classical form of tribute at a wedding – to wish good fortune on the Bride and the marriage. Eventually he said: 'Yes, it is an epithalamium, involving prosaic reality within a love story'.

The speaker: 'The stalking happened seemingly by chance, impossible to detect in advance and beyond co-incidence. In Hardy's words, 'it was fate, the sport of the Gods'.² It could happen to anyone'.

Continuing: 'For some, rejection slowly fades and is often cured by separation, which works to remove the hurt as the object slowly disappears from focus. For others, the impact of rejection is heightened and persists, producing genuine pain and reaction. The impact may have much to do with circumstances which make it harder to bear. High expectation, born say of ambition, or the hope of recognition, or recompense for hardship or disappointments, may amplify

the hurt. Persistence may lead to success, in due course, showing the strength of feeling. But it may also become self-destructive where nothing seems to be a deterrent. Even Police action or warnings or a restraining order may simply be seen by a stalker as an obstacle to be overcome – or as an intervention which invites retaliation. A stalker may, self-generatively, swing between admiration and hate, and escalate activity without warning – the dark side of love.’³

‘The problem is in the mind of the stalker not readily ascertained or removed – where there may exist a relationship even though there is none and where any nuance or communication by the target is readily interpreted by the stalker as a relationship or an expectation. The mind of the stalker is impossible for the target to access and dangerous to attempt.

‘Dealing with stalking and its prevention is fraught with difficulty. John endeavoured to ease the impact of rejection by being supportive and friendly, which unwisely meant continuing contact and creating incentive and opportunity for the stalker. The Police were uncertain as to what to do, awaiting advice as to how best to proceed. The Magistrate may not sufficiently have recognised the potential dangers of stalking. To the media, it was an opportunity to exploit unfounded allegations in a sensational and salacious way and detractors were using it as a weapon to promote their own objectives. Legislators were cautiously stepping gingerly into new territory which was ill-understood. Few were familiar with stalking, what it was and, once known, how it might be dealt with, thereby enabling it to continue and its impacts magnified.

‘How does one know who is prone to stalk? How can victims avoid the consequences? How do you know when and how to take action to counter? How do you avoid the risk of retaliation if you do? How do you get stalking, when deeply

ingrained, to stop?’ Reflecting, he said: ‘There is more work yet to be done and wider understanding needed’.

The listener responded: ‘Although stalking is now unlawful and those who are stalked recognised at law as victims, there is still stigma attached, that they are responsible in some way for being stalked and that it could somehow have been avoided. The targets may be thought to have invited the attention and, for those who are well known, that it simply goes with the territory of being in the public eye. It is prone to misconception and requires better awareness and understanding, especially by those responsible for dealing with it, but also by the public generally.’

The Speaker again: ‘But, importantly, the awareness created – of the recognition of stalking and its intrusions – has redeemed an otherwise ‘sad case’. Bringing it to attention has highlighted the awareness of a problem formerly ‘under the radar’ and has provided legal protection for those who are adversely affected by stalking. This story is less a media inspired ‘scandal’ than a tale of unrequited personal ambition, but with an outcome of significant use, value and importance to the community and to those who may be affected’.

Stalking can appear simply as lovelorn longing – seemingly relatively trivial. This hides potentially serious consequences for the targets – such as nuisance, apprehension, distress and the loss of security in not knowing what is coming next. That stalking is now clearly unlawful and there are official procedures for dealing with it, is a Godsend. At its simplest, stalking infringes the right to search for companionship and to be left in peace – it is a theft of a portion of life.⁴

Postscript

Since the events in question, John resumed legal practice in New Zealand and continued to serve the public in various roles. By writing and in providing the material for this book, warning, he continues that public service.

John and Maggie lived happily between England and New Zealand, variously at 'Frog Pond Farm' in Wiltshire and 'Akarana' in Auckland, for twenty years. Maggie died unexpectedly on 1 February 2017. Steadfast and loyal to the end, in 2015 she wrote:

'To my Love

I will catch the moon in my butterfly net
And leave the larger stars behind
For my love this orb I'd save
And shake the stars through a silver sieve
To-night I will catch the moon
And to my love this present give'.

This book, 'a story in praise of the Bride', with love and affection, is dedicated to Maggie.



Appendices

Chronology

Chronological Schedule of Contact Provided to the Police

When the matter was first raised with the Police, they recommended keeping a record of approaches. The three chronological lists provided to them are reproduced below. They cover the period from April 1995 (when John met Maggie) to March 1997. They are described as the First List, the Second List and the Third (1997) List. They do not disclose the full extent of the activities or correspondence.

The Lists are sketch outlines only and are not exhaustive, but they provide a broad chronology and show that the stalking was not, as alleged, trivial.

From the Lists it can be seen that various categories of actions (eg the telephone calls, the following, the prostitute cards, the posters, the vitriol, etc) were interspersed with each other. For convenience, in the book the different types of activity have sometimes been dealt with together, but in broad sequence.

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FIRST LIST

April 1995

I started to go out with Maggie. ('Catherine') rang her and said she was having a relationship with me which was going through a bad patch and tried to get Maggie to discontinue seeing me. I told her that I now appreciated that the purpose of her visit here was to ruin any relationship I might have and that I would have nothing more to do with her.

May 1995

Letter saying ignore me at your peril.
Letter re threat to future goals.
Card admitting attempts to 'torment' me and admitting that it is caused by jealousy.

2.7.95

She tried to write a cheque which she had stolen from me. Fortunately, the Bank noticed that it was not my signature and at my instructions declined payment.

20.8.95

Card objecting to housekeeper (unknown to me) taking her parking ticket by the Residence.

September 1995

Two undated letters abusing myself and Maggie 'I want to destroy you'. 'Your career and reputation will soon be in tatters'.

18.9.95

Letter to me abusing Maggie.

19.9.95

I tried to return documents she had sent to me (ie insurance policy) by leaving them at the Concierge Desk. She called there but refused to take them.

21.9.95

Letter abusive of Maggie.

5.10.95

Card – asking me for feelings of remorse.

7.10.95

Letter from Paris, a 'come on' letter. Says that I told her there was no relationship between us in the kindest possible way.

Letter.

2.11.95

Post card from Paris.

21.11.96

Card.

December 95

Abusive note after Maggie and I had been on holiday together.

December 95

She called at the weekend.

When not admitted, she threw a tantrum, very loud, on the street outside for about an hour. She finally put a foot in the door and gained entry. She refused to leave before the Police were called. She then left at their request.

CHRONOLOGY

2.2.96

At Waitangi Day Ceremony she kicked me in the shin as I entered the Church. At the function she menaced Maggie.

2.2.96

That evening there was a note left at the door 'I don't believe what you did today in taking Maggie to the service and flaunting that woman'. 'She is a bit of a tart'. Maggie's car was obviously vandalised by scratches on the body and bonnet. Reported to the Police. Note that we then realized that the earlier vandalism to my car (twice) and to Maggie's car (once) was also caused by her.

26.2.96

Telephone call (tc) at office asking for a meeting. Her complaint is that I will not respond to her. This was followed by a note saying she wanted her fare home.

1.3.96

More scratches to Maggie's car. They were serious scratches. Reported to Police.

March 96

Two letters outlining what she wants from me, and outlining arrangements to meet.

6.3.96

I contacted her by phone to complain about vandalism to Maggie's car. She denied it and said she wanted money for a trip home in return for not hassling me.

11.3.96

Accosted Maggie and myself outside Westminster Abbey on Commonwealth Day. Blocked our way 3 or 4 times until we went the other way. Hissed at Maggie and called her 'bitch'.

11.3.96

That evening we found papers attached to the door of the Residence. She left copies of stolen medical papers at the door. Separate copies were also found by the housekeeper. She wrote on back that copies had been faxed to people on the list, but no list was attached.

17.3.96

She turned up at Ansty and was seen by Maggie's son, was driving a grey Peugeot 406.

18.3.96

She accosted me at a London Connections meeting, refused to let me leave by preventing me from shutting the door. I had to ask the driver to drive off.

19.3.96

Left copies of stolen correspondence at the Residence. Letter from legal client. Makes threat that she is going to use it against me.

20.3.96

Long letter. Admits she behaved badly. She still has 'passionate attraction' for me.

22.3.96

Telephone call (tc) rang. Maggie said who is calling. She replied 'none of your business bitch'.

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24.3.96

Tc to Maggie at her home on a Sunday – caller hung up. Call went back to an answerphone with a NZ accent.

27.3.96

Discussions with Police.

27.3.96

Long letter abusive of Maggie, 'any other woman she could stand'. 'I knew following you would annoy you'. 'If you want me to stop, all you have to do is talk to me'.

28.3.96

She followed Maggie and me by car from the High Commission to Stoke on Trent. The car was a Renault dark blue.

29.3.96

Letter wanting me to renew contact.

29.3.96

00.26 am call – silent, traffic noises in background, from 0171 351 2370 a call box in Manresa Road. She called again from 0171 352 1280 another call box in Manresa Road. Saw her drive past the Residence shortly after in same dark blue car she had followed us to Stoke.

30.3.96

TC at 0100am. Phone left off the hook for some time. Phone booth 0181 780 2119. It seems she was on her way home.

1.4.96

Tc at 11.15pm from call box in Manresa Road.

2.4.96

I signed BT tracing authority.

4.4.96

Tc 22.22 pm, silent call, number barred.

23.4.96

Letters re return of insurance policy in respect of which she had previously refused to accept delivery.

26.4.96

Tc 1.40 am call from Manresa Road payphone.

May 96

Letter. Asks for return of things she wouldn't collect.

Acknowledges return of insurance policy.

24.5.96

Tc 10.18pm from callbox 0170 352 1280. Phone left off hook. Then followed a series of nuisance calls 22.03pm from 0171 352 1280; 23.08 from 0171 352 3651; 23.10 from 0171 351 4320 to which there was no answer. She then called to the Residence and rang the doorbell for about 15 minutes until the Police arrived. She left just before.

25.5.96

Tc at 05.54am and 05.06 am from 0171 584 1212 and 352 1627. Silent.

CHRONOLOGY

- 27.5.96
Tc from 0182 878 217 at 1852 pm, a payphone I think.
- 29.5.96
Tc payphone 0181 number. Silent call. 23.51 pm.
- 29.5.96
Letter asking for her things. Abusive of Maggie. Said that Maggie was sponging on the NZ taxpayer.
- 30.5.96
After a speech which I had given at the Penthouse, she accosted me in the foyer and said she would create a scene if I didn't see her. I explained to her in my office that things must stop. She said she would if I would speak to her if we met. I reluctantly agreed. I said she could pick her things up at any time.
- 31.5.96
I rang her and offered to bring around her things left at the Residence, she refused saying she was in no hurry.
- 31.5.96
Card on her birthday saying that I had already betrayed her before the previous birthday.
- 4.6.96
Letter asking me to accompany her to Wimbledon. I sent the ticket back to her. It became clear that talking to her actually meant going out with her and inviting her to functions.
- 5.6.96
Tc 9.07 abusive of Maggie, query whether pm or am.
- 6.6.96
Two tc's 10.32pm and 10.37pm, silent. Call box I think.
- 7.6.96
She finally called and picked up things which she had previously refused to collect. She seemed satisfied that she had got everything.
- June 96
Letter remonstrating with me for refusing to take her to Wimbledon' I still love you'.
- 8.6.96
Letter asking me to come to her home.
- 9.6.06
Tc at 7.33 pm. Silent call.
- 10.6.96
Tc at 23.45. She spoke for the first time and said that she couldn't help herself and asked for my assistance. I said that she was not doing herself any good by continuing.
- 10.6.96
I saw her lurking around the Residence.
- 10.6.96
Letter wanting me to take her to Ascot. If I do she will help me. If I do not the status quo applies.

PURSUIT and PREVENTION

11.6.96

Tc 9.15 am at office, wants me to help her stop. I told her again that the harassment must stop.

June 96

Letter saying Ascot my last chance and that she will not be responsible for her actions. Maggie stole me from her and she will not leave her in peace.

June 96

Card saying she could be useful to me.

14.6.96

She called and tried to get into the Residence on the pretext that she had left her glasses there. She confronted both myself and Maggie in an hysterical way. She only left on threat of the Police being called. The visit lasted approx 1 hour. She was warned again that the behavior must stop.

15.5.96

Note – 'Whatever you do does not matter to me'.

19.6.96

Her car blue was parked outside Chelsea all day until about 11.30pm. She was seen by me.

19.6.96

Letter to Maggie, critical of me.

June 96

Letter, critical of Maggie.

June 96

Letter, abusive of Maggie. 'How can she represent New Zealand?' Critical of me 'Flaunting my floozie at official functions'.

24.6.96

Note and attachment.

24.6.96

Letter – 'you haven't shared this life with me'.

3.7.96

Letter – threat about my aspirations for future office.

5.7.96

At NZ Society function she made uncomplimentary remarks to me about Maggie – left on her parked car. Also alleges, wrongly, that Maggie is being kept by the New Zealand taxpayer.

6.7.96

Letter abusing Maggie.

8.7.96

Accosted us while walking in Chelsea Square Park. She was lurking hidden by the bushes watching the Residence. She pushed Maggie and abused us. Later she left letter threatening to drag me with her to jail.

8.7.96

Envelope left on Maggie's car – blank paper inside.

9.7.96

Tc Residence at 7.50am, payphone. Silent.

10.7.96

Letter to Maggie – abusive letter left on her car.

11.7.96

Tc call at c2.30am. Also one at 6.50am. Both silent.

12.7.96

Tc 7.48am, silent call.

CHRONOLOGY

- 19.7.96
Letter outlining intent to embarrass me and not let up.
- 20.7.96
Tc 10.02pm withheld number.
Silent call.
- 20.7.96
Left envelope on Maggie's car, no message.
- 22.7.96
Accosted Maggie at London Connections function, told Maggie to 'piss off' and pinched her. She caused a scene in front of a number of people. Then she bailed me up and berated me. Prevented us from leaving without confrontation. Told her yet again that the behaviour must stop. She said she was determined to keep it up and to ruin me.
- 22.7.96
Tc 4.46 am silent withheld number.
- 24.7.96
Letter saying we are living together. 'You would never let us try'.
- 24.7.96
Tc 6.50 am from payphone, silent early morning call.
- 25.7.96
Tc 5.46 am. Caller withheld number. Silent early morning call.
- 26.7.96
Letter. Implied threat.
- 27.7.96
Tc payphone – she said 'having a nice weekend together'. To let me know she had been watching the Residence.
- 1.8.96
Letter 'I do wish we could resolve our differences'.
- 2.8.96
Letter 'it must be boring living with one person'. Renegs on what she said in previous letter.
- 4.8.96
Tc from payphone 22.39pm – silent call.
- 5.8.96
Telephone call 4.16 am – silent call. Number withheld. Seems now to becoming a pattern to wake me up in the middle of the night.
- 6.8.96
Telephone call 9.14 am – to Maggie at Residence – from payphone 0171 351 2370. Silent call.
- 7.8.96
Abusive letter indicating that she knows everything which is happening. Makes vague requests yet again.
- 7.8.96
Telephone call at 4.21am. Caller withheld number. Silent call. Phone seemed to be left of the hook for a time.
- 10.8.96
Tc no answer. Number withheld. At 10.24am.

PURSUIT and PREVENTION

11.8.96

At Newmarket Racecourse on NZ Day, she accosted us 5 times when others were not with us, comments were abusive.

12.8.96

Tc 8.27am from payphone 0171 244 7979. No answer.

13.8.96

She went again to Ansty Wilts, a two-hour journey, to leave a note on my car there. The note implied she was staying nearby.

14.8.96

Tc (3) to Maggie's answerphone, gist was that she was at Milton Abbas watching us.

15.8.96

Sent card 'I cannot stop loving you'.

28.8.96

Maggie had been overseas from 17th to 27th. She rang at 7.35 am on the 28th and said 'the old girl's back'. She had obviously seen Maggie's car parked outside. It had not been there while Maggie was away. She rang again at 7.44am and made obscene comments when I answered, from 0171 352 4095 a payphone.

28.8.96

Tc to Maggie at 8.59am from payphone 0171 351 4337. Abusive call. Another at 9.30 am from payphone 0171 373 7638.

28.8.96

Fax requesting P45 sent to Chelsea Square. She continues to maintain contact by giving my address.

28.8.96

Note left on Maggie's car, derogatory.

28.8.96

Series of telephone calls at 18.42, 21.48, 21.49 and 22.16 – all abusive. Caller withheld number.

1.9.96

Left copies of medical records from me on Maggie's parked car at Residence.

2.9.96

Silent call at 5.45 am. Caller withheld number. My car (NZ1) had flat tyre after being parked outside Residence. No proof to connect it with her but same has happened to staff on three occasions.

4.9.96

Note left on Maggie's car 'There will always be three in this relationship'. Copy of my medical records left with housekeeper through kitchen window.

5.9.96

Tc's from payphones 0171 736 1718 (22.47pm), 0171 244 8333 (22.57 pm), 0171 736 1718 (at 23.22pm) and finally from her residence (number withheld) at 23.32pm. The calls were obscene and abusive of Maggie. The calls started shortly after arrival of Maggie at the residence (some 15 minutes) for the first time that week. I left the phone off the hook for the evening so there were no further calls.

CHRONOLOGY

6.9.96

Newspaper again missing. She called Maggie at 9.19am from 0171 928 9292 from St Thomas's Hospital. Obscenities plus allegations that I am consorting with other women.

6.9.96

Was seen by staff around Residence during the day. She disrupted dinner at the Residence by constant calling on the telephone and uprooted plants planted in the front of the house, leaving them in a two feet high pile across the front door to obstruct guests egress. After dinner there was tc at 23.17 pm, caller withheld number, silent call.

7.9.96

Tc's at 8.50, 10.07, 10.11 and 10.2 am. Some silent caller withheld. Some from her 'Hullo bitch. Had a good night did you?' Also TC that evening at 23.03 pm from payphone 0171 351 4320.

8.9.96

Tc at 3.56am. Caller withheld number, silent call. Also same again at 8.16am.

9.9.96

She repeatedly called the Residence during the day, some from St Thomas's Hospital, some from payphones, and some from caller withheld numbers, some 20 calls in all. She berated my daughter when she answered the phone.

10.9.96

Persistent phone calls to the Residence during the day. Left abusive note on Maggie's car.

11.9.96

Persistent calls to the Residence. When Maggie took the phone off the hook, she continued to ring the domestic number, and that finally also had to be taken off the hook.

12.9.96

Calls from payphones mostly, at 17.44, 21.44 (3), 22.43, 22.49, 23.13, 23.22, 23.40, 23.42. She also thumped on the windows of the residence for some 5 minutes at 22,000 pm. She shouted obscenities at the house. She upended two rubbish bags in the front doorway. Police were called.

12.9.96

Note left on Maggie's car 'Back again bitch'.

13.9.96

Tc's 5.56, 6.08, 6.24, 6.50, 7.06, 7.20, 7.27 am. Did not speak. Phone rung for a short period only.

15.9.96

Received letter saying she had applied for details of a job for me without my knowledge.

16.9.96

Private phone number changed at midday.

PURSUIT and PREVENTION

16.9.96

She banged on Study windows at 23.15pm, ran away when challenged, repeated the banging later, and departed only on threat to call the Police.

17.9.96

Left letter at Residence 'Changing the phone makes no difference. Don't you understand I still love you'.

17.9.96

She caused a major disturbance by screaming etc outside the Residence, ringing the doorbell repeatedly and vanishing, Police were called twice. She broke window and was taken to the Chelsea Police Station for a caution.

18.9.96

Some 20 or 30 cards advertising prostitute services stuck on front steps and front verandah. Some dozen calls were made during the day to the domestic number at the Residence. She was seen outside the Residence at about 8pm, although no damage seems to have been done.

SECOND LIST

26.9.96

Prostitute cards over Maggie's car. Further cards through the windows of the Residence.

30.9.96

She follows Maggie's car when she went out with friends, very closely and threateningly.

2.10.96

Banged on Study windows twice at 6.30pm and 9.15 pm. Waved to us when we came out.

5.10.96

Message on ansaphone. Police thought that I was at fault and my complaint was a joke.

12.10.96

Message on Maggie's ansaphone 'You will be home quickly. Your time here will be short'.

16.10.96

Arrest and formal warning given by Police.

17.10.96

Cooking oil poured on front steps of residence.

18.10.96

Letter arrives – posted 14.10.96 – 'your star is fading fast'.

22.10.96

Abusive card saying status quo will continue.

10.11.96

Card, further stolen papers returned.

CHRONOLOGY

- 10.11.96
Call from New Zealand on Maggie's ansaphone, my reputation is ruined because of Maggie.
- 21.11.96
Delivery card for her, addressed to Residence.
- 21.11.96
She arrives back in London about this date.
- 24.11.96
Card from China from her.
- 26.11.96
Prostitute cards left at door of the Residence, three times on one evening.
- 28.11.96
Saw DS Ball at Kensington to update.
- 30.11.96
At reception for NZ Barbarians, she harangued me on two occasions 'I must contact her about our relationship. The harassment will not stop until I did'.
- 1.12.96
Prostitute cards left on Maggie's car between 5-7pm.
- 7.12.96
She left obscene message on Maggie's ansaphone disguising her voice.
- 8.12.96
Letter to Residence addressed to me, unopened.
- 8.12.97
She screams into Maggie's ansaphone and bangs with receiver.
- 10.12.96
Prostitute cards left three times in one evening at Residence front door at 5pm (removed) at 12.30am (removed) and 1.05 am. Maggie saw her place the cards on the door at 1.05am, a quick movement in and out.
- 11.12.96
Phone calls to domestic number - no response when phone picked up.
- 12.12.96
Prostitute cards thrust through Garage door where Maggie's car was parked. She followed Maggie to the Hurlingham Club, honked and leered at her there.
- 13.12.96
Screams, banging of receiver, obscene ranting on Maggie's ansaphone, nearly a full tape used up.
- 16.12.96
Christmas card 'Much love from ('Catherine')'.
- 17.12.96
Prostitute cards on from door of Residence at 7.15pm.

PURSUIT and PREVENTION

THIRD LIST (1997)

- 23.12.96
Calls at night to Maggie's phone. Maggie had to change phone number.
- 4-19.1.97
12 letters received by me while away, not read.
- 20.1.97
Maggie received 8 page letter on St Thomas letterhead. Wants to have a talk with her, and abuse.
- 1.2.97
She takes away shrubs from the front of the Residence. Places motor oil on the steps (twice). Police called to take evidence of her presence there. She calls again late at night to place notices.
- 4.2.97
Further notices left.
- 5.2.97
She kicks me at Bow Group function at Christies and abuses Maggie.
- 6.2.97
Similar threatening behaviour to us at Girdler's Hall.
- 7.2.97
Ditto at NZ Society Dinner at the Savoy.
- 8.2.97
Letter received – not read.
- 10.2.97
NZPA calls about events on 1.2.97 which had been reported to it.
- 11.2.97
Letter received, not read.
- 12.2.97
Made aware of a letter addressed to herself care of me. It was opened by (housekeeper) and was blank.
- 12.2.97
At 12.50am threw stone against window. Drove car past Residence several times and watched Residence. Left prostitute cards around the drive and in front of the house.
- 13.2.97
Letter received re Maggie.
- 13.2.97
Notices and prostitute cards placed conspicuously on front of Residence.
- 15.2.97
She attacked Maggie outside Residence crossing the road to do so. She was apprehended by the Police called. A report made.
- 16.2.97
She arrived at Ansty and walked around public way next to Maggie's house. She was escorted to her car by Maggie's son. He told her that she had been under camera surveillance and that her activities were well known.
- 17.2.97
Letter arrives at Residence, unread.
- 18.2.97
Maggie receives letter addressed to 'Mrs M Postlethwaite the whore'.

CHRONOLOGY

21.2.97

A new notice attached to the front door of the Residence which includes my name and address as Dishonourable and a Liar and a Cheat.

24.2.97

Same notice appended to door at 9 pm.

27.2.97

Ditto.

27.2.97

Ditto.

3.3.97

Prostitute cards found on garage at Residence.

4.3.97

Early morning call at 5.40 am. She had found the private line. At 8.30am a further call 'Hullo Whore' to Maggie.

4.3.97

Cards, notices all over Residence front and back, including some on railings over the road. There was a new notice 'the whore of Chelsea Square' posted.

5.3.97

Letter received by me 'I worship you etc. We have unfinished business'.

5.3.97

Emptied pot of white paint on footpath outside residence at c10.30 pm during an official dinner. Cards and papers left with paint. She left the paint tin.

6.3.97

Letter to Maggie c/o Residence – not read.

10.3.97

'The whorehouse' cards picked up from Chelsea Square.

11.3.97

Two letters arrive. The whorehouse cards on the pavement outside Residence. Nuisance calls to domestic number.

12.3.97

Notices against me, the usual ones, left at Information Point and the Arcade at NZ House. On three occasions during the day little notes saying 'The Whorehouse. Madam Maggie Postlethwaite' left in various spots outside Residence. The words 'whore' sprayed in white paint on the road outside the Residence.

13.3.97

Notice again left at Information Point, NZ House. Words 'The whore Postlethwaite' in red spray paint on the road by the Residence Garage.



Towards Understanding¹

Speaking generally, and not to any particular case, there are still elusive aspects to be grappled with. Stalking in its modern sense is a course of conduct involving a pattern of unwanted contact and intrusions upon another which threaten that person's well-being or safety. Cumulatively it causes a nuisance to or harassment of the target.¹

In most stalking, but by no means all, there is a relationship or an intended relationship which the stalker wishes to continue or pursue in the belief or hope that it is or will be returned, an intimacy which the stalker thinks exists or is supposed to be.² In many cases there has been some personal contact between stalker and target before.

Any person whom the stalker sees as an obstacle to such purpose, a new love interest of the target in substitution for example, is also likely to be stalked, perhaps even more so. To a stalker the obstacle is there to be overcome. Stalkers can hate the obstacle with a passion which is otherwise inexplicable.

Victims of stalking come to feel that something is wrong, that there is interference with their activities and/or well-being. Victims will often alter their behaviour to avoid the

stalking, worry as to what is coming next and when it will stop. Stalking is likely to begin with psychological stress but may develop into fear for the safety of property or person.

Since the legislation outlawing stalking in the 1990's, there is advice and assistance if stalking occurs, providing information and comfort for the victims. It enables them to know that they are not alone and not at fault and may help in formulating a course of action of avoidance. Nevertheless, in a recent survey, some half of the targets reported being told that they were being paranoid or over reacting when confiding stalking to friends and colleagues. Some said that the targets were lucky to receive such attention. Some thought that stalking was confined to people who were otherwise deranged. To others, stalking applied to sought-after celebrities only. Accordingly, there is still some way to go in understanding stalking and how to deal with issues arising.

Some statistics

In the 1990's, knowledge of stalking was largely in the hands of psychologists and psychiatrists, with the rest of the community slowly becoming aware, mostly through high profile cases of celebrities being stalked. Much of the learning and practice was in America, although also in its infancy. Some thirty-five years on and with legislative intervention, many more cases have come to notice. As a result, knowledge of stalking has grown and there is now a clearer profile.³ The figures from Britain below are indicative only.

There, in one survey, 21.5% of women and 9.8% of men over 16 years had been stalked at some point of their life. Stalkers were approximately 70% male and 30% female and, of the victims, 80% were female and 20% male. Women aged between 16 and 25 years are more likely to be victims of stalking than other categories. Hence women may be more

likely to relate to stalking from experience.

Most stalking (approximately 80%) is by intimates or ex intimates, with acquaintances, work colleagues, ex colleagues and neighbours making up most of the balance. The same percentage of victims know their stalker in some capacity, the balance are strangers. The risk of being stalked is highest among individuals who are divorced or separated, possibly they are thought to be more available or more vulnerable.

Of stalking behaviours, phone calls, texting, emails, following, visiting home and work and sending gifts are the most likely, with intrusions, assaults, sending and publishing offensive material, break-ins, vandalism also featuring. There are probably few human actions which might not be called in aid by stalkers. One of the more unusual is breaking and entering the target's premises simply to move furniture around, just to remind the target of the continuing attentions. In stalking, there is an element of advertising, by stalkers bringing themselves to the notice of the targets.

Over half of victims say that the contact is at least one unwanted communication per week, some daily. Most victims are stalked for 1–5 years, 11% say that it was for at least 5 years, but there are many examples of longer and of more than 20 years. Characteristically, victims do not tend to report stalking until the 100th incident, very late in the piece. Stalking is not only chronic, there can be transference to other victims.

Some 50% of those stalked have curtailed or altered their lifestyle or work or residence as a result of stalking, but many do not have that luxury and cannot easily avoid the stalker. It can continue in spite of victims shifting elsewhere and to other countries, and can continue in spite of arrests, Police warnings, prosecution, Court orders and even jail. It can be serial – targeting successive victims. Almost one third of stalkers have stalked before.

When the Bill introducing The Protection from Harassment

Act 1997 (UK) was presented, it was expected to result in about 200 prosecutions per year. In fact, in 1998 there were nearly six thousand. Many targets do not come forward because they cannot explain it or fear that others will think it is their fault – stalking is often below the public surface. Agencies responsible for monitoring stalking tend to say that their figures may be conservative. The chances of being stalked may be considerably higher than thought.

Relevant questions are: Who is likely to be a stalker? Who is likely to be stalked? How do you identify and prevent stalking? What is the impact upon victims? When and how should you act? If you do act, what of retaliation by the stalker? Will Court intervention (such as a restraining order) be effective?⁴

Who is likely to be a stalker?

Stalking is commonly, but not exclusively, based upon rejection (say from a crush, a date or a relationship).⁵ Many people suffer hurt on being rejected and master it, but others experience it strongly. Stalkers may become preoccupied with the hurt or of rectifying the hurt.

People with low self-esteem or those who suffer chronic anxiety may be prone to stalking. They may not have sufficient confidence in themselves to be positive, to help themselves and to reposition their objectives upon being rejected. The absence of close friends and family to whom a person can turn to for support may contribute.

But it also applies to people of high self-esteem, stalking may also be the product of or influenced by resentment, a feeling of having lost status, of having been humiliated within their own network or of having been badly or unfairly treated. It may be in frustration that they or their aspirations are not sufficiently recognised by their peers. There may have been

a series of disappointments, thereby heightening feelings of inadequacy and victimhood.

Stalkers may be under-engaged and under-fulfilled. They may seek to fill the void and to remedy an unsatisfactory life by transfer, entering the identity of their target.

There may be a strong element of entitlement, a feeling that their objectives are their due, rightfully theirs and are supposed to be. If they fail to achieve their objective, they may perceive themselves as the victims and seek to punish in return.

Anyone can be a stalker – even strangers. Stalkers may be middle class, seemingly, more intelligent and more competent than the norm, capable of a predetermined plan of action, cool and calculating in intent. The conduct is likely to be premeditated and systematic, carried out with thought, cunning and cleverness, designed to have maximum impact upon the victims. Explanations are lucid and logical. Not all stalkers are socially inept.

Those who know the stalker (friends and relatives) are characteristically incredulous that the person they know could stalk, so well disguised are the activities. Stalkers may be psychotic or may be non-psychotic. It is difficult, if not impossible, to tell who will stalk and when. If there are signs, they are capable of other explanations, or are mild, or are hidden, becoming apparent only in future.

Many stalkers are ex-partners who have been rejected but there seems no magic formula as to who is likely to stalk. The examples cited are indicators only but they may not be apparent at the outset. Thus, there is usually nothing specific or definitive so as to be able to say in advance that a person is likely to stalk or to be a poor risk in a break up. And if there is, it may be well masked.

Who is likely to be stalked?

As to who is likely to be stalked, a thread is that the stalker looks up to or admires the target in an exaggerated way. Celebrities, media presenters and people in public life can be stalker-prone. There are also many cases of attractive women having stalkers. People stalked have something that the stalker admires, looks up to and wants. It could be for a relationship or for the lifestyle of the target or the glamour of the target's life. Power and prestige are important indicators, but the majority of those stalked are not celebrities or in public life.

People who are kindly, or those who find it difficult to say no, can also unwittingly provide a stalker with a sign, and the stalker takes advantage.

Very often those stalked are professionals responsible for the care of others or their property or are involved in giving advice (health care providers, doctors, psychiatrists, lawyers, teachers, clergy, politicians for example). This is because they are looked up to, their advice much valued and they may appear to the stalker to have shown special consideration to him or her (say to their patient, client, student or flock) over and above the norm.

Far from being blamed for the stalker's unwanted attentions, the only fault of the target is that they have something which the stalker admires or wants. There is no need for targets to feel guilt, the problem is in the mind and person of the stalker.

Identifying stalking

Most targets are not expecting to be stalked. They are not experts in psychology. They are not looking for problems. A relationship is one of trust and the guard may be down. Normal defences of guile, instinct and wit may be missing. They may be young or have had no knowledge or experience of stalking

before. The potential stalker is likely to be complimentary, friendly, helpful and supportive, and also to appear very normal and even charming, thereby disguising intention.

Some signs may be: someone who is too intense about a relationship. They may talk about marriage too early, for example, or they may be overly friendly or overly flattering to the target: 'You are my idol. I would do anything for you'. The receipt of many unsolicited gifts, books, chocolates, clothes etc out of the blue is another. Often a stalker will prematurely create a presumed partnership say by using 'we' in conjunction with the target or making out that they are a team. They may treat the relationship as the most important thing in their life. They may feel that a relationship is supposed to be. All of these may be signs indicating, not only admiration, but a fear of rejection.

Imbalance of contact is a pointer. There are likely to be repeated excuses to be close to the target. The stalker might devise reasons why they must come back. They may be small requests, apparently reasonable. They may use pity, elicit sympathy and make the target feel guilty if there is no response. Stalkers seem empowered by obtaining a reaction from the target, an indication that he or she notices and cares. Stalkers have then achieved what they wanted, to be in the consciousness of the target, in his or her mind.

Stalkers can appear to enjoy the chase and to relish the hunt, playing a cat and mouse game, in the nature of an exciting 'undercover' operation. They seek information. They plan. They implement. They monitor. They calculate. They seem to take pleasure from being cunning and clandestine, and in dedicating their lives to the pursuit. They rejoice in having a sense of power or control over the target. Even when Police are called, it can add excitement, a new dimension to their lives.

Stalkers may not appear to see things from a perspective

other than their own. Only the ends count. Truth and judgment go by the board. Any means are permissible to achieve the objective, including breaking the law. They seem to react to their own emotions, to what is in their mind. Stalkers are seemingly indifferent to the impact of their actions on their targets or upon others, oblivious to the harm they might cause. The goal is paramount.

Tenaciously, they may not let go. Some say that this may be due to a degree of narcissism believing that they are worthy of the target and that the target should realise this.

Stalkers may endeavour to create a general impression among others that there is a relationship with the target. They may discourage others from the target, especially those they think may be potential competitors. They may use third parties and friends to bring pressure on the target or the obstacle.

A characteristic of stalking is that of attempting to live the target's life and the desire for participation and control over it. It may involve changing an address to be close to the target or attempting to work with him or her. Monitoring activities and taking an unusual interest in the target is another. The stalker may attempt to 'own, watch and control' and may research and spy on those they may think to be of interest to the target. This may be due to a feeling of incompleteness in their own lives, seeking to merge with the identity of another to establish self-worth.

There may be a degree of subterfuge to hide identity, such as disguising a voice and handwriting. Stalkers may wish the target to know that they are there but perhaps are not yet confident or ready to disclose their identity or their overall objective.

Stalkers maybe adept at interpreting innocent actions in order to justify their belief that the victim is really interested in return, eg by interpreting 'body language' or receiving subliminal messages sent by others. They readily rationalise why their

overtures are not returned, for example the existence of a spouse or someone who is preventing or intercepting communications. They engage in creative misconception.

Idolisation is not abnormal and can be aspirational. But, where there is an acute or extraordinary sensitivity to rejection, when the overtures are unsuccessful it may result in attempts to de-idolise, attack and devalue the target. Thus, stalking can swing quickly between love and hate, between reconciliation and revenge, between praise and denigration, particularly when the stalker believes that the stalking is not proceeding as well as expected. Love may be expressed in one letter and hate in the next.

Many activities of a stalker are not abnormal in themselves and part of everyday life, part of a normal overture. Seeking rapport with another is not usually sinister, but it is the overall pattern of conduct amounting to unwanted intrusion which is a key identifier. It shows no sign of abating and it recurs persistently. It is perhaps the extra intensity and effort which sets the potential stalker apart, a single mindedness. They will often spend an inordinate amount of time, persistence, activity and tenacity to obtain their objective.

In fact, many of these indicators are likely not visible to the target, especially at the outset, which makes identification difficult. And they may be well hidden. The stalker knows what they are after, the target may not. There is a need to be aware as far as possible, not only of the good things about a person, but also indicators such as those above.

Having said all this, none of the above traits are necessarily signs of stalking or its likelihood. It may be that the only guide to detect stalking is instinct. There is a need to be mindful of the possibility of hazard. This is assisted by curiosity but not by busy pre-occupation. Intuition is required and this might range from a gut feeling to one of apprehension. The best guide seems to be: Is there a frisson of unease? This has been

described by an expert as 'the gift of fear'.⁶ If this occurs, do not turn a blind eye.

Impact on the Victims

People who have been targets of extensive stalking over a long period tell of the aggravation it can cause and that they wish intently for it to stop. The peace when it falls into remission (such as when the target is on holiday) reinforces the desire that the stalking cease. Stalking interrupts private life, with the inconvenience that entails. Cumulatively, the activities of the stalker become increasingly stressful and worrying. Targets wonder what will happen next. They experience anxiety. They tend to feel helpless, alone and isolated in their own homes or at their work. It can come to consume victims who cannot see an end to it.

A target may have to shift residence, change phone numbers or take care when they are alone. But stalkers may follow and targets may not be able to avoid. Stalkers may enjoy causing havoc to the target who increasingly becomes the victim in the course of a determined pursuit. The stalker is the hunter and the target the hunted.⁷ Ultimately, the target feels trapped. Often there is no place for the target to go or to hide.

The initial effect is often purely psychological, with no physical sign or obvious damage. Notwithstanding, it cannot be assumed that this is harmless. The activities, circumstances and continuation of the stalking may come to cause targets reasonably to worry for their property, their families, their peace of mind.

There are many examples where the stalker succeeds in compromising reputations⁸ or breaking up relationships, thereby injuring others in the process. Further, vocations may be impacted, where stalkers seek to disrupt the workplace or the work of the target. Stalkers may affect income or

employment where it will have the most impact.

Finally, there are the perceptions of the public of the stalking especially when magnified by the media. Because people know so little about stalking, they might automatically think that something must have triggered it, that the target did something wrong.

Intervention and Restraining Orders

Once unease in relation to the stalking develops and a complaint is made to the Police, or someone who is trusted, even then, dealing with the nightmare may not be easy. The Police may tell the stalker that the conduct is to stop and the stalker complies, but when the matter appears to be resolved and the Police no longer involved it may restart. It can become a cat and mouse game, with the stalker revelling in the strategy. The Police may then feel that they have no alternative but to obtain penalties or a restraining order from the Courts.

Intervention using statutory powers (whether by the Police or the Courts) is essential but can appear as an obstacle to the stalker, the intervention now clothed with the authority of the law and the legal system. This can have different results. On the one hand, it can place a seemingly insurmountable barrier between stalker and target so that the stalker desists, there now being serious consequences including imprisonment for an offence or violating a restraining order. On the other, the stalker, being emotionally charged, might be goaded into increasing the level of stalking and become even more of a nuisance or dangerous to victims. In one study, half of those who obtained a restraining order felt that their problems worsened and that it only increased the stalker's resolve and pursuit. Then too, it may have an adverse effect upon potential witnesses who are reluctant to give evidence because they may also be stalked.

It is notoriously difficult to predict when violence will occur and this seems also true in stalking. It does not matter whether or not there have been threats first, there may be violence irrespective. Cases which do proceed to violence or further action are likely to have had some trigger, for example where the stalker feels angry and humiliated by an action taken either by the target or by the obstacle, such as the announcement of an engagement or some success. Violence seems most likely at the stage when the target becomes devalued in the eyes of the stalker.

Thus restraining orders may give the appearance of security, but that is not invariably the reality.⁹ This is not to argue against such orders, but the decision to intervene needs care and consideration.

Retaliation

Importantly, targets should not confront the pursuer, endeavor to rectify the problem or deal with the stalker themselves. They should avoid personal contact with the stalker and not negotiate directly. Further, abuse of the stalker should also be avoided, likewise comment about the stalker to others where it risks being relayed back. If contact is inevitable, always be polite as action by the target against the stalker can cause a reaction.

Retaliation invites retaliation and the stalker is likely to be more cunning, purposeful and effective in return. A target should not become an enemy of the stalker and effectively engage in war, it can result in devaluation of the target in the eyes of the stalker and invite more serious consequences. Stalkers may look for a way in which to punish the target in return.

Some Issues and Initiatives

Since the legislation, which effectively made stalking unlawful, there have been significant advances. Processes to deal with stalking are in place and there are sources of advice and assistance. But there is still much to be understood. It is a field of behavioural science in its infancy.

It is still not clear what causes a person to stalk, whether it is psychological or environmental. It may be a mixture of both, where circumstances trigger a predisposed person. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to know when a person is likely to stalk. There may be indicators but these are likely to be invisible or are well-hidden. It may be necessary to rely upon instinct.

In stalking, the threat (if you do not comply with my requests, I will continue to harass) may not be explicit, but simply implied.¹⁰ The implicit threat and its psychological impact causing stress needs recognition.

In order to establish stalking, there are still many difficult questions. Proof that actions are committed by the stalker and that they result in distress or fear of harm is not always easy. Likewise, proving and assessing psychological harm, and when activities will escalate?¹¹

Once stalking exists, how is the attachment (strong in stalkers to their targets) to be broken? Stalkers will generally not believe that there is a problem and so are unlikely to present themselves for treatment and, in any event, are notoriously unresponsive. Confronting and talking to a stalker, by a target does not work. Stalkers do not think they are in the wrong or doing harm, only pursuing what they believe is rightfully theirs. They may not consider themselves in need of assistance, but instead blessed with a romantic or other interest. It is inappropriate to dismiss stalkers as seemingly non-violent or to treat stalking as trivial and invited.

A breach of a restraining order can, in itself, sound

innocuous. For example, in response to breach of an order that the stalker not communicate with the target, a letter saying, 'I still love you and I have a Christmas present for you', can readily be dismissed as trivial and harmless and not warrant sanction. Consider this plea also: 'Your Honour. I would like the Court to know that my client is resolving the problem, and now realises that he or she was wrong. My client is truly sorry for the difficulties caused to the target and the obstacle, and it will not be repeated'. Though seemingly innocuous and seemingly contrite, any further action can build on the prior history of intrusion and the psychological effects of the stalking.

Further, it should not be assumed that undertakings by stalkers to desist will be honoured. Recognition is needed that stalking is chronic behaviour and more likely than not to continue. Stalking is not reasonable behaviour.

It is the interests of the victims which needs most attention, the safety of the victims being paramount, and this should be a focus. Adequate protection from harm for those affected should be recognized. For example, greater surveillance of stalkers; shelter locations for victims, electronic monitoring of stalkers and enforced segregation may be necessary. Reparations also need to be considered for victims. Nevertheless, where possible victims should take their own steps to protect themselves.

Victims should not endeavour to solve the problems themselves, this being likely only to worsen the stalking. They may now rely upon the legislation and those responsible for its administration. Police, lawyers, Judges, psychologists and mental health professionals for their respective roles are gaining experience as examples accumulate.

Appropriate action requires expertise to help assess cases objectively, carefully and properly. Professionals (such as psychologists or psychiatrists) should be engaged to assist

Judges where appropriate, if necessary taxpayer funded. When appropriate, psychological assessment and treatment might be mandated for the stalker.¹²

Dealing with stalking also requires community awareness. It still needs to be better recognised that targets and obstacles are victims, that they are not at fault and that approaches can be made to the Police without stigma.

Too often stalking is not recognized. For example, persistent attentions which result in injury to an ex-spouse or partner, may simply be described or dismissed as a domestic incident or altercation rather than arising in connection with stalking. Had these been analysed as stalking prior to the event, precautions might have been prudently taken.

Advances there may be, but stalking, due to the increasing means available, is on the rise. It is relentless and not romantic. Recognising its disruption and potential danger, much of the improvement needed is in recognition of the syndrome but, above all, in enforcement.

The idea of persistence against the odds finally resulting in success is ingrained within our culture as a desirable trait and can be aggrandized, promoted in films and elsewhere. There is a need to ensure that stalking (a pattern of conduct so as to cause fear and apprehension) and obsessive behaviour in pursuit of an objective is not confused with this or sanctioned. The public may be titillated by stalking and to be receptive to persistence against odds, yet there is nothing pretty about unwanted persistence to the victims, nor the potential for harm arising to them.¹³

Not all stalking leads to serious consequences. Nevertheless, it may be extremely damaging and worrying to the target or to the obstacle. When and whether the stalking is liable to commence and whether a person is a good risk in a relationship, and, when the stalking is likely to escalate or to become aggressive, nobody really knows.¹⁴



Acknowledgements

I have the greatest admiration for Maggie's fortitude, dignity and demeanour over a long period, throughout the whole of the events recounted here which she could not dignify with a response. Contrary to those who said that the harassment was trivial or ludicrous, Maggie had reason given the extent and nature of the activity to feel threatened. Now seen, it extended far beyond the posting of prostitute allegations and the sending of a malicious letter. Although to some extent this book is an explanation on her behalf, due to the depth of her feelings I am apprehensive that it does not show her perspective sufficiently, nor the extent of her concern, nor the pressures she felt under, described elegantly by her as 'a great sorrow for me'. Had she been involved in this work, which she was not, I feel sure that she would have added to and expressed its events with much greater feeling, detail, depth and strength.

My thanks go to Geoff Walker of Geoff Walker Books in Auckland for his advice on writing generally; to Mary Egan Publishing for its presentation and production; and to a peer review from John Ryan now of Auckland, but who is closely familiar with the background. Nevertheless, the responsibility for the book and its contents is mine alone.

John Collinge

10/5/2024



Endnotes

It Could Happen to You

1 Stalking in the sense that paparazzi 'stalk' to obtain photographs of celebrities may be a cause for distress to the celebrity in question but is not necessarily stalking as used in this book. Stalking as used here exists where the stalker, often for love or search for identity (immersion with the life of another), stalks in the hope that the target may respond positively to that interest.

2 Stalking can be 'highly intrusive and disturbing in nature'. See Susanna Every-Palmer, Justin Barry-Walsh and Michelle Pathe, *Harassment, stalking, threats and attacks targeting New Zealand politicians: A mental health issue*, Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 2015.

3 See *I Know You Really Love Me*, a book by Dr Doreen Orion, Macmillan, New York, 1997.

4 An act, said by Hinckley, to be 'the greatest love token in the history of the world'.

5 This work does not purport to be a treatise on the subject of stalking, that is left for others with appropriate psychology or psychiatry qualifications.

6 The story is told from the perspective of the stalker by selection from a mountain of material in her own words, elaborately supplied in voluminous writing in an articulate way. However, it is told by a target and should be read in that light. Notwithstanding, the book endeavours to state matters accurately and fairly.

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The book also tells of the impact upon the targets. Often much is said on behalf of the perpetrator and not the victims. Inadequacies in dealing with the stalking are recounted as a cautionary tale.

The identity, roles and actions of John and Maggie are central and, to show the nature and impact of stalking in context, cannot be avoided. The stalker's Christian name, name, addresses and photographs have not been used to aid anonymity, in respect for her and to acknowledge the compliment inherent in her expressions of love and esteem. The purpose of this work is to show the nature of stalking in its setting and not the individual.

7 To aid readability, the instances and examples mentioned in this book are a selection only of the communications and activities of the stalker in the same vein. A chronological outline can be obtained from the three lists compiled for disclosure to the Police (see Appendix) but these do not disclose the full extent of the activities or the correspondence.

1 Wedding Feast

1 The preceptory supported the powerful Order in the Crusades to the Holy Land with the purpose of the capture and retention of Jerusalem. It consisted of a group of Knights and clerics under a Commander. It was also used as a halfway house administering to pilgrims between two very important ecclesiastical centres, Salisbury Cathedral and the Abbey of Shaftesbury. The Knights had black robes with a white cross on the left breast and fed the pilgrims with white and black bread and malter or secunda beer until the Order was abolished by Henry VIII.

2 King Alfred is reputed to have hunted and dined at Ansty around 890 AD. Even then Ansty was long established, having long and bowl barrows from the Bronze Age. A Roman road ran along the hills to Salisbury (Old Sarum) and then to London. The name Ansty is Saxon (Anstige meaning 'the way up') and the sheltered village of Ansty nestles in valleys below. Down the way up today are magnificent views of the area stretching to the Salisbury Plain.

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3 In the 1500's the area and buildings came under the control of the Lords Arundell of Wardour close by. They were fiercely Catholic and it became a Catholic enclave, Protestant preachers were discouraged from providing services there by the banging of drums. Tenant farms were established, mills developed fed by the several streams from the Manor and from Ansty Coombe which combine before they feed into the Nadder. Cumulative deaths and death duties around the Second World War forced much of the property in Ansty to be sold to commoners, including Frog Pond Farm.

4 The Maypole, having been taken down by Puritans, was replaced on restoration of the Monarchy. Made of Douglas fir, it is the highest in England.

5 From the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner'.
'Sweeter than the marriage feast
'Tis sweeter far to me
To walk together to the Kirk
With a goodly company'.

6 One of the practical successes of the Oxford Movement was the settlement by the Canterbury Association of Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand in 1850.

7 Frog Pond Farm included a gently concave field known as Gasson Mead. Part of the field is designated, as is the village of Ansty, as a conservation area of significance.

8 From '*Far from the Madding Crowd*', Chapter LVI. Hardy was often cynical about marriage and had drily observed (concerning the marriage of Bathsheba Everdene and Sergeant Troy) that it was one way of getting out of love.

9 It was a custom at one time to invent ecclesiastical history and connections as a means of advancement. University College had been also a little guilty, adept at inventing history to claim that it was the oldest of the Oxford Colleges. This was aided by some creative and rather deft scholarship and depended upon how you classified which was first: the acquisition of property, the creation of a charter or the commencement of teaching.

10 Greyhounds is the Oxford University second rugby XV.

11 John's mother had died and his father with four younger children had nothing to spare for a University education.

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12 During this time, three books were published *The Law of Competition in New Zealand* (Butterworths); teaching and tutorial notes in *Tutorials in Contract* (Law Book Company); and *The Law of Marketing in Australia and New Zealand* (Thesaurus Press). No one gets wealthy writing dry legal texts but the status it would later create was helpful.

13 Eg as Chairman of New Zealand Pelagic Fisheries Limited which pioneered, for New Zealand, fishing for migratory species of tuna in the Economic Sea (ie within the 200 mile zone and elsewhere in the Pacific), and as Chairman of market leader United Distillers (NZ) Limited for which latter association he was later made 'Keeper of the Quaich' at Blair Athol Castle by the Scotch Whisky Association.

14 See 'Keeping the Free Market Fair', Margaret Meyer, *Southern Skies*, 1987.

15 By the Business Editor, *Dominion* newspaper, Richard Braddell.

2 Beginnings

1 'Catherine' is not her real name, and is used here to aid anonymity.

2 There was also a need for sufficient funding (those who asked me to stand did not tell me that the Party was close to Bankruptcy). I endeavoured to modernize the Party, upgrading its polling, market research and targeted campaigning capability, introducing computer technology for the first time and providing the essential building blocks upon which the elections are fought.

There was also a need to upgrade the quality and standard of candidates; to obtain skills and balance in a caucus then dominated by farmers, teachers and lawyers; to identify the skills which could with advantage be added to Caucus; and importantly, to encourage women Members (there being three only National women MP's of forty Members).

The contest for the Presidency had been hard fought and bruising, exacerbated by the internal divisions on many issues. Once elected, it was necessary to deal with the debilitating factional and personal in-fighting which had led to the approach to me. Ultimately, under MMP four separate Parties emerged from the National Party.

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3 London

1 These functions were not commemorative only. For example, an Anzac Day reception produced a visiting Fellowship from New Zealand to Britain and significant multiple donations to New Zealand causes.

2 At Brockenhurst in the New Forest, when inspecting, by walk past, the graves of New Zealanders, I chanced upon the Commonwealth headstone dated 1919 of a close relation on my mother's side of whom I was not aware. This is probably quite common as memories fade.

3 There were concerns in Britain that it had lost goodwill from New Zealand by joining the Common Market in 1972. British politicians well understood that a reliable friend was acting or proposing to act in a rather independent way, with significant implications for itself.

4 New Zealand was considering abolishing the British form of titles and also appeals to the Privy Council in London. Given that New Zealand was a sovereign nation there was no difficulty with this in itself, but it raised the question of whether republicanism was just around the corner and whether

traditional sympathies with Britain were beginning to fade. Many in Britain were asking whether the relationship was changing for the worse and this necessitated response and re-assurance.

5 New Zealand had also recently changed its electoral system to MMP (in effect, adopting the German proportional voting system in contrast to the British, who continue with first past the post). In Britain there was much interest in this development, the Liberal Democratic Party had in 1992 approximately 18% of the vote yet only a few seats, and was seen to be disenfranchised.

6 As a result, I worked on speeches on widespread matters such as the Treaty of Waitangi; the Maori Land Settlements; Anzac; New Zealand's Role in the Commonwealth; the Criteria for Commonwealth Membership; Republicanism in New Zealand; Links between Britain and New Zealand; Asian Pacific relationship; Britain and the Common Market; New Zealand Connections in Britain; Constitutional Issues; New Zealand Politics; MMP; Coalition Government; New Zealand's Reforms (economic, agricultural and public sector); Investing in

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New Zealand; Farming without Subsidies; Captain James Cook; Bishop Selwyn; and many more.

7 'Catherine' had also previously applied for a position for herself at the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand in Wellington when I was Chairman. Later, she recommended me to make application for a position (the Office of Fair Trading in the UK) which would have allowed me to stay in England.

8 I believe of the order of two months.

There was also, at her suggestion, a short visit to the West Country to research my ancestry and to see some of the features.

9 I was not at this time keeping records, so the exact dates of activities around the period are not always known.

10 Again, not her real name but to help protect her identity.

11 However, the occasion later reminded me of another event I could not explain. In New Zealand, in 1993, I had received an anonymous note which had been compiled from cut out letters of the alphabet from a newspaper. It was addressed to me saying that my wife, from whom I was separated, had taken up with a young man and that he

was obtaining and using drugs with money which had obviously come from me. It was signed, again using letters cut out from a newspaper 'Concerned friends of you both'. I immediately consulted my ex, but neither of us could give an explanation as to whom the letter might have come from or of the allegation which was baseless. At the time, I suspected it was something to do with my ex-wife's life not mine. She, for her part, was equally puzzled. I had never thought that the pastiche letter might have come from 'Catherine' (possibly, she may have been under the mistaken impression that my ex was a rival). I had put the letter aside and had thought nothing more of it.

12 I was, however, uneasy as to how 'Catherine' had obtained Hilda's address. Her home in outer London required rather specific directions to find and she was not listed in the telephone directory. The home was heavily gated, hidden by high walls with very large locked doors and, once there, could only be accessed through a gatehouse and a security system. But Hilda's inner London house was close by the Residence and I was accustomed to going there by foot rather than by car. Much later, in retrospect, I felt that 'Catherine'

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might have obtained this address through close surveillance of the Residence and of me.

4 Maggie

1 Also, I had a personal interest in North Cornwall. Two of my great-great-grandparents had emigrated to New Zealand from there. John Hingston Fox, of a well-known Quaker family of Gonvena, Wadebridge had emigrated in the 1860's with his wife Frances to be County Engineer of South Canterbury. Edward Tucker (who started the business which became Tuckers Wool Scourers in Clive, Hawke's Bay) and his wife Jane had emigrated to New Plymouth in 1841 from St Kew and North Hill nearby.

2 Maggie was there as a Trustee of the Queen Elizabeth Children's Hospital. The Hospital had its origins in a sail maker's shed in the Docklands of London and had for long served the seafaring fraternity which inhabited Hackney and surrounds.

3 A collection of Maggie's paintings, poems, short stories, sketches and memorabilia are reproduced in *Maggie, Some Memories*, Thesaurus Press, Auckland, 2019 compiled by me.

4 'Catherine' also asked me for her insurance policy which she had sent previously. I had some time before agreed, at her request, that she could leave it with me 'for safe keeping' (her intention, she said, was to raise money on it at an appropriate time and she wanted my assistance in that). I sent back her insurance policy by post but she returned it, leaving it at the Concierge Desk of the High Commission. She took possession of it much later.

5 A spouse or partner adept at social skills is particularly helpful in relation to the position of High Commissioner. Two can always act more efficiently than one, especially if they are both attuned to the requirements of the occasion and the people involved. However, this was by no means universal, there were in London at the time instances of Ambassadors and High Commissioners who were single or gay, and also those whose spouses remained in the home country.

5 Pursuit and Privacy

1 A list of 'Catherine's' activities from March 1996 to September 1996 was prepared for Police – see Appendix.

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2 This commemorates the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 between British and Maori. The reparation programme had been initiated by the Government while I was President of the Party and, giving the sermon, I said: 'I believe that the compensation proposals are an excellent and brave attempt to recognise the just claims of a minority. It is a striking endeavour to right the wrongs of history, not in their entirety but in substance, so that compensation is awarded, economic development prospered and, above all, wounds are healed and honour and mana restored. We wish the Government well in this process'.

3 'Catherine' variously used the letterhead of St Thomas's Hospital, the House of Representatives of New Zealand and of Chelsea Square. There may be no conclusion to draw from this other than she was using paper most conveniently at hand.

4 By way of further examples, on 5 September 1996, there were calls, at 10.47 pm, 10.57 pm, 11.05 pm, and 11.22 pm from payphones, the final one being 'number withheld'. Similarly, on the 7 September 1996, there were calls at 8.50 pm, 10.07 pm, 10.11 pm, 10.23 pm and 11.23 pm, the

first were silent calls number withheld and the final one from a payphone. On 12 September 1996, there were calls to the Residence during the evening at 5.44 pm, 7.44 pm, 10.43 pm, 10.49 pm, 11.13 pm, 11.22 pm, 11.40 pm and 11.42 pm. There were many more instances.

6 Search and Seizure

1 I later read that women stalkers, often in pursuit of information about the target, are prone to breaking and entering homes.

2 Later, 'Catherine' forwarded to me some papers which were mine. They were a certificate of my credits towards a B Com degree at Auckland University, and an Agreement between me and my ex-wife relating to a matrimonial settlement. I had no idea that 'Catherine' had these, how she obtained them, why she would have them, or even why she sent them back.

7 Retaliation and Escalation

1 During this period 'Catherine' had addressed letters to herself care of the Residence which contained a blank piece of paper. That was a puzzling tactic. Possibly it was just to keep reminding us of her presence or to see whether mail was being onforwarded.

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2 At this time, I was not aware that an intervention of this kind or a Court Order can possibly increase the threat to victims as the stalker reacts against the legal obstruction to his or her objectives.

3 When HM the Queen tours New Zealand, it is customary to visit the High Commission before or after the visit. The evening was a great success, in New Zealand style and informal, which the principal guests seemed to relish. Given the limited seating available in the dining room, there were a dozen invited guests selected from the current leaders of the various organizations in London, usually voluntary, responsible for promoting relations between Britain and New Zealand. The Queen and the Duke stayed on quite late in the evening and far longer than had been anticipated and scheduled. The Queen, not known as a big eater, had two helpings of New Zealand lamb. On the desert menu was printed 'Kiwi Mousse' which the Duke queried. Maggie quickly responded 'The fruit Sir and not the bird'. The Duke laughed loudly and the Queen raised her eyebrows.

4 In the remaining two or three months of my term there was much activity from all quarters.

5 Interspersed with all of this were the usual messages: 'You were once my best friend'. 'You made me totally dependent on you and then you walked away'. 'My tears for you have filled an ocean'. 'My love for you will never change'.

6 My term and residence in the United Kingdom ended 31 March 1997. By convention High Commissioners do not overlap.

8 Perception

1 Because of the contest by some 200 countries for time and access, for efficiency, the custom and practice in Britain is for people talk to others of their own role and rank – politician to politician, First Secretary to First Secretary, and so on. This tends to favour the appointment of non-career diplomats to London, particularly from the political ranks, to talk policy with politicians.

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2 In this, the High Commission was greatly supported and assisted by an expat group Ngati Ranana (tribe of London) and generally.

3 There had been concern for some time of the effectiveness of the Commonwealth as a protector of good governance (ie democracy, human rights and the rule of law) and as a non-confrontational forum to resolve disputes. The task was to assist the vexed question of whether the Commonwealth was unwieldy and was losing its focus, and particularly whether membership should be expanded, contracted or held. Upon due deliberation, the Committee recommended that the Commonwealth retain its identity, cohesion and effectiveness by limiting membership in future to those countries which had significant constitutional links with Britain or (so as to include the controversial acceptance of Mozambique to membership) links to other Commonwealth countries.

Around this time too, much effort of the the Commonwealth had been spent on the activities of Member countries which did not adhere to or align with its fundamental tenets. In

particular, there had been much concern about the conduct of Nigeria, but there were also others. The Committee recommended strengthening its good governance role by requiring applicants to comply with the rule of law, democracy and human rights *prior* to being accepted as members and, of course, subsequently in order to maintain those standards.

4 In Britain, nearly everyone seems to like New Zealand and New Zealanders. In New Zealand itself, the circumstances were not quite the same. Although there are many Anglophiles in New Zealand, there are Anglophobes as well. One can hear in New Zealand that its relationship with Britain, once strong, is not what it was and there is a minority, for whatever purpose or reason, who do not look as kindly upon Britain as people in Britain tend to look on New Zealand. The relationship between New Zealand and Britain is not a mirror image in both countries.

5 There was considerable pre-occupation in Britain (with support from New Zealand) in relation to the genocidal activities in Bosnia. Along with other continuing world tensions, this produced

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a strong emphasis in Britain upon defence including the development and maintenance of its nuclear capability. In this, it was diametrically opposed to the current non-nuclear policy in New Zealand. Prime Minister John Major, very properly, personally acknowledged that each country, remaining friends, had a different priority given their differing circumstances.

6 From New Zealand, the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Criteria for Commonwealth Membership chaired by me was described by the Minister of Foreign Affairs (later himself Secretary-General for the Commonwealth) as producing 'real results' and as 'admirably sensible, concise and clear'. It continues to form the basis of attitudes to membership today.

7 This message needs to be read in the light of a co-incidental relationship. I was Richard's best man at his wedding in Oxford and he at mine.

8 There were also testimonials from New Zealand from the Governor General, the Governor General Designate, the Cabinet

Clerk and the Leader of the Opposition Helen Clark for my 'hospitality and care' and the efforts in making their visits 'such a great success'.

The Canterbury 2000 Project also wrote to me of the special quality of my support in relation to the Commemoration of the Canterbury Association settlement of Christchurch in 1850, that it was 'far beyond what one could, in normal circumstances, hope for'.

9 The Court

1 Maggie had recently purchased 'Frog Pond Farm' which was also, like 'The Hundred' situated in Ansty Coombe, Ansty, Wiltshire.

2 It can be difficult to prove the identity of the stalker who is placing the offensive material or responsible for the events. Victims might attempt to solve the difficulty of obtaining evidence by engaging private detectives. But this is costly and only a few can afford it.

3 I had not had 'Catherine' as my consort (but as a friend). In fact, Maggie had not replaced her in all senses.

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4 The errors (particularly that our relationship lasted five years; the implication that I may have had a relationship with 'Catherine' while I was still married; are simply not correct.

5 'Catherine' did attend a function in my company, at Newmarket and the Savoy. For Newmarket she acknowledged her request: 'I know that I put pressure on you to take me and I really enjoyed myself'. For a function at the Savoy, it was again, at her request, to enable and allow her entry into the function.

6 There is a reference by 'Catherine' in the 8 page letter to a harbour view from a spa bath, in fact, the Residence, there is no spa bath, there is no harbour view, there is no harbour view from the spa bath. It has been confused with my apartment in Auckland.

7 The 'eight-page letter' was written more than two years after the alleged sex on the dining table could possibly have occurred. In 'Catherine's' extensive correspondence, there is no other mention of it.

8 As Maggie herself wrote 'The reality is nobody could do anything on it apart from lay a fairly sparse table' (*Sunday News*,

29 June, 1997, page 2). The table had long been scheduled by the Ministry to be replaced as the panels did not fit together.

9 The advice to 'Catherine' to 'forget him' could not be faulted, as was the Magistrate's comment on jealousy. However, the statement by the Magistrate: 'I will say nothing about the High Commissioner' and accepting that 'Catherine' had suffered enough, can be taken as implying that there was fault on my part. For a judicial officer to make an implication without complying with natural justice (the right of someone who is the subject to have the opportunity to respond) is in error.

10 The Media

1 The *NZ Herald* promised that it had attached to the library file a note stating that 'should any future reference be made to 'Catherine' or her allegation, the story should note that those allegations have been vigorously denied by yourself'. It had to apologise later and when it was not updated to electronic format. It then confirmed that 'You can be assured our readers will indeed be offered the 'fuller explanation' of the issues if the story resurfaces'. That did not happen either when it resurfaced.

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2 At no time did I ever have a relationship with, or courted, two women at once.

3 In a letter to a sister discovered after her death, soon after meeting me Maggie wrote: 'He's a dear but he is not Rafe Fiennes'. Rafe (now M in the Bond movies) was a friend of hers.

4 Erotomania is a psychologist's term, an excessive sexual desire or delusion in which a person believes that another is in love with them and who communicates this by special signals. Although known from antiquity, it is sometimes called de Clerambault's Syndrome because he published a paper in 1921 on such a case. Similar is obsessional love, where the stalker knows that the love is not returned, eg where the target is a complete stranger such as a film star or celebrity. In these cases, stalkers appear to feel safer by attaching themselves to an identity, the pursuit of unrequited love can be a safe haven. Where there are other mental or personality disorders stalking may be heightened, but stalkers may not be so disturbed.

5 A Labour Member, Hon Jonathan Hunt (later also High Commissioner to London) was quoted as saying that cases of serious pestering, on the scale which I received, were rare.

6 The Leveson Inquiry in Britain relating to press power recommended an independent audit of voluntary regulation as a protection to the public and its people: 'We believe that a free press is a cornerstone of democracy. It should be fearless in exposing corruption, holding the powerful to account and championing the powerless. It has nothing to lose, and can only be enhanced, by acknowledging unethical practice in its midst and acting firmly to ensure it is not repeated'.

7 It is not within the scope of this work to deal with the difficulties of obtaining a remedy in relation to statements in the media. At law the principle avenue is defamation – that false and defamatory material might result in pecuniary penalty. However, even when the onus is on the publisher to establish truth or fair comment, the legal remedy can be expensive, delayed, time consuming and ineffective.

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11 Legislation

1 The Court hearing was 16 June 1997 and the date of enactment was 25th June 1997. Stalking was first criminalised in California in 1990. In addition to Britain, there is now similar legislation in Australia, Canada, Ireland and other countries.

2 This brief outline does not do justice to the severity of the stalking which Evonne suffered – more fully outlined by Dr Orion in *I Know You Really Love Me* (supra) at pages 174–179.

3 S 2A of the UK Act extended this in 25 November 2012 adding a more specific definition of stalking. The following were described as non-exclusive examples of stalking: following, contacting by any means, publishing a statement or material, monitoring, loitering, watching or spying and loitering with intent to do so.

4 Establishing distress or fear for safety depends upon the nature of the stalking and the circumstances, for example, the place of stalking may be a home, it may be late at night, the home may be remote, the target may be alone, the safety or well-being of others may be involved.

5 Instead, in the first breakup, ‘Catherine’ said it was necessary to help her through that period. Bearing no ill will, I helped her which meant maintaining contact. In retrospect, had I understood, I should have pursued a clean break in spite of her persistence and upset, but that might have appeared unkind. When she followed me to England, I had tried to assist all other friends who came. She would properly have been aggrieved had I not shown similar consideration for her. But it may have been wiser not to have done so. After her arrival in London, it was clearly a mistake for me to renew intimacy after her persistent efforts at contact. The renewal appeared to re-inforce her sense of entitlement. After her attacks on Hilda, though reticent to have contact, it was hard to avoid her, I was, as she said, ‘trapped’. She was determined to be around the High Commission and had given an abject apology and undertaking not to repeat the conduct. But for her it was a way of maintaining contact and I should have continued my resolve to avoid her, even in the face of threats. After I had met Maggie and was avoiding contact, my meeting ‘Catherine’ to endeavour

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to bring the harassment to an end was also a mistake, she knew that her persistence was paying off. It would rebound later as she used it in Court against me, that it was I who was approaching her while in a relationship with Maggie. However, the price for stopping the harassment was that she wanted me to escort her to events, to create the appearance of a relationship and to spoil my relationship with Maggie, a price too high and not possible to pay. Now, since the legislation, the Police can instead clearly intervene on behalf of the target.

6 Of course, if action against the stalker is premature there is a risk that intervention may result in the perpetrator being let off with a warning, being seen as a minor irritation with the target over-reacting. A response to a claim of stalking might be like this: 'I simply wanted to have a conversation with the target. I only wanted to talk. My motives were purely out of respect and admiration, no more. I am sure that the matter can be resolved amicably and that we can be friends and there will be no bother'. A slap on the wrist may be vindication for the stalker and it may encourage renewal of efforts.

7 This brief summary by way of outline is not an exposition of the law relating to stalking and details may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

8 Restraining orders generally are not a rarity. In one New Zealand report, between 2006 and 2010 when the current penalty for breach was up to two years in prison or a \$5,000 fine, there were more than 10,000 people charged with 21,049 incidents of breaching protection orders. Of these, 6,361 offenders were convicted of over 10,000 proven breaches. Subsequently, 400 new protection orders were granted between 2007 and 2011. From *Herald on Sunday*, 11 March 2001.

9 Note that in intervening years, attitudes against stalking, appreciating the trauma to victims, have hardened.

12 Revival and Respite

1 McLoughlin said that: 'this was an initiative of the Labour Government of the time (Richard Prebble was Minister of Energy). Jim Bolger's National Party defeated Labour in the General Election shortly afterwards and appointed pro privatisation John Luxton as Minister of Energy

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and Luxton, rubber stamped Prebble's actions, pushed on with the reforms'. Later, John Luxton, zealously, sanctioned the structure, which removed the normal shareholder appointment and oversight of directors, notwithstanding objection by the Auckland Council and nearly everyone else.

I had supported and was in favour of corporatisation and also privatisation in appropriate circumstances, eg where there was adequate competition to or control of the privatised entity. My objection in this case was the unprecedented company structure, the absence of accountability of the directors and the sequestration of consumer assets without compensation.

2 McLoughlin also wrote: 'Despite Collinge's silver spoon National Party credentials, Labour had kept him on as Chairman of the Commerce Commission. When Prebble sacked the elected AEPB, he retained Collinge as Chairman of the new appointed five-member Board. Collinge then and now was no blazing-eyed ideologue of the Left or Right. If anything he was a diplomatic centrist which at least partly explains his suitability for his later appointment as High Commissioner to London'.

3 McLoughlin noted that, once the proposal was in place, electricity prices increased and costs were reduced: 'In 1993, Mercury earned \$21.8 million after tax, had 1141 staff, sold 3725 gigawatt hours of electricity, had assets of \$400 million and debts of \$63 million. By 1997, Mercury's profit was \$82 million after tax, the company almost halved its staff to 596, electricity sales were up 40% to 5201 gigawatt hours, it had assets worth \$896 million and debts of \$419 million'.

4 Some six years after the reconstruction, at the time of the blackout, no plans for the float had yet been made and were not imminent.

5 It was said to be the hottest February on record with a high demand for power through the aging cables, but normally all climatic scenarios and extremes would be taken into account in assessing capacity and contingencies.

6 We were both extremely grateful to all those concerned, to 'Catherine's' girlfriends and to the Threat Squad members involved.

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7 Being very much in love with Maggie and immensely grateful for her continuing loyalty, I had obtained the necessary documents for a Resident's Visa to allow her to live permanently in New Zealand. She had made a lie of the allegations against her. She had stood by me throughout. Few would have done so.

8 Given my knowledge of her conduct, realistically 'Catherine' could never succeed in re-establishing a relationship with me.

9 What follows and anything said in this book is not an assessment by a psychologist or a professional and certainly not a diagnosis, I do not have any psychiatry or psychology qualifications. I have endeavoured to set out the facts and some of my observations as to what was experienced, but it is not an assessment or diagnosis. That is for others to decide.

From general reading, it seems that various cases of stalking are different. There may be those which cause nuisance, apprehension or fear without the stalker being disordered in any way.

Thus, not all stalking may be accompanied by disorder, nor is it erotomanic or obsessive and there is no suggestion that stalking involves any kind of

sexual depravity. 'Catherine's' thoughts were precise, her activities well thought out and ordered and expressed in an articulate way. Given her goals, she seemed rational and appeared so to others.

Maggie and I knew so little about stalking and we were at a loss to know what to do about it. It was only after the Court case that we learned more, and tried to make more sense of what happened. However, as said above, this is not an attempt at assessment or diagnosis.

13 An Urban Myth

1 A folklore or a myth is something that is generally believed to be true even though it is not necessarily capable of proof.

2 To the claim that I had no qualifications for the job, Bryce Harland a previous High Commissioner who was a career diplomat, quite soon after my arrival in London, alerted some of his former colleagues that I was not the usual political appointment and that, in his opinion, I was very well qualified to be New Zealand High Commissioner to London. As he noted I had local knowledge and instant local acceptability (having been educated at Oxford University at an elite College, having played

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cricket for the University and having worked as a lecturer at an English University). I already, independently, had close contacts across the highest levels (the Secretary to the Treasury, the Chief Whip, the Secretary to the Commonwealth Countries, the Secretary to the Cabinet, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, to name some only) who I already knew or who knew of me from those days. Also, through my various New Zealand roles, I was known to my respective counterparts in England. In addition, I had significant practical experience and knowledge in many fields, such as law, trade, commerce, energy, administration, local authorities and politics, unlike most career diplomats. I had travelled widely on official and State business and, though not a professional diplomat, was hardly a stranger to international affairs.

3 I had chaired the meeting of the National Executive of the National Party (of 20 members) at which Peters was expelled from the Party

4 To this, the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Don McKinnon as he then was) wrote to me that the media 'had got it wrong', and Lord Justice Cooke wrote that the article was 'inappropriately worded' and did not reflect my

'successful service'. Even the Secretary of the Foreign Services Association admitted in response that she was not aware of any strain with Ministry officials. The *Dominion* article was 'a beat up'.

5 There was a report by John Roughan, Deputy Editor *New Zealand Herald*, that week: 'I have some terrible news. John Collinge tells me that the table at Chelsea Square is old and fragile, and groans under a plate of scones'.

6 The overall purpose of 'Diplomatic Ladies' (2012) with its sub title 'New Zealand's Unsung Envoys' was to highlight the position of diplomatic wives and partners. Diplomatic wives generally (and certainly those of New Zealand) were not paid for their contribution, nor for assisting their husbands in the course of their duties, they are unpaid workers and hostesses. The quid pro quo is, for the wife or partner, the opportunity to attend special functions and to meet people whom they might not otherwise meet and to enjoy a lifestyle which few others could match.

7 And, of course, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

8 As to the creation of the urban myth see Chapter 10 (The Media). There were many other

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times the story would be revived as true – when the Residence was in the news or was being sold, when ‘Catherine’ returned to New Zealand, when there was a search for rented premises in London for the Deputy High Commissioner and even when there was simply a reference to a Board table.

9 The spokesperson for the Otago University Press was reported in the *New Zealand Herald* as saying that the recovery involved recalling the books ‘from libraries and shops’.

14 An Epithalamium

1 See also A Alvarez, Introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *Tess*, 1978 who tells ‘of the ruthlessness with which Tess, having rejected Alec d’Urberville, was hunted down’.

2 Possibly influenced from Shakespeare, *King Lear*: ‘As flies to wanton boys, are we to the Gods; They kill us for their sport’.

3 As Hardy said, upon rejection, a man may endeavor to drown it by drink, false reverie or engage in a search for improvement or success elsewhere to ease the loss of self-esteem. It may be more painful for a woman whose attachment may have been less spontaneous, more developed

and for reasons other than superficial attraction, for security and the building up of trust for example which has taken longer to form, the loss might be felt more deeply and more difficult to dis-engage.

4 In the story, told by the Ancient Mariner to the principal Wedding Guest after the Guest leaves:

‘He went like one that hath
 been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.’
– *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Samuel Coleridge.

Towards Understanding

1 This note derives from general reading on the subject and does not apply to any particular case.

2 There are other causes for stalking (eg relating to employment or to politics) but for the most part it is relationship stalking, where there has been contact with another or a relationship or where a relationship is sought.

3 Little is said here of the extent of the growing trend of cyber stalking, a new area.

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4 The factors noted here are not to be taken as exclusive of the indicators of stalking, who is likely to be a stalker, and who is likely to be stalked.

5 Gavin De Becker, *The Gift of Fear*, Little Brown & Co, Boston, who notes various categories of stalkers where rejection may not have occurred.

6 See Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear*, Little Brown & Co, Boston, pp 186–187. He also discusses the nature of fear and the prediction of the possibility of harm.

7 Princess Diana had, not only paparazzi to contend with, but a number of stalkers who followed her everywhere on the pretext that they were in love with her. As Earl Spencer said in his oration at her funeral ‘of all the ironies about Diana, perhaps the greatest is this, a girl given the name of the ancient god of hunting was in the end, the most hunted person in the modern age’.

8 The matters recited here put a cloud over my term as High Commissioner. I felt I had achieved my objectives in a way I had not dared to hope for. But, I had, if the media were to be believed, spent most of my time in London fornicating in the Residence. For someone who

takes pride in effort and probity, that was hard to bear.

It was the first time that my private life had been the subject of public issue. I had avoided the social columns before and certainly did not welcome the attention. A friend who had spent considerable time and effort endeavouring to obtain a reputation as a ‘rake’ lamented he had put so much effort into it and I had put so little. We agreed that there was no justice in this world.

9 An alternative is to take criminal proceedings to endeavour to have a jail sentence imposed in the first instance. In that way security is ensured for at least a time. Of course, that may also rebound when the stalker is released.

10 The implied threat is not necessarily sufficiently specific to trigger the normal law relating to threats.

11 For a scholarly work see *The Psychology of Stalking* edited by J Reid Meloy, Academic Press, 2001.

12 Treatment may include prescribing sedatives (antipsychotic) and by using therapy to assist in managing the symptoms.

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13 There are more serious cases of stalking which due to inapplicability are not dealt with here.

14 Opinions expressed herein by the author, who is a lawyer, are not to be taken as medical opinions.



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- The three principal characters:
Maggie, 'Catherine' and myself
occur throughout the work.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Collinge was educated at Auckland University (Senior Scholar in Law) and at Oxford University (Shell Scholar) and has undertaken many public roles in and for New Zealand.

They include:

- Chairman, Auckland Electric Power Board
- President, Electrical Development Association of New Zealand
- Chairman, Policy and Finance Committee of the Auckland Regional Authority
- Chairman, Commerce Commission
- Chairman, National Civil Defence Energy Committee
- Chairman, Alcohol Advisory Council
- President, National Party of New Zealand
- President, Auckland Citizen & Ratepayers Association
- President, Auckland Rotary Club
- High Commissioner for New Zealand to the United Kingdom

- Ambassador for New Zealand to Ireland
- High Commissioner for New Zealand to Nigeria
- Chairman, Intergovernmental Committee on Commonwealth Membership
- Patron, British New Zealand Business Association

He has lectured in law at Universities in England and Australia; practised as a Barrister & Solicitor in New Zealand and as a solicitor in Australia; held company Chairmanships and directorships of prominent companies in New Zealand and various charitable trusteeships; and has represented or led a number of delegations for New Zealand at international level.

He is the author of legal texts: *Restrictive Trade Practices, Monopolies, Mergers and Takeovers in New Zealand* (Butterworths), *Tutorials in Contract* (Law Book Company) and the *Law of Marketing in Australia and New Zealand* (Thesaurus Press). He has also written *An Identity for New Zealand?* (a history); *Maggie – Some Memories* (a collection of paintings, poems, short stories, sketches and cornucopia by Maggie); *Public Life – Reminisces from Public Service*; and *The Last Quarter – 1975 to 2000* (both Thesaurus Press).