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think it shocked him as he calmed down very quickly. But the next time he was quieter with the attack and, in his words, he "did not want the neighbours to hear we were fighting". But in a nutshell - yes, if you hear anything please report it, it is appreciated... take it from one who knows.

Anon, UK/US

Report him? If the man next door was beating up his wife I'd wipe him off the face of the planet!

John, Great Britain

Most wife beaters are charmers by nature, to the extent that the wife often does not know what she has married until that first beating. Perhaps if every woman were not in such a hurry, and had a chance to see how her future partner interacts with others around him, she would see her potential partner as he is before it is too late. Love alone is not enough in any marriage.

Hazel, UK

Now you've broached the subject, the government will probably debate wife-beating and introduce licences.

Chris B, England

violence is not a private matter and should be reported by anyone who witnesses it

Lynn, Tennessee, USA

Domestic violence is not a private matter and should be reported by anyone who witnesses it, but it is not limited to husbands/wives, it also happens in same gender couples. My brother was abused by his gay partner for many years until he was strong enough to leave, and my son has been abused by his wife. He was wise enough to call the police on her and the court ordered counselling for both of them. No one has the right to abuse, mentally or physically, another person.

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Lynn, Tennessee, USA What sort of civilized society would need to ask such a question? Of course they should be reported.

Thomas Carter, Canada

As a child from a family which suffered physical abuse from a drunken father and was scared stiff to report it I think this is a good idea. No one can imagine how hard it is on the kids, and especially the mother who may be too scared to call the police and even too scared to leave the relationship.

Simon, England

Domestic violence is vile and cowardly and has a far greater impact on its victims than is realised

Anon, UK

It seems sadly domestic violence is still a real taboo subject. As other people have said if we saw a violent crime happening on the street we would report it, why is domestic violence different? The scary thing about this is it goes on all the time often by 'respectable' people and is either ignored or considered to be a private matter. Domestic violence (and I write as someone regularly beaten up by my dad as a teenager) is vile and cowardly and has a far greater impact on its victims than is widely realised. Anything to expose the abusers and help stop it for good is to be welcomed. Keep up the good work Ms Harman.

Anon, UK

Wife beating (or husband beating) is assault. Assault is against the law. Everyone has a social duty to report law breakers. It's really that simple!

Bryan, UK

I've been on the edge so many times because she provokes me at least three or four times a week. At times I just want to be left alone but she goes on and on. I have hit her and hurt her. And she has called the police. I have had a chat with the Police and been put on 12-month

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watch. Now when she goes on and on I simply walk out off the house go to the pub and come home after a few hours and she's ok, as if nothing happened. TO ALL MEN; WALK AWAY

Mr X, London UK

By phoning the police the lives of victims and their families can be saved

Mich, UK

Whether or not the injured person will ever press charges is irrelevant. By phoning the police the lives of victims and their families can be saved. Any person with any conscience should be prepared to do this. These bullies need to be dealt with. How many times has domestic violence ended up in murder or will serious injuries. You should not have to ask for help!

Mich, UK

When I was a child and my mother got exasperated with my father she had a habit of throwing whatever small object were at hand at him - occasionally with painful results. Under Ms Harman's dominion my mother would have been carted off to gaol and I would be put in care, splitting up what was a caring, loving and exciting family life. I know people like Ms Harman mean well, but very often they cause much more misery than they cure because they do not think through what they are proposing.

Anon, UK

I firmly believe that the government should introduce a law similar to that in the USA where the police have the power to prosecute even where the victim is unwilling/unable due to fear to testify against the aggressor. This has to become society's responsibility if there is to be a reduction in this horrific crime for the sake of the families as well as the victim.

Angela, UK

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Ha! Yet another tactic to distract us from the fact that there aren't actually enough police around to deal with any 'domestic' incident. Yes, all good citizens can report as much as they like, but the only people the police are interested in prosecuting are celebrities like former Tory ministers or former members of the Royal household.

Mr Garn Machaud, Leicester

regulations make people more willing to report domestic violence

Wei-Chu Wang, Taipei, Taiwan

I believe regulations make people more willing to report domestic violence. Sometimes women don't have enough strength to avoid getting hurt, but the police and those who may offer help can help the abused a lot. If we see somebody attacking others on the road, we would call the police and try to stop it undoubtedly. Such is the case with this wife-beating matter.

Wei-Chu Wang, Taipei, Taiwan

Typical of a 'Ms' to be blatantly sexist. Ms Harman should hang her head in shame. All domestic violence should be reported, regardless of the sex of the victim. Clearly she believes men cannot be victims or are not worthy of her attention.

Mike, England

What is the point? A member of my family has reported a serial woman beating neighbour to the police before. When the police arrived, the woman denied there was any problem, blaming my family for lies. It is of no benefit to anyone unless the woman WANTS help - in which case she should seek it herself. I am a young woman myself and after that experience, I would be inclined to ignore a female neighbour being beaten by her partner. She knows where the door is.

Anon, England

I think that yes men (and women) who are abusive should be reported to the police. However the police need to ensure that some sort of

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action will be taken if they receive reports and the culprit is not just released with a caution "not to do it again!" Just one small point though - would this reporting procedure be used to report people as abusers, when they are not but have just got a conflict with the person next door who wishes to get them into trouble?

Lindsey, UK

Yes, yes, yes. I lived with my boyfriend and his two friends. I was beaten. They knew. They both spoke to him and one tried to help, the other ignored the situation. I was terrified. The only way I got out was a few years later by my own strength. It took years to tell anyone and I still blame myself. He told me it was my fault, you see. Women need help. Even if they won't take it, offer it. That one time out of a thousand may save a life; a man or a woman's. Violence in a home is unforgivable. As is mental abuse - and they go hand in hand. After a while the bruises cease to hurt and the words cripple far more. A woman will eventually find that strength to fight. Many more people out there have been in this situation than care to admit. Christmas wasn't always such a merry time for me.

Anon, London

It sounds great, but the victims sometimes need to have it pointed out to them that the person hitting them is doing something bad and that THEY should report them. Love is blind as they say. I once saw a person try to stop a man beating his wife repeatedly in the street. When it got physical and the two men ended up wrestling, the woman started clawing at the man who was now grappling with her husband, shouting: "don't hit my husband I love him", as the blood trickled from her nose.

Brian S, Scotland

Yes - because domestic violence often kills

Ian Armitage, UK

Yes - because domestic violence often kills, and always does great damage; to the woman, to children involved, to the anxious family, friends and neighbours, and to the man himself. If deadly diseases need



urgent treatment, so does this

Ian Armitage, UK

Why is it that whenever the issue of domestic abuse is raised, we solely concentrate on women being abused by men? When men are abused by their female partners it is far more difficult for them to seek help, not to mention the ridicule they face for "being beaten by a woman".

Tracey, UK

All abuse should be reported, sometimes the victim is just too frightened to help themselves.

Duncan, London, UK

Simply yes. Just as they should report any other serious assault, no matter who the victim is. This will save lives.

Dan, UK

What kind of question is this? Who in their right mind would think it's wrong to report such a crime to the police?!

Justice, UK

If the police simply caution and release them then the situation will be worse

Amy, UK

Surely the issue is not whether violent partners (of both sexes) should be turned in but what would happen to them if they were arrested? If the police simply caution and release them then the situation will be worse not only for the person who shopped them but also for the partner/victim.

Amy, UK

Of course neighbours should report such people. Signing a marriage

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certificate is not a consent form to be subject to violence.

Ross, UK

Of course domestic violence should be reported and dealt with rather than ignored. But will the likes of Ms Harman please stop discriminating based on which partner is the attacker. A woman attacking a man is equally wrong, and the same potential for injury or death exists. Violence is the issue, not gender. Wording laws, or even opinions, in a gender specific way is totally unhelpful and unnecessary in this matter.

Raymond Gray, UK

Surely this is up to the individual. It needn't necessarily just be neighbours but also other witnesses, or worried friends or family. A 'government proposal' won't affect matters at all, just an individual's perception of what is right and wrong and how it should be dealt with.

Manny, UK

A housemate of my ex-boyfriend once stepped over me when I'd been beaten to the floor. Anon It won't help. People will inform the police (if they want to) whether there is an initiative or not. A housemate of my ex-boyfriend once stepped over me when I'd been beaten to the floor. Call the police? No, it was none of his business! Anon What about abused husbands - in an age where we are striving for equality, shouldn't these things be worded a little more fairly - after all, words like chairman have been replaced with inclusive words. Besides, I think the proposals will result in the police being called whenever there is an argument, and possibly in men being hauled away after one of these verbal disagreements. What protection do men have when accused of Domestic violence?

Niels Brandbergh, Sweden and England

Neighbours, strangers and any other witnesses should report wife-beatings.

TJ Cassidy, USA

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Let's try rephrasing this: Should a responsible citizen report a violent crime to the police? Is anyone prepared to argue that they should not? However, what about help for beaten husbands? Once again, they are ignored. These issues will not be solved by ignoring them, Ms. Harman. And should we take it that you simply do not care when men are harmed? That seems to be implied.

Andy, Netherlands

Yes. Wife beaters disturb the peace of neighbours.

M Khalid Khan, India/UK

It depends on what is going on. Where a spouse (I note Ms Harman appears silent on the subject of beaten husbands) is suffering genuine violence, this is a serious crime and should be reported. However, most couples argue - the question is at what stage to get involved. Police do not have time to deal with trivial domestic disputes and care must be taken not to criminalise someone who merely shouts at their partner. On a side note, if the perpetrator of domestic violence is "as much a criminal as a burglar" then presumably they can look forward to a slap on the wrist and some time planting flowers, in line with Lord Woolf's latest proposals.

John B, UK

people usually end up reporting nothing as nothing they report ever makes any difference

Bill, UK

It's not as if people don't already inform the police about neighbours' domestic violence; they frequently do. Unfortunately domestic violence is a potential minefield for the police. If I report my neighbour's wife having two black eyes, the police will do nothing unless the victim has made a complaint. If I call them to an on-going incident they'll do all they can to calm things but will be unable to prosecute as the victim rarely wants to escalate their partner's violence by co-operating in a police inquiry. Sadly, people usually end up reporting nothing as nothing

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they report ever makes any difference.

Bill, UK

I fully support the proposal for neighbours/friends/family to report domestic violence - these men need every deterrent there is. One of the main reasons men bully women is because it's all kept secret, so to get them out in the open is a great start! I can also add with confidence that my friends and family would fully support this.

Melissa Dawkins, England

Without the willingness of the injured party to press charges it would make little difference if a neighbour reported anyway. Too often when the police are called the woman will defend her husband, or waste police time the next morning by withdrawing the complaint, at the slightest sign of remorse from the husband. I have every sympathy for abused women, but shouldn't the Government provide a more adequate support system for the abused to seek permanent refuge? Why should a neighbour become involved in a violent situation?

Mark Q, UK Send us your comments:

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Harriet Harman
Ms Harriet Harman M.P.
House Of Commons

London
SW1A 0AA

Harriet Harman

Tuesday 7, January 2003

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CPS will ask rape victims how justice system can be improved

Rape victims are to be asked for their views on how sex assault cases are dealt with in a bid to improve justice for those who have been attacked.

The Crown Prosecution Service has launched a consultation exercise with support groups following complaints that the legal system fails large numbers of rape complainants.

Solicitor General **Harriet Harman** QC said the consultation was part of ongoing work to ensure that victims have confidence in the criminal justice system.

"The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process," she said.

She added at the launch of the consultation Ms Harman said each year the number of convictions for rape grew, but that the increase was not keeping

pace with the rise in reports of rape.

She said that since 1985 reports of rape had increased by 400 per cent, but convictions by only 40 per cent.

● A serial sex attacker targeted three young students as they walked home alone and raped a terrified 16-year-old girl in her own home, a court was told yesterday.

Andrew James McCarten's four young victims – all of whom had long, blonde hair – feared for their lives, Liverpool Crown Court heard.

The 24-year-old, dubbed the "Greenbank rapist", repeatedly warned his victims against looking at him and went to some length to conceal his face.

McCarten, of Wallasey, Wirral, yesterday pleaded guilty to four counts of rape and two of indecent assault.

Two further counts of indecent assault, five of theft, three of making threats to kill, one charge of false imprisonment, one of attempted theft

and one of assault with intent – all denied by McCarten – were ordered to lie on the file.

For the Crown, David Turner QC told the court the attacks took place in the Greenbank Park area, close to a university hall of residence.

He raped two students in April and November 2001 and in April 2002 he indecently assaulted a 20-year-old student. He stopped when she suffered an asthma attack.

The defendant's fourth victim – a 16-year-old schoolgirl – was at home on the phone to a boyfriend in July last year when she saw McCarten's face pressed up against the window.

He broke in, wrapped tape around her face and raped her twice. He bolted when the police arrived at the house.

Sentencing was adjourned until March 3 for psychiatric reports.



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More court help for rape victims

By JOSHUA ROZENBERG
LEGAL EDITOR

NEW arrangements to help rape victims give evidence in court are working well, the Crown Prosecution Service said yesterday.

Judges have willingly cleared the public gallery, if asked, and have allowed vulnerable witnesses to give evidence using video links or from behind screens.

The assessment was made public as the CPS began work on a new policy statement designed to ensure that rape cases are prosecuted effectively. Victims and those working with them will be asked for their views.

Harriet Harman, MP, who supervises the CPS as one of the Government's law officers, said that the number of convictions for rape was growing but reported attacks were increasing more quickly.

"Rape is a callous and bru-

tal crime. The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process," she said.

Since July, all alleged victims of sexual offences have been eligible for what are called special measures.

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir David Calvert-Smith, QC, said it was important that victims were supported from the moment they came forward to the police. He added that, like domestic violence and crimes against homosexuals, rape attacks were under-reported and acquittal rates were higher than for most other crimes.

"We are anxious to make sure victims of these crimes are supported from the moment they pluck up the courage to go to the police."



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Rapists target pubs and clubs

Clare Dyer

Legal correspondent

Rapists who in the past would have attacked strangers are now targeting potential victims in clubs or pubs, a police rape expert said yesterday.

Detective Chief Inspector Richard Walton, who heads the Metropolitan police's rape project, said advances in DNA technology mean that men who rape strangers now have a much smaller chance of escaping justice.

As a result, potential rapists are more likely to strike up "some sort of relationship" with their victims. This turns the crime into acquaintance rape, where the issue becomes not the rapist's identity but the more difficult one of whether the woman consented.

The number of reported stranger rapes has remained constant over the past 20 years, while numbers of acquaintance rapes have soared.

DCI Walton heads the Met police's Project Sapphire, a

team of specially trained officers and detectives set up two years ago to improve rape investigations and victim care.

He was speaking at the launch yesterday of a crown prosecution service consultation on improving the handling of rape prosecutions, aimed at tackling an attrition rate which sees only one in 13 rape reports end in conviction.

The consultation, launched in London by the solicitor general, **Harriet Harman**, and the director of public prosecutions, Sir David Calvert-Smith, follows a report last April from the independent inspectorates for the police and CPS, which found that the system failed rape victims at all stages.

The report concluded that more sensitive treatment of victims was crucial to securing a conviction. It recommended introducing specialist prosecutors for rape cases, better training for police and prosecutors, and instructions to

prosecuting counsel to challenge offensive cross-examination by defence counsel.

There is already a nationwide network of specialist rape prosecutors who will follow a case from start to finish.

A key finding of the report was that rape victims were more likely than other crime victims to lose confidence in the criminal justice process. Only one in five rape victims reports the crime, and many who do report it decide not to give evidence or retract their allegations before trial.

Ms Harman said: "The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process."

She said that each year the number of convictions for rape was growing, but that the increase was not keeping pace with the rise in reports of rape. Since 1985 reports of rape had increased by 400% but convictions by only 40%.

Sir David said: "What we are anxious to do is make sure victims of these crimes are supported from the moment they pluck up the courage to go to the police to the moment the case is concluded at crown court. Our view is that many victims fall out before the case ever goes to court because they lose confidence in the process."

Ms Harman said a change in the law last July allowing vulnerable or intimidated witnesses to give evidence by video link was working well. Special report on law and order at guardian.co.uk/crime



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Harriet Harman



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Britons still have 'She asked for it' rape attitude

PROSECUTION OF rape in this country is being hampered by hardened cultural attitudes that assume victims of sexual assault lead men on, the Director of Public Prosecutions said yesterday.

Sir David Calvert-Smith QC urged the Crown Prosecution Service and the Government to tackle this misheld belief so that more rapists could be brought to trial.

Yesterday he joined the Solicitor General, Harriet Harman QC, in trying to combat such views by consulting the public, including rape victims, on how to improve investigation and prosecution of rape.

He criticised the "she asked for it" attitude, saying: "Thirty

BY ROBERT VERKAIK
Legal Affairs Correspondent

years ago, I heard practitioners saying no woman need be raped if she didn't really want to. There are still residues of that in the British consciousness. That's one of the things we are looking to break down."

Ms Harman said: "Rape is a callous and brutal crime. The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows clearly that we must do more to support rape victims."

Since 1985, reports of rape have increased by 400 per cent but convictions by only 40 per cent. Just 7.25 per cent of reported cases end in a conviction.



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Rape victims' views sought in effort to increase convictions

By Frances Gibb
Legal Editor

RAPE victims will be asked for their views on how more rapists can be brought to justice in a move to improve the prosecution rate, which currently stands at 7 per cent.

Harriet Harman, QC, the Solicitor-General, and the Director of Public Prosecutions, announced an overhaul yesterday of the way rape cases are handled in an effort to close the gap between the number of rapes and convictions. Rape, Ms Harman said in London yesterday, was a "brutal and callous crime".

"The justice gap, between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions, shows quite clearly that we must do more to support

rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process," she said. Some progress had been made and reporting of rape had risen by 400 per cent since 1985. The conviction rate in the same period had risen by only 40 per cent.

In 1999, the total number of offences recorded as rape by police was 7,809 but the total number of offenders cautioned or found guilty of rape was 661. Sir David Calvert-Smith, QC, the Director of Public Prosecutions, said that there was also a big problem with under-reporting. It is thought that only one in five rape offences is reported to police.

"There is a history of under-reporting; very few of those who report a rape get a case before a court and the conviction rate, even of those cases, is far

lower than for most other types of crime," he said.

One aim, he said, was to combat cultural attitudes. The belief 30 years ago was that "all women had asked for it" and that "no woman would be raped if she did not want to be."

"There are still residues of that in the British consciousness and that is one of the things we are hoping to break down under the framework of the present law," he said.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) hoped, for instance, to encourage the view that if a woman had not reported an alleged attack immediately it was not because it did not take place but because she might have been so traumatised that she could not

bring herself to speak about it until some time later.

In response to criticisms about the way rape cases are handled and prosecuted a series of reforms are being introduced.

A consultation exercise has been launched asking for comments from rape victims' organisations and others on the process of handling rape cases through to trial.

The CPS is also setting up a network of specialist rape prosecutors to provide continuity of advice through proceedings.

Convictions have already been secured in several rape cases using screens and video links where the victim had been unwilling to give evidence.





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Rape victims to give advice on sex cases

RAPE victims are to be asked for their views on how sex assault cases are dealt with in a bid to improve justice for those who have been attacked.

The Crown Prosecution Service has launched a consultation exercise with support groups following a series of complaints that the legal system fails large numbers of rape complainants.

Solicitor General **Harriet Harman** QC said the consultation was part of work to ensure that victims have confidence in the criminal justice system.

"Rape is a callous and brutal crime," she said. "The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process."

She added, at the launch of the consultation in London yesterday: "This is part of our determination to ensure justice for rape victims and to ensure that the guilty are

convicted." Ms Harman said that each year the number of convictions for rape was growing but that the increase was not keeping pace with the rise in reports of rape.

She said that since 1985 reports of rape had increased by 400 per cent but convictions by only 40 per cent.

Director of Public Prosecutions Sir David Calvert-Smith QC said it was important that victims were supported from the moment they came forward to the police. He added that, like domestic violence and homophobic crime, rape was under-reported and, furthermore, acquittal rates were higher than for most other crimes.

"What we are very anxious to do is make sure victims of these crimes are supported from the moment they pluck up the courage to go to the police to the moment the case is concluded at Crown Court," he said. "Our view is that many victims fall out before the case ever goes to court because they lose confidence in the process."



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A charity that actually listens

By Valerie Grove

IN the operations room of Plan UK, behind Camden Town High Street, a huge wall-chart reflects the struggle for survival in a strife-torn world. Floods, heavy rainfall, guerrilla activity, drought and civil unrest are all recorded. In Ecuador there is violence because of land rights disputes; in Zimbabwe and Zambia, political problems and food shortages. In this room Plan staff and volunteers field queries from sponsors who want to know how their money is being spent.

Plan has 40 paid staff, and as many volunteers, from students to pensioners, who help for a couple of hours a week. It couldn't survive without these volunteers, says Marie Staunton, its chief executive.

"At the heart of sponsorship, or fostering, is the altruistic desire that ordinary people have to do something, out of a sense of international responsibility. People who have never been to Uganda become involved with a child in a village they have never heard of, and make a 12-year commitment to support that child's community." Plan now has a million sponsored children, benefiting 10 million people.

Most new sponsors offer to sponsor a child "wherever the

need is greatest", but some specify a country. "If you specify, say, Mali," (Staunton digs out a file) "we might suggest this little girl, Dgenou Nobu." The picture shows a cheerful child whose favourite game is pretend cooking and who wants to be a government worker. It is the identifying of individual children's hopes, and supplying sponsors with reports and letters, that creates the involvement.

"In Mali we sponsor more girls because girls tend to get withdrawn from school earlier, so we can talk to the community about why it's important for girls to stay on at school. Plan is very solidly grass roots, you see. Our commitment is long term, 10 to 15 years. And we're good at listening to what the community itself wants."

Dr Miriam Stoppard, the writer, a patron of more than 40 charities concerned with the wellbeing of mothers and babies, has been a Plan foster-parent 20 years. She liked the idea of Plan, because it worked in communities.

"Although I would be supporting a particular child, it would be done in a subtle way; the tiny amount of money I sent would go to cleaning up the wells or setting up a school. And it was very education-conscious," she says. At

one time she had six "foster-daughters" in different parts of the world — one has become a nurse, another a teacher — and still has five. "It's like an extension to my family, having these five little girls to care about," she says.

Plan's holiday season appeal through *The Times* is focused on Uganda and its HIV-positive orphans in the poor Tororo area, where infected men infect their wives, both parents die, and the extended family comes and snatches their property. Plan's strategy is to help the orphaned children to stay in their homes by organising community support: they keep the parents alive as long as possible with antibiotics, supply anti-retrovirals to stop mother-child transmission, and after the parents' deaths, support the woman in the next hut who sees that the orphans have an evening meal and get to school.

"People use all sorts of euphemisms for Aids. And there is no point in a health clinic distributing condoms, if it isn't acceptable to use them, so educating the Aids orphans themselves is the key. It is important to work with church leaders, Catholic or Muslim, and get them on your side.

Marie Staunton, a solicitor by profession, has spent her

life helping others, working for Amnesty, Liberty and Unicef. While boarding at a convent school in Preston, she would walk in the park at weekends and talk to the winos. "They had had fascinating lives: the had been round the world as sailors, they were people outside my ken — and I wanted to get to know about them."

At 18 she ran the Simon Community's hostels for the homeless in Camden, Belfast and Cork. Her Lancaster University student days were a doddle by comparison. Her first job was with Geffens, the Walsall solicitors who took on the Birmingham Six. Later she inherited Harriet Harman's job as legal officer at Liberty.

Staunton is well acquainted with her charities' beneficiaries. "In Khartoum I met a woman who had carried three of her children for six days to get to the feeding centre. We may say, 'I'd do anything for my children', but would we do that?"

□ Plan is one of two registered charities *The Times* Charity Appeal is supporting. The other is Home-Start, a UK-based charity giving support to families in crisis. To donate, please see the coupon.



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THE TIMES

Christmas Charity Appeal 2002

To make a donation fill out the coupon below, ticking the appropriate charity, and send it to:

Times Christmas Appeal, **Home-Start**, 2 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR

(Contact this address if you want to be a volunteer)

Times Christmas Appeal, **Plan/Uganda**, Freepost, 5-6 Underhill Street, London NW1 0YJ

(Contact this address if you want to be a sponsor)

Or make a donation by telephone or online



Home-Start

Tel: 08000 68 63 68

Online: www.home-start.org.uk



Plan/Uganda

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Home-Start Plan/Uganda

Name _____
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I would like to donate £ _____

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Marie Staunton, chief executive of Plan UK, one of the charities supported by *The Times* appeal

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Nappy news again for MP super mum

BY CLARISSA SATCHELL

AN MP is expecting to set a record after revealing she is pregnant with her fourth child.

Treasury minister Ruth Kelly, MP for Bolton West, shares the record with Harriet Harman for having the most children while in office.

Now she is on course to set a new record if all goes well when her fourth child is born in May or June next year.

Since becoming an MP, Mrs Kelly has juggled her work with looking after Eamonn, five, Sinead, four, and two-year-old Roisin.

She campaigned for her 1997 seat while heavily pregnant with her first child and made her maiden Commons speech three weeks before the birth.

After revealing the happy news, Mrs Kelly and her husband, Derek, are enjoying a relaxing holiday in Spain to prepare for the new arrival.

Mrs Kelly, 34, said: "Derek and I are absolutely thrilled, we have always wanted a large family. The other children are also very ex-

cited and we are all looking forward to a new arrival in the New Year.

"We don't know if we are expecting a boy or a girl, we'll have to wait and see."

Former journalist and economist Mrs Kelly attributes her success at juggling motherhood and ministerial duties to being organised and trying to avoid taking the usual red box of papers home at the weekend.

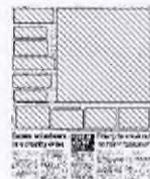
She tries to bring the whole family, who are based in London, back to their second home in Horwich for the weekend as often as possible.

Her spokesman George McNamara said: "Effective time-management is the key to Ruth's success. She likes taking time meeting people in her constituency whenever she can come back to Bolton."

And Derek said having another child would not slow Ruth down.

He said: "Ruth has a lot of commitments and people are amazed that she can fit in having three children as well as her work."

"But she always gives 100 per cent to everything, whether it is the Treasury, her family or her constituency. It is wonderful news and it will be nice for the other children to have another brother or sister."



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■ FIRST AMONG EQUALS . . . MP Ruth Kelly holds her eldest son, Eamonn, shortly after his birth



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Wife-beaters 'must be reported'

NEIGHBOURS are being urged to report men who attack their partners to the police under Government plans to tackle domestic violence, it emerged yesterday.

The move may include Neighbourhood Watch schemes to identify wife-beaters. Solicitor General Harriet Harman said a change in at-

titudes was needed to ensure a blind eye was no longer turned to domestic violence.

She said: "If you see someone burgling your neighbour, you don't think, 'Shall I intervene?'. A man who beats his wife is a violent criminal. He's not an upstanding citizen who happens to beat his wife."



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Britons still have 'She asked for it' rape attitude

Prosecution of rape in this country is being hampered by hardened cultural attitudes that assume victims of sexual assault lead men on, the Director of Public Prosecutions said yesterday.

Sir David Calvert-Smith QC urged the Crown Prosecution Service and the Government to tackle this misheld belief so that more rapists could be brought to trial.

Yesterday he joined the Solicitor General, Harriet Harman QC, in trying to combat such views by consulting the public, including rape victims, on how to improve investigation and prosecution of rape.

He criticised the "she asked for it" attitude, saying: "Thirty years ago, I heard practitioners saying no woman need be raped if she didn't really want to. There are still residues of that in the British consciousness. That's one of the things we are looking to break down."

Ms Harman said: "Rape is a callous and brutal crime. The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows clearly that we must do more to support rape victims."

Since 1985, reports of rape have increased by 400 per cent but convictions by only 40 per cent. Just 7.25 per cent of reported cases end in a conviction.

<http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/legal/story.jsp?story=367016>

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Courts to help rape victims

victims Search options The news site The web Tuesday 7 January 2003 Telegraph Network Network home Arts Books Education Expat Telegraph Family Fantasy football Fashion Gardening Horoscopes Health Jobs Letters & Mobile Services Money Motoring News Outdoors Personal finance Promotions Property Reader offers Science Shopping Sport Technology Travel Wine Business file Connected Internet for schools Juiced Alex cartoon Business news Crossword Society Feedback Law reports Matt cartoon Obituaries Opinion Weather More court help for rape victims

By Joshua Rozenberg, Legal Editor

(Filed: 07/01/2003)

New arrangements to help rape victims give evidence in court are working well, the said yesterday. Judges have willingly cleared the public gallery, if asked, and have allowed vulnerable witnesses to give evidence using video links or from behind screens.

The assessment was made public as the CPS began work on a new policy statement designed to ensure that rape cases are prosecuted effectively. Victims and those working with them will be asked for their views.

Harriet Harman, MP, who supervises the CPS as one of the Government's law officers, said that the number of convictions for rape was growing but reported attacks were increasing more quickly.

"Rape is a callous and brutal crime. The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process," she said.

Since July, all alleged victims of sexual offences have been eligible for what are called special measures.

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir David Calvert-Smith, QC, said

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it was important that victims were supported from the moment they came forward to the police. He added that, like domestic violence and homophobic crime, rape attacks were under-reported and acquittal rates were higher than for most other crimes.

"We are anxious to make sure victims of these crimes are supported from the moment they pluck up the courage to go to the police."
Previous story: Next story: External links Crown Prosecution Service of 2003. of reading.

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;\\$sessionid\\$XGKDUJYNVJHAFQFIQMFSFGGAVCBQ0IV0?xml=/news/2003/01/07/nrape07.xml&sSheet=/news/2003/01/07/ixhome.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;$sessionid$XGKDUJYNVJHAFQFIQMFSFGGAVCBQ0IV0?xml=/news/2003/01/07/nrape07.xml&sSheet=/news/2003/01/07/ixhome.html)

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Shake-up for rape case procedures

Rape victims are to play a key role in changing how sex assault cases are dealt with, it has been announced.

The Crown Prosecution Service has launched a consultation exercise with support groups following complaints the legal system fails those who have been attacked.

The number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims

Harriet Harman Solicitor General Harriet Harman QC said the consultation was part of ongoing work to ensure victims had confidence in the criminal justice system.

During the consultation, which begins next month, rape victims will be asked what can be done to encourage those who have been attacked to take the case to court.

The exercise will also focus on how prosecutors or police could help victims in the courtroom, and what extra information could be given to victims to make the process easier.

Government plans are already under way to set up a nationwide network of specially trained rape prosecutors.

"Rape is a callous and brutal crime," Ms Harman said.

"The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process."

Ms Harman said: "This is part of our determination to ensure justice for rape victims and to ensure the guilty are convicted."

Victim support

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Each year the number of convictions for rape is growing but the increase is not keeping pace with the rise in reports of rape.

Ms Harman said that, since 1985, reports of rape had increased by 400% but convictions by only 40%.

Director of Public Prosecutions Sir David Calvert-Smith QC said:
"What we are very anxious to do is make sure victims of these crimes are supported from the moment they pluck up the courage to go to the police to the moment the case is concluded at Crown Court."

Support organisations complain that, when rape victims take the witness stand, they find themselves subject to excessive cross-examination about their sexual history.

Special measures, including screens to hide victims giving evidence in court, are already working well.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/2631819.stm



Rape Victims Give Court Advice

VICTIMS GIVE COURT ADVICE Rape victims are to be asked for their views on the way police and prosecutors handle sex assault cases, it has emerged.

The launch of the consultation exercise with rape victims follows a series of complaints that the justice system fails a huge number of rape complainants.

A report published last year shows just 7.25% of cases reported to police end up with an offender being sentenced.

Of the 1,741 cases analysed by inspectors just 28% saw attackers being charged or cautioned.

The main criticisms focus on the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system.

The consultation exercise, to be launched by Solicitor General Harriet Harman QC and Director of Public Prosecutions Sir David Calvert Smith QC at the Attorney General's Chambers in London, is due to get under way next month.

The comments from rape victims and support organisations will form a public policy statement which is part of an on-going Government initiative to overhaul the way rape cases are handled.

Government plans are already under way to set up a nationwide network of specially trained rape prosecutors.

A spokesperson from the Rape Crisis Federation welcomed the CPS's consultation exercise.

"It is very important that rape victims and organisations like us who support victims are consulted.

"The main changes we would like to see are improvements in the way rape cases are investigated and prosecuted.

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"We would like to see prosecutors meeting survivors of rape so they can hear their stories directly and not just read the police statement."

<http://www.sky.com/skynews/article/0,,30100-12218576,00.html>



Victims consulted on handling of sex cases

Rape victims consulted on handling of sex cases

The Crown Prosecution Service has launched a consultation exercise with support groups following a series of complaints that the legal system fails large numbers of rape victims.

Victims will be asked for their views on how sex assault cases are dealt with in a effort to improve justice for those who have been attacked. Harriet Harman QC, Solicitor General, said the consultation was part of ongoing work to ensure that victims have confidence in the criminal justice system.

"Rape is a callous and brutal crime," she said. "The justice gap between the number of reported rapes and the number of convictions shows quite clearly that we must do more to support rape victims through the often traumatic criminal justice process."

She said: "This is part of our determination to ensure justice for rape victims and to ensure that the guilty are convicted."

Ms Harman said that each year the number of convictions for rape was growing, but that the increase was not keeping pace with the rise in reports of rape. She said that since 1985 reports of rape had increased by 400 per cent but convictions by only 40 per cent.

Sir David Calvert-Smith QC, Director of Public Prosecutions, said it was important that victims were supported from the moment they came forward to the police. He added that, like domestic violence and homophobic crime, rape attacks were under-reported and, furthermore, acquittal rates were higher than for most other crimes.

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witness stand they find themselves subject to excessive cross-examination about their sexual history. It has also been suggested that more could be done to prevent victims having to wait long periods before giving evidence.

It was revealed that special measures including screens to hide victims giving evidence in court were working well and that Crown Courts, particularly in London, were granting such procedures without any difficulty.

<http://portal.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2003/01/06/urape.xml&sSheet=/portal/2003/01/06/ixport.html>



Nappy news for MP super mum

AN MP is expecting to set a record after revealing she is pregnant with her fourth child.

Treasury minister Ruth Kelly, MP for Bolton West, shares the record with Harriet Harman for having the most children while in office.

Now she is on course to set a new record if all goes well when her fourth child is born in May or June next year.

Since becoming an MP, Mrs Kelly has juggled her work with looking after Eamonn, five, Sinead, four, and two-year-old Roisin.

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After revealing the happy news, Mrs Kelly and her husband, Derek, are enjoying a relaxing holiday in Spain to prepare for the new arrival.

Thrilled

Mrs Kelly, 34, said: "Derek and I are absolutely thrilled, we have always wanted a large family. The other children are also very excited and we are all looking forward to a new arrival in the New Year.

"We don't know if we are expecting a boy or a girl, we'll have to wait and see."

Former journalist and economist Mrs Kelly attributes her success at juggling motherhood and ministerial duties to being organised and trying to avoid taking the usual red box of papers home at the weekend.

She tries to bring the whole family, who are based in London, back to their second home in Horwich for the weekend as often as possible.

Her spokesman George McNamara said: "Effective time-management

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"But she always gives 100 per cent to everything, whether it is the Treasury, her family or her constituency. It is wonderful news and it will be nice for the other children to have another brother or sister." Commonwealth Games 2002 Buy the commemorative brochure. Buy the official commemorative book.

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18 DEC 2002

Harriet Harman
Ms Harriet Harman M.P.
House Of Commons

London
SW1A 0AA

Harriet Harman

Tuesday 17, December 2002

Keyword	Publication	Page	Date	A4s
<u>Harriet Harman.</u>				
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Harriet Harman

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Jackie Ashley Domestic violence is on the agenda
— the first sign of feminised politics

From Little Mo to IDS: black eyes are the new black

Ha. So Tony Blair is spearheading a campaign against domestic violence. Bet he wants to land one on Cherie at the moment, with all the havoc her dodgy friends have caused. Ha, ha, ha. That, I'm afraid, is the way domestic violence has always been treated: a bit of a joke, a laugh for the lads, a brag down the boozer. Until now. Suddenly something has changed the shocking figures that surround domestic violence. More than 200 women are killed by their husbands or partners every year. Domestic violence also makes up at least a quarter of all reported crimes. Compare that with street crime — just 2% — about which we have heard so much recently, and you wonder about our priorities as a society.

When it was revealed earlier this year that murder rates in British cities were the highest for a century, one Home Office official tried to look on the bright side by pointing out that a third of these were "domestic". The assumption that somehow these are lesser killings, not to be worried about quite as much as — the much rarer — street murders by strangers, is deeply rooted.

The newspaper stories are like the poor, always with us. Think, only recently, of the two children killed alongside their mother; the 14-year-old boy killed trying (unsuccessfully) to save his mother; the four children who will grow up to learn that they were asleep upstairs while their father malleted their mother to death in the sitting-room.

Each story chills; yet most of us turn the page and move on. It must have been such an unusual situation, an incomprehensible private tragedy, beyond the range of public policy.

And yet, at last, there seems to be a spreading acceptance that this is not so. Domestic violence is everywhere as an issue: black eyes are the new black. Today, Tony Blair and Barbara Roche, from the deputy prime minister's office, will announce a cash injection of millions of pounds for refuge accommodation, to counteract the disturbing news that one in six of those needing local authority housing is fleeing a violent partner. A million pounds of lottery money, alongside a further million from the government will help set up a National Refuge Helpline, providing a single comprehensive database, with immediate advice on where refuge places are available. Domestic violence has been raised several times recently at prime minister's questions. Blair declares it "at the top of the criminal justice agenda".

A new bill — proposed for next year, with consultation in the spring — would give anonymity to victims of domestic violence when they testify; allow the criminal courts to use restraining orders on violent spouses; make reviews of all domestic violence-related deaths mandatory, since police believe many could be prevented; and make breaking a non-molestation order a criminal, rather than a civil offence. That should be in

next year's Queen's speech.

Even before that, there are legal changes afoot. Harriet Harman, the solicitor general, is behind new moves to force more prosecutions, even when women are pressured into trying to drop them, arguing that if you assault someone in the home you are every bit as much a criminal as someone who assaults a stranger in the street. Harman is working, along with the attorney general, to get the court of appeal to overturn unduly lenient sentences in domestic murder cases. Among those which have been referred to the court are the three gruesome cases mentioned above.

And it isn't just Labour. The Association of Chief Police Officers suggests a register of domestically violent men, like that of sex offenders: one problem is that men who beat up women tend to move around, strike up new relationships and carry on. The Conservatives, meanwhile, are launching a Christmas campaign, including the distribution of 10,000 posters warning of "Boxing Day", and highlighting the fact that one woman in four is the victim of domestic violence at some point. Iain Duncan Smith says that "for us as a party, this is not just a side show — this is serious", and, as proof of that, they have agreed to work with the government to produce a bill that really makes a difference.

Whether or not people listen to the politicians, they certainly pick up messages from TV soaps and dramas. This week BBC 1 announced that it was to include a new series,

Hitting Home, in its winter season as part of a BBC campaign against domestic violence. And storylines are to be written into Casualty after Little Mo's experiences at the hands of her abusive husband, Trevor, in EastEnders produced a huge public response, according to the channel controller, Lorraine Heggessey.

Any issue which can unite Labour and Tory campaigns, bring in the police and also mobilise one of the biggest opinion-formers, television drama, has clearly seized the imagination of official Britain. Men too, of course, can be victims of domestic violence. We mustn't forget that, but in the huge majority of cases, it is women we are talking about. In terms of women's real lives, this may be the single most important political shift for a generation — remembering that the murders are only the worst end of a spectrum of beatings, kickings and lacerations that go on all the time.

So why this sudden awareness? For once, the simplest explanation seems the best one. At last, the slow incursion of women into public life is having some effect. On the government benches, it is female ministers like Harriet Harman, Barbara Roche, Hazel Blears, Yvette Cooper, and their backbench



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supporters such as Vera Baird, Maggie Moran, Julia Drown and Fiona Mactaggart, who have been pushing this. For the Tories, Caroline Spelman seems to have been the moving force. And without a main channel controller like Heggeseey, would the BBC have been quite so interested?

Along with some of the family tax changes and credits coming out of the Treasury, this is the first real sign of the feminised political agenda so many people thought they

saw coming in 1997 — the first flicker of hope that all those bland, smiling female faces clustered round Tony Blair would actually make a difference. Along with them we now see a clutch of senior women in top positions throughout television — Heggeseey, but also Jane Root, Jana Bennett, Dawn Airey, never mind the quangocracy. Of course, there are still far too few female politicians, almost no senior female judges and hardly any real fe-

male opinion formers in business. Too few female ministers are being promoted just now. But the sisters are shuffling, if not marching, and what a difference it already makes.

How much further might this go? What would be the effect on transport policy, on the environment and on work-life laws if the feminisation of politics continued? I don't know about you, but for me it would be the first possibility in many years of beginning to scrub away the

grime of cynicism that has slowly blotted out most of our hopes for public life.
jackie.ashley@guardian.co.uk

In terms of women's real lives, this may be the biggest shift for a generation



'We need more cops' says MP

A THOUSAND police on the streets of Southwark - that's the call from anti-crime campaigners.

A powerful coalition including councillors, all three of the borough's MPs and local tenants' and residents' associations are backing a petition calling for more cops.

Figures released by Camberwell and Peckham MP Harriet Harman show Southwark has lost more than 100 officers since 1997 and almost the same number of civilian support staff.

In March 1997, the borough had 881 officers and 278 civilian staff, but by March this year that figure had dropped to 176 civilian staff and fewer than 775 officers.

Speaking at a meeting at Peckham police station, Ms Harman said: "We want to see far more police and more civilian staff to back them up.

"We don't want more police just to see them sitting in the stations doing paper-work."

A spokeswoman for the Met said decisions about staffing levels would be made by the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Campaigners have taken to the streets gathering signatures for the petition. You can also back the campaign and sign on at the Southwark council website on www.southwark.gov.uk

Alternatively you can write supporting the campaign to the London Assembly member for Southwark and Lambeth, Val Shawcross, at City Hall, The Queen's Walk, SE1 2AA.

Ms Shawcross will hand the petition to Mayor Ken Livingstone this week.

<http://icsouthlondon.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/0200southlondonheadlines/page.cfm?objectid=12442433&method=full&siteid=50100>



From Little Mo to IDS: black eyes are the new black

Jackie Ashley

Wednesday December 11, 2002

The Guardian

Ha. So Tony Blair is spearheading a campaign against domestic violence. Bet he wants to land one on Cherie at the moment, with all the havoc her dodgy friends have caused. Ha, ha, ha. That, I'm afraid, is the way domestic violence has always been treated: a bit of a joke, a laugh for the lads, a brag down the boozier.

Until now. Suddenly something has changed the shocking figures that surround domestic violence. More than 200 women are killed by their husbands or partners every year. Domestic violence also makes up at least a quarter of all reported crimes. Compare that with street crime - just 2% - about which we have heard so much recently, and you wonder about our priorities as a society.

When it was revealed earlier this year that murder rates in British cities were the highest for a century, one Home Office official tried to look on the bright side by pointing out that a third of these were "domestic". The assumption that somehow these are lesser killings, not to be worried about quite as much as - the much rarer - street murders by strangers, is deeply rooted.

The newspaper stories are like the poor, always with us. Think, only recently, of the two children killed alongside their mother; the 14-year-old boy killed trying (unsuccessfully) to save his mother; the four children who will grow up to learn that they were asleep upstairs while their father malleted their mother to death in the sitting-room. Each story chills; yet most of us turn the page and move on. It must have been such an unusual situation, an incomprehensible private tragedy, beyond the range of public policy.

And yet, at last, there seems to be a spreading acceptance that this is not so. Domestic violence is everywhere as an issue: black eyes are the

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Durrants

Harriet Harman

[D1799-1]

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new black. Today, Tony Blair and Barbara Roche, from the deputy prime minister's office, will announce a cash injection of millions of pounds for refuge accommodation, to counteract the disturbing news that one in six of those needing local authority housing is fleeing a violent partner. A million pounds of lottery money, alongside a further million from the government will help set up a National Refuge Helpline, providing a single comprehensive database, with immediate advice on where refuge places are available. Domestic violence has been raised several times recently at prime minister's questions. Blair declares it "at the top of the criminal justice agenda".

A new bill - proposed for next year, with consultation in the spring - would give anonymity to victims of domestic violence when they testify; allow the criminal courts to use restraining orders on violent spouses; make reviews of all domestic violence-related deaths mandatory, since police believe many could be prevented; and make breaking a non-molestation order a criminal, rather than a civil offence. That should be in next year's Queen's speech.

Even before that, there are legal changes afoot. Harriet Harman, the solicitor general, is behind new moves to force more prosecutions, even when women are pressured into trying to drop them, arguing that if you assault someone in the home you are every bit as much a criminal as someone who assaults a stranger in the street. Harman is working, along with the attorney general, to get the court of appeal to overturn unduly lenient sentences in domestic murder cases. Among those which have been referred to the court are the three gruesome cases mentioned above.

And it isn't just Labour. The Association of Chief Police Officers suggests a register of domestically violent men, like that of sex offenders: one problem is that men who beat up women tend to move around, strike up new relationships and carry on. The Conservatives, meanwhile, are launching a Christmas campaign, including the distribution of 10,000 posters warning of "Boxing Day", and highlighting the fact that one woman in four is the victim of domestic violence at some point. Iain Duncan Smith says that "for us as a party, this is not just a side show - this is serious", and, as proof of that, they have agreed to work with the government to produce a bill that really makes a difference.

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Any issue which can unite Labour and Tory campaigns, bring in the police and also mobilise one of the biggest opinion-formers, television drama, has clearly seized the imagination of official Britain. Men too, of course, can be victims of domestic violence. We mustn't forget that, but in the huge majority of cases, it is women we are talking about. In terms of women's real lives, this may be the single most important political shift for a generation - remembering that the murders are only the worst end of a spectrum of beatings, kickings and lacerations that go on all the time.

So why this sudden awareness? For once, the simplest explanation seems the best one. At last, the slow incursion of women into public life is having some effect. On the government benches, it is female ministers like Harriet Harman, Barbara Roche, Hazel Blears, Yvette Cooper, and their backbench supporters such as Vera Baird, Maggie Moran, Julia Drown and Fiona Mactaggart, who have been pushing this. For the Tories, Caroline Spelman seems to have been the moving force. And without a main channel controller like Heggessey, would the BBC have been quite so interested?

Along with some of the family tax changes and credits coming out of the Treasury, this is the first real sign of the feminised political agenda so many people thought they saw coming in 1997 - the first flicker of hope that all those bland, smiling female faces clustered round Tony Blair would actually make a difference. Along with them we now see a clutch of senior women in top positions throughout television - Heggessey, but also Jane Root, Jana Bennett, Dawn Airey, never mind the quangocracy. Of course, there are still far too few female politicians, almost no senior female judges and hardly any real female opinion formers in business. Too few female ministers are being promoted just now. But the sisters are shuffling, if not marching, and

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How much further might this go? What would be the effect on transport policy, on the environment and on work-life laws if the feminisation of politics continued? I don't know about you, but for me it would be the first possibility in many years of beginning to scrub away the grime of cynicism that has slowly blotted out most of our hopes for public life. jackie.ashley@guardian.co.uk Special report

Gender issues

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,857575,00.html>



Black eyes are the new black

Until now. Suddenly something has changed the shocking figures that surround domestic violence. More than 200 women are killed by their husbands or partners every year. Domestic violence also makes up at least a quarter of all reported crimes. Compare that with street crime - just 2% - about which we have heard so much recently, and you wonder about our priorities as a society.

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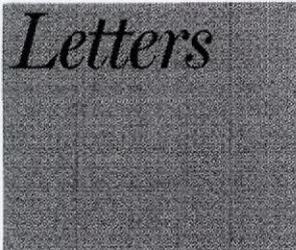
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http://politics.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,9115,857798,0_0.html



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A suitable case for women judges

According to an all-male court of appeal, short prison sentences for manslaughter are appropriate "where the killer has a defence of provocation arising from the faithless conduct or disenchantment of his partner". ('Lenient' jail terms for killers upheld, December 21).

The three cases of men who had killed their wives or partners were brought before them by the attorney general, Lord Goldsmith, and the solicitor general, **Harriet Harman**, because they were concerned that judges were imposing short prison sentences if they took the view that men were "provoked".

Far from reversing this trend, the three lordships appeared to have thoroughly

endorsed the 19th-century patriarchal approach of treating women as their men's sexual property. Apparently, a man may be provoked so that his killing of his wife or partner is to be punished no more than a punch-up outside a pub, and less than the sentences imposed on the Blackburn rioters, if she dares as much as say she was "disenchanted".

In one case, a man who killed by punching his partner's head and was sentenced to three years was said not to intend her serious harm; in another, a wife was stabbed 12 times in front of their four children when she told her husband she had feelings for another man, and a sentence of seven years was found to

be appropriate; and in the third case a sentence of four years was upheld when a man suffocated his ex-partner who had left him.

No doubt the judges were told that 42% of all female homicide victims in England and Wales were killed by their current or former partners (as against 4% of male victims) or two women a week (Home Office, 2001).

Would it be too much to ask that in cases such as these there is at least one female judge? There are at last some women judges in the court of appeal. They should be used.

Tess Gill
London
gill@oldsquarechambers.co.uk





Clearing house Eleven who are going

Joyce Quin, 58, Gateshead East and Washington West

A former Europe and agriculture minister. Quin wants to stand for a future north-east regional assembly

Alice Mahon, 65, Halifax

A veteran peace campaigner, Mahon has pledged to address meetings throughout Britain after she stands down

Brian Sedgemore, 65, Hackney South and Shoreditch

The bane of new women Labour MPs after he described them as "Stepford Wives", Sedgemore caused some surprise when he called for a woman to replace him

Peter Pike, 65, Burnley

One of the few remaining MPs to have done national service, Pike has championed the Indian subcontinent since his election to parliament in 1983

Win Griffiths, 59, Bridgend

A campaigner for overseas



Quin: eyeing assembly

development — he taught in Tanzania in his 20s — Griffiths briefly served as a junior Welsh Office minister in 1997

Llew Smith, 58, Blaenau Gwent

A persistent rebel who ran into trouble with the Labour leadership for opposing devolution, Smith has pledged to speak up for socialism in his last years in parliament

Kevin McNamara, 68, Hull North

A former history teacher,



Sedgemore: Stepford jibe

McNamara was Labour's chief spokesman on Northern Ireland until Tony Blair removed him from the post in 1994, fearing he was overly sympathetic to nationalists

Gerry Steinberg, 57, City of Durham

A former headteacher, Steinberg has been a stalwart of select committees since his election in 1987

John McWilliam, 61, Blaydon

A former engineer, McWilliam



Mahon: peace campaigner

is a deputy Speaker for backbench Westminster Hall debates

Syd Rapson, 60, Portsmouth North

A former MoD aircraft fitter and union shop steward, Rapson wants to spend more time with his family

Terry Lewis, 66, Worsley

A former local government official, Lewis has served on three Commons select committees since his election in 1983



Women MPs target looks distant for Labour

Lack of vacant seats could hit moves to boost representation

Nicholas Watt
Political correspondent

A mere handful of Labour MPs have announced they are to stand down at the next general election, raising fears that barely any new women will be elected to parliament.

Around a dozen veteran MPs formally notified the party ahead of yesterday's deadline that they will not contest the next election.

This immediately raised doubts about whether Labour would achieve its target of having 35% of women MPs in each English and Welsh region.

The Labour party refused to comment yesterday on which MPs have decided to stand down at the next election, which is expected to take place in 2005.

But it is understood that around a dozen MPs, 11 of whom are named by the Guardian, have formally told the party of their intention to retire.

The list is headed by the former Europe minister, Joyce Quin, and the veteran peace campaigner, Alice Mahon. Other retiring MPs include the former frontbencher, Kevin McNamara, and the outspoken Hackney South and Shoreditch backbencher, Brian Sedgmore, who branded the record number of women Labour MPs elected in 1997 "Stepford Wives".

In an attempt to end the pattern of "favoured sons" inheriting seats, Labour's national executive committee has drawn up new rules to try to increase the number of women MPs. The rules state that:

- Any seat where an MP announces retirement from today onwards will have to select the next candidate from an all-women shortlist.

- The two seats being vacated by women – Ms Quin's and Ms Mahon's – will have to select their next Labour candidate from an all-women shortlist.

- Half of the 10 other seats, in which a male MP has announced his intention to stand down by yesterday's deadline, will have to select their next candidate from an all-women shortlist.

The system is the brainchild of Patricia Hewitt, the women's minister, who won widespread praise among women's campaigners for introducing legislation to allow for all-women shortlists.

But some campaigners believe that the party must go further and impose all-women shortlists in every vacant seat.

Katherine Rake, director of the Fawcett Society, said: "With so few MPs standing down we would ask the party to use all-women shortlists for all those seats that are free. It is disappointing that not more MPs have announced that they are standing down, though the party can hardly be criticised for that."

Ms Rake said it was too early to judge the party's performance: "This is a test for them. Let us see how they get through this test. But they have done much better than the Tories who will not commit themselves to all-women shortlists."

There was support for Ms Hewitt from leading Labour women MPs. One senior MP said: "Pat Hewitt has done a great job – Labour's rules are miles ahead of the Tories. It

should be remembered that hardly any Labour MPs will stand down at the next election because a big clear-out took place in the run-up to the 1997 election."

Some leading women MPs believe that the departure of Ms Quin, who wants to stand for election to a future north-east assembly, shows how far Labour has to go in promoting and sustaining women.

One minister said: "Joyce is a huge political talent. It is a sign of how macho and how obsessed Labour is with projection that she did not flourish."

But all sides in the party agree that its new rules show how far the Tories have to go.

Caroline Spelman, one of the most prominent women on the Tory frontbench, was recently told in forthright terms by the solicitor general, **Harriet Harman**, that her party was repeating the mistake Labour made in the 1980s of failing to take positive action in favour of women.

Special report on the Labour party
[at guardian.co.uk/politics/labour](http://at.guardian.co.uk/politics/labour)



Harriet Harman caught doing 99mph on the M4



Harriet Harman: Taking son to university

SOLICITOR General Harriet Harman was caught speeding at 99mph on a motorway yesterday.

Police stopped the Government law chief's car on the M4 in Wiltshire - where the limit is 70mph - as she drove her son back to university in Bristol after the Christmas break.

Last night, a spokesman for the office of her superior, the Attorney General, said the 52-year-old MP intends to plead guilty to the charge at the 'first available opportunity'.

'Harriet Harman is very sorry that she exceeded the speed limit,' the spokesman added.

'She fully recognises that she should have paid more attention to the speed at which she was travelling.'

The spokesman said the former Social Security Secretary and Minister for Women had not yet been given any information by police about a date for a possible court appearance.

A Downing Street spokesman said: 'Harriet Harman said she is sorry and made clear she intends to plead guilty.'

A spokesman for Wiltshire police said snow showers did not hit the county until later yesterday afternoon. 'We are assuming it was cold but clear when the offence took place,' he added. Miss Harman does

'She says she is very sorry'

have a driver, but as she was not on official business she was driving herself. Last night, Edmund King, executive director of the RAC Foundation, said she could face a driving ban because of the high speed.

'In the past, we've argued that maybe the speed limit on motorways should be upped to 80mph,' he added.

'But 99mph is way beyond that, especially given that the winter weather conditions were certainly not conducive to road safety.'

When Labour came to power in 1997, Miss Harman, MP for Camberwell and Peckham, was seen as the typical 'Blair Babe'.

She entered the Cabinet as Social Security Secretary, but was sacked just 14 months later in July 1998 after a series of blunders.

Born into a professional background, she followed in her mother's footsteps and trained as a solicitor, becoming a barrister.

When she first entered the Commons in 1982, she had the reputation of being a hard-Leftist, but turned her back on her radical roots once in the Cabinet as a model Blairite.

As Social Security Secretary, she pushed through controversial cuts in benefits for lone parents, insisting they 'wanted to work'.

She showed the same lack of political touch in sending her children to distant selective secondary schools rather than local Southwark comprehensives, without first clearing it with Tony Blair. The Prime Minister protected her until she was in the head-

75 feared dead as plane crashes

MORE than 70 people - including at least two Britons - were killed when an airliner crashed last night, splitting apart in flames as it landed in heavy fog.

Of the 80 people on board only five were thought to have survived.

The Turkish Airlines RJ-100 was flying from Istanbul to the south-eastern city of Diyarbakir when it

came down in the military section of the city's airport. Prime Minister Abdullah Gul said the military was dismissing the possibility of sabotage.

'The reason for the crash is being investigated,' he added. 'Most probably it was bad weather.'

Among the injured was a two-year-old boy.

Survivor Aliye Il, who fell out of the airliner as it broke up, spoke

of a crashing sound as it landed.

'The plane split into two and was burning, then there was an explosion.'

'The whole plane was burning,' she said.

Relatives were seen crying and comforting each other at Diyarbakir airport.

The Foreign Office confirmed last night that at least two Britons were believed to be among the dead.

Daily Mail Reporter

lines for all the wrong reasons, and she was forced to leave the Cabinet.

She has been Solicitor General since 2001 and is deputy to the Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith - who is chief legal adviser to the Government.

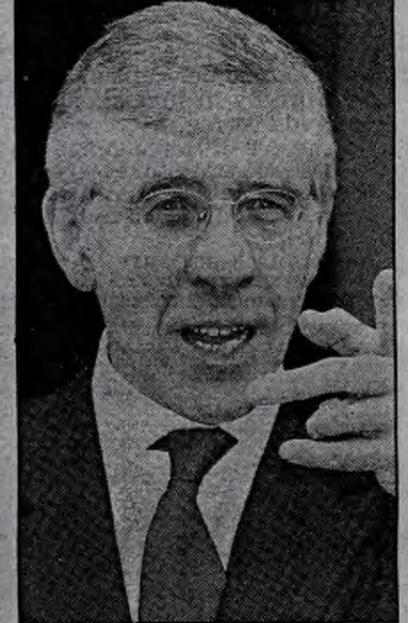
Miss Harman has responsibility for legal policy, a wide range of civil law issues, including charity and family matters, and questions of European Community and international law.

Her speeding incident comes more than two years after Jack Straw's police driver escaped prosecution for doing more than 100mph.

He told investigators he was trying to get away from a 'perceived threat' to the then Home Secretary.

The driver was said to have been clocked at 103mph in his unmarked Vauxhall Omega as he drove Mr Straw along the M5 to an engagement in Exeter in July 2000.

After a four-month inquiry, the CPS and Avon and Somerset police said that he had accelerated to escape any danger after 'an incident involving other vehicles'.



Straw: Driver escaped prosecution



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New arrest as toxin hunt intensifies

Nick Hopkins and Audrey Gillan

Detectives investigating the mysterious production of a lethal poison found in a north London flat have arrested a seventh man and intensified their hunt for a small quantity of the toxin which they believe has gone missing.

Through officers admit they remain unclear about the extent of any plot, sources said the inquiry was "massive and complex" and would probably lead to further arrests in the coming days.

The developments came above a pharmacy in Wood Green, pending hearings about their legal status, but were not there when detectives raided the property on Sunday and found ricin residue and basic scientific equipment.

Six men and a woman were arrested at different addresses in north and east London at the weekend. The woman has since been released.

Scotland Yard said yesterday that a seventh man has now been detained. The 33-year-old was arrested in north London on Tuesday at 4pm.

The arrest is part of ongoing inquiries by the anti-terrorist branch and is linked to Sunday's arrests, a Metropolitan police spokesman said.

Harman caught driving at 99mph on M4

Rebecca Allison

The solicitor general, Harriet Harman, was stopped by police yesterday for speeding on a motorway, the Attorney General's Office confirmed.

The MP for Camberwell and Peckham was allegedly travelling at 99mph in a 70mph zone on the M4 in Wiltshire, and intended to plead guilty to the charge at the "first available opportunity", a spokeswoman said.

Harriet Harman is very sorry that she exceeded the speed limit. She fully recognises that she should have paid more attention to the speed at which she was travelling," she added.

The MP was driving her son back to university in Bristol after the Christmas break when she was pulled over.



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informed the leaders of the Jewish community and other vulnerable ethnic groups. French intelligence services

INSIDE

Boy's escape

A British teenager snatched by his Palestinian father in the West Bank in 1999 is safely home with his mother in Wales after an extraordinary escape in which he eluded in-laws and Israeli snipers and checkpoints.

Visa ruling

Jamaicans visiting Britain will need a visa from Tuesday night under new Home Office rules aimed at curbing illegal immigration. The measure is also expected to help tackle drug and gun smuggling from the island.

German squeeze

Germany was given five months to put its public finances in order or face huge EU fines, putting more pressure on Gerhard Schröder as unions are threatening the first public sector strike in a decade.

Replica gun ban

The Government is to ban the carrying of replica guns and will raise the age for owning air weapons from 14 to 17 after an alarming rise in gun crime.



02

Paris or London, "one security source said. Of the suspects being held in London, five are said to be Algerian. The others are believed to be an Ethiopian and a Moroccan. Police suspect that all of them may have travelled here on false documents.

Special Branch officers and counter-terrorist detectives are scouring telephone records, documents, credit card slips and anything that may identify other suspects who are still missing. They are still uncertain how many people were involved. Police say that their first priority is to track down the rich. Forensic teams found only traces of the poison left on equipment in the flat, leading them to believe that a quantity may still be at large.

One security source said: "They could have dispersed of the rest, hidden it somewhere, or they might try to smuggle it out of the country, although it is very dangerous in transit." While Jewish, Sikh and Hindu community leaders have been warned to be on their guard, security was also stepped up around senior politicians yesterday because of

in Paris. American officials are also involved in the investigation as to where else Islamic terrorists may be manufacturing lethal chemicals. As forensic teams returned to the top floor flat yesterday to continue their search, and to take away more material from the building, Beverly Hughes, the Home Office Minister, said: "It is understandable that people are concerned. But we need to keep it in perspective. People need to be alert, but not alarmed and panicked."

Doctors around Britain have been warned to look for symptoms of exposure to ricin, one of the most powerful poisons and one for which there is no antidote. Symptoms include fever, stomach ache, diarrhoea and vomiting. Sue Atkinson, director of public health for London, said that most hospitals in the capital had been alerted. "People should know that this is around but they shouldn't be alarmed," she said. "If you've got flu-like symptoms, the chances are you've got flu."

Terror War, pages 10 & 11
Leading article, page 25

Daily grunt of families who don't know how to chat

By Glen Owen

Education Correspondent
FAMILY conversations have deteriorated into a "daily grunt" that leaves young children unable to talk properly, according to the man in charge of maintaining educational standards in Britain. Alan Wells blames television and long working hours and fears that thousands of

families are becoming like the Royle family, the monosyllabic layabouts in the BBC sitcom, who live in the shadow of the television. He says that parents should go back to school to relearn how to talk to their offspring in order to counter a sharp drop in primary school pupils' linguistic abilities. Mr Wells, director of the Government's Basic Skills

Agency, set out to investigate why pupils reaching primary school age had the worst language skills in memory. Research has shown that in some areas up to half of children aged five lack linguistic ability. Working-class families are most likely to be affected, but children from affluent backgrounds also suffer because their parents tend to work long hours. Mr Wells also

blamed the rise of one-parent families and the end of shared mealtimes, which had ended the reasoned discussion of the day's events. At the age when they come into school, many children have very few language skills at all," he told the North of England Education Conference in Warrington. "It's because of the children sitting in front of the television

and the computer and the lack of time families spend having food together. It clearly has an impact on their learning." Mr Wells said that the splintering of family structures meant that grandparents were less likely to pass on the social skills or to contribute to the development of their grandchildren. He said that the agency had pioneered a programme in

Wales called Language and Play, to advise parents how to interact with their children, and that introducing it across the country would be a worthwhile investment. He added that tests for seven and 11-year-olds had damaged their development. "I think the tyranny of tests in schools has become entirely negative," he said. "The danger is testing, not teaching."

The crash happened as the aircraft tried to gain altitude. The US Airways Air Midwest Beech 1900 turboprop, with 19 passengers and two crew, crashed during take-off, clipping the corner of a hangar and bursting into a fireball. It was on a flight to Greenville-Spartanburg airport 100 miles away in South Carolina.



road and rail networks were thrown into chaos by bad weather. More than two inches of snow fell in Central London, the heaviest showers for 12 years, while four inches fell on outer suburbs. Parts of Kent and Essex saw more than six inches of snow. Blizzards closed the Bluewater shopping centre in Kent, the country's largest

M25 and A2 were blocked by snow, and the AA dealt with almost 2,000 breakdowns an hour. At Heathrow, 150 flights, mainly to Europe and domestic destinations, were cancelled and dozens delayed. The wintry weather, caused by high pressure over Britain drawing in bitter winds from Eastern Europe, is expected to ease today. Scattered snow showers are

stable in the Midlands, the North East and Scotland. Sharp frosts are forecast over the weekend. "There may be a few wintry showers, but it will be nothing like the past few days," he said. "The worst of the weather is over."

Rare old battering, page 7
Leading article, page 25

Harman stopped doing 99mph

By David Brown

HARRIET HARMAN, the Solicitor-General, was yesterday stopped by police for speeding at 99mph. Ms Harman, the Labour MP for Camberwell and Peckham, was almost 30mph above the 70mph limit when she was stopped on the M4 in Wiltshire while taking her son back to university in Bristol after the Christmas break.

A spokeswoman for the Attorney-General's Office said that she intended to plead guilty at the first available opportunity. "Harriet Harman is very sorry that she exceeded the speed limit. She fully recog-

nises that she should have paid more attention to the speed at which she was travelling," she said. The spokeswoman said that police had not yet told Ms Harman about a possible date for a court appearance. As Solicitor-General, Ms Harman, 52, the first woman to hold the post, is one of the most senior law officers in the country.

A source close to her said last night that she was mortified about the incident. "She does not intend to offer any excuses or argue mitigating circumstances in any way. She has thrown her hands up. "It is the first speeding of-

fence she has had in her life and she is understandably very angry with herself. There is nothing she can say other than how sorry she is." Ms Harman will consider herself relatively lucky to be caught speeding at 99mph. Drivers exceeding 100mph can usually expect a driving ban of at least a month and a fine of around £800. However, for a first offence, she can expect to have her driving licence endorsed with a number of penalty points and a fine. She is also likely to see her motor insurance premium increase when it is renewed. The incident follows one in 2000 when the chauffeur

Jack Straw, then Home Secretary, was stopped by police driving at 103mph along the M5 near Taunton. No fixed penalty was issued. A few months later, when it was decided that the chauffeur would not be charged, it was claimed that he had accelerated to avoid a potential risk of ter spotting another car approaching at high speed. John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, has four speeding convictions, the last in 1997 when he drove at 80mph on a 30mph section of the icy M62 motorway. He said that he was going to a constituency surgery and did not want to keep people waiting in the cold.

75 die in Turkish air crash

By Our Foreign Staff

SEVENTY-FIVE people were killed last night when a civilian airliner crashed in heavy fog at Diyarbakir in southeast Turkey. Five people survived. The Foreign Office said that at least two Britons were believed to be among the victims. The Turkish Airlines aircraft, on a flight from Istanbul, crashed two miles from the airport while going in to land. One woman survived when she was thrown clear of the aircraft and landed on a bale of hay. "The plane crashed with a huge noise and caught fire before breaking up," Altye Ilgin told the Anatolia news agency. "It was engulfed in flames."

Earlier in the day, a US commuter plane carrying 21 people crashed during take-off at Charlotte Douglas International Airport, North Carolina. The crash happened as the aircraft tried to gain altitude. The US Airways Air Midwest Beech 1900 turboprop, with 19 passengers and two crew, crashed during take-off, clipping the corner of a hangar and bursting into a fireball. It was on a flight to Greenville-Spartanburg airport 100 miles away in South Carolina.

The Times Today: page 2. Leading articles: 25. Crossword and weather: 26. TV & radio: T2, 23-28

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of the inspectors' first full report to the Security Council on Jan 27. Officials said the date was "not a deadline"; the inspectors should be given "time and space" to carry out their work. They also insisted that an indefinite game of "cat and mouse" was not acceptable. Hans Blix, the chief weapons inspector, is expected to tell the Security Council that Iraq is co-operating in terms of procedure, but that he needs time to investigate the apparent omissions in the latest declaration of its weapons programmes. Hard-liners in Washington see Iraq's claim that it has no banned weapons as enough justification for action. British officials know that the real decision about the war will be taken by President George W Bush. Powerful voices in Washington argue that prevarication would risk allowing another crisis to divert the effort against Iraq and afford Saddam a symbolic victory. British officials hope that London's reservations and Mr Blair's growing problems in the Labour Party will help to tip the balance in the Bush administration in favour of delay. But they accept that Britain will go along with an American-led war in almost all circumstances, including a conflict in the spring if Washington is determined to launch an early campaign. The first Prime Minister's Questions of the year, held at noon instead of 3pm under Commons reforms, was dominated by Iraq. Iain Duncan Smith, the Tory leader, highlighting the spat between Mr Hoon and Mr Straw, warned Mr Blair that he could not win public backing for a war if he could not convince his Cabinet and if troops were only "half-prepared for war".

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Tunnel of snow: Ricin terror flat was rented for asylum seekers

By JOHN STEELE AND PHILIP JOHNSTON

THE flat where police found traces of the poison ricin had been rented by a London council and provided to two teenage asylum seekers, it emerged yesterday. Islington borough council said "two of the people arrested by police... had been placed in this accommodation by Islington council under our obligation to support destitute asylum seekers as required by existing legislation. The people in question are young people, over 16 but under 18."

Police sources said only one man was arrested in the second-floor flat, above Guardian Pharmacy on Wood Green High Road, on Sunday and he was in his 20s. Scotland Yard confirmed, though, that at least two men in their late teens were being held under the Terrorism Act. Local people recalled seeing a group of north African men linked to the flat. Some of those arrested are thought to be students and a several have been in Britain only for a short time. Police are trying to establish their true identities and recent movements. A seventh man has been arrested, police said yesterday, as the hunt continued for associates who may hold a quantity of the lethal poison which was removed from the flat before police raided it. The 33-year-old is believed,

like the other six, to be of Algerian origin. The arrests were being hailed by MI5 as "significant" and confirmation of back-ground intelligence pointing to attempts by terrorist groups linked to al-Qaeda to acquire biological, chemical or even nuclear weapons. "It is the first real, hard evidence that they are in that business," said one source. Police have still found no evidence of a plot to use the ricin against a specific target and played down speculation that it was to be sprayed in the face of a leading politician such as Tony Blair.

Although even a few grammes of ricin could have spread panic if used in a public place, one anti-terrorist officer said: "We should not lose sight of the fact that it may not have been intended for use in Britain. It is not clear what the target was." Investigators believe the poison could have been taken abroad, possibly to France, by terrorists who regarded London simply as a safe place in which to concoct it. The six were arrested at five addresses around London on Sunday and, apart from the two teenagers, are in their 20s and 30s. Police were led to the alleged terrorists by a lengthy intelligence operation involving a number of foreign agencies.

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Harriet Harman stopped for speeding at 99mph

By TOBY HELM AND ANDREW HIBBERD

HARRIET Harman, the Solicitor General, was stopped by police for speeding at 99mph on a motorway yesterday. The MP for Camberwell and Peckham was recorded breaking the limit in a 70mph zone on the M4 in Wiltshire, a spokesman for the Attorney General's office said. Miss Harman, a QC and the first woman to be appointed

Solicitor General, had her 20-year-old son, Harry, in the car when she was stopped. She was taking him back to university in Bristol after the Christmas break. The spokesman said Miss Harman intended to plead guilty to the charge at the "first available opportunity". She added: "Harriet Harman is very sorry that she exceeded the speed limit. "She fully recognises that she should have paid more

attention to the speed at which she was travelling." No date has been set for a hearing. A spokesman for Wiltshire police said that Miss Harman was pulled over by a motorway patrol. He added: "A vehicle was stopped doing excess speed and dealt with accordingly. The weather at the time was cold and clear. "The RAC said: "On a day like that it is surprising to

hear that a high-profile MP would be travelling at such speed and taking such a risk." Government sources said her position as Solicitor General was not under threat. Miss Harman, 52, was appointed secretary of state for social security and minister for women in Tony Blair's first Cabinet in 1997. But she was eased out of the job the following year. She was appointed to the post of Solicitor General in 2001.

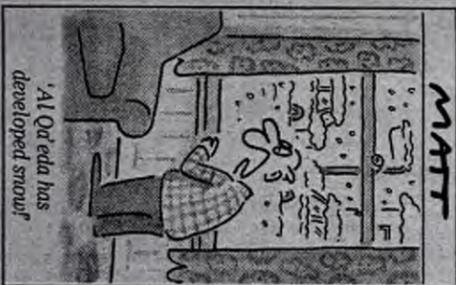


Harriet Harman: 'Very sorry'

Ban on replica guns

By PHILIP JOHNSTON HOME AFFAIRS EDITOR

A BAN on the possession in public of replica firearms and tough new controls on air guns were announced by the Government last night. The laws will make it illegal for anyone to carry a replica or air weapon without a good reason. The age limit for acquiring and using an air gun without adult supervision will be increased from 14 to 17. The move was announced before figures are published today showing that gun crime has doubled since Labour came to power in 1997. It also anticipates a "summit" tomorrow in London on gun crime following the killing of two cousins in Birmingham last week. This week the Home Office promised to give the courts the power to impose five-year minimum prison sentences on those caught with guns. Although the police have pressed for new controls, the legitimate shooting community will be dismayed at further curbs only a few years after the sport of pistol shooting was almost destroyed by the handgun ban imposed after the Dunblane massacre. There will also need to be widespread exemptions for the many people who use replica weapons to re-enact historical events, such as Civil War battles. The Home Office is also considering a ban on the sale, manufacture and import of so-called tandem air cartridge systems, such as the Brocock, and the licensing of those already held. These are the guns which the police fear are particularly easy to convert to firing live ammunition. Existing owners will be able to apply for a licence or be offered an opportunity to hand in their guns voluntarily. These guns, which are sold legally in their thousands, have been involved in a spate of murders, hold-ups and muggings. Scotland Yard said that 75 per cent of the guns it seized on the streets were adapted air weapons. Police estimate that up to 600,000 imitation guns could be in circulation in Britain. There is no law to prevent their sale and many are worn Judge's plea: Page 5



MPS snub Blair over hospitals

Tony Blair suffered a damaging blow to his flagship health policy last night as dozens of Labour MPs refused to back his plans for elite foundation hospitals.

Tory plotters

Disgraced Tory MPs are looking for a senior figure in the shadow cabinet to lead the "men in grey suits" who will tell Iain Duncan Smith that he no longer has the confidence of the party.

Hunt silenced

A foxhunt has had a noise abatement order imposed on it and the master of hounds has been told to stop his hounds from baying to prevent a nuisance.

Jet Britons die

At least two Britons were believed to be among the 75 people killed last night when an airliner crashed in heavy fog in Turkey.

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TV & Radio pages 30-31 Business pages 32-38 The Daily Telegraph 9-1-03 9 1770307 123849 A B C D E F *

Confusion reigns over 2003 police numbers allocations

Anthony Phillips

CONFUSION REIGNED this week over the number of police officers to be allocated to Southwark this year, with some claiming the borough is to receive just seventeen extra officers, and others stating no figures can be set until a budget has been decided.

The 'News' spoke to the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) this week and was told that Southwark will receive an extra seventeen officers this financial year. But in the same day the 'News' obtained a letter written by the chair of the authority, by Harris, written to the borough's three MPs, which states otherwise.

The borough's three MPs, Simon Hughes, Harriet Mann and Tessa Jewell, along with London Assembly rep Val Shawcross and the council, are desperate to avert a repeat of last year's fiasco, which saw Southwark allocated just eleven extra officers. The MPA's decision making process, the Resource Allocation Formula (RAF), newly adopted that it, was much criticised for being unfair to Southwark by the borough's politicians.

This week a spokesman for the MPA said that this year Southwark's RAF allocation was to award the borough just six extra officers, taking the number to 791 to 797. On top of that five boroughs have been awarded extra officers due to their high crime rates, with Southwark being one of the main recipients, gaining an extra eleven officers. This brings the total allocation to seventeen, and Southwark's amount of officers to 808.

It is this information is contradicted by a letter sent to Toby Harris to Southwark's three MPs this week, which has been obtained by the 'News'. In it he states that as London Mayor Ken Livingstone has



expressed an intention to further increase police numbers in the capital in 2003/4, no decision can yet be made. He writes that it is not until the GLA and the Mayor decide on the Met's annual budget, that the MPA can make any allocations. This decision will not be made until February at the earliest.

The borough's three MPs, Val Shawcross and the council have vowed to carry on lobbying the GLA and MPA to increase Southwark's quota. The 'News' reported in November last year how politicians lost a cross-party campaign to increase Southwark's police numbers by 200. With Southwark's current numbers wavering around the 800 mark, the campaigners' aim is to achieve 1,000 officers for the borough - a figure reached after high profile meetings with Southwark's borough police Commander Rod Jarman.

Blue Plaque nominations
NOMINATIONS FOR the Blue Plaque Scheme are now closed and judges will this week make up a short list of 50 before voting starts.

The scheme, which is being run by the council in conjunction with the 'News', will see 20 blue plaque being placed across the borough to celebrate a person, place or event. Over the next few months voting slips will be available in the paper, in the council's magazine Southwark Life and in key places, to get locals to decide who they think deserves a blue plaque. Watch out for next week's edition when we will reveal the shortlist.

Guy's panto

STAFF AT Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital are staging their annual panto this Friday and Saturday at the Greenwood Theatre.

The financial director of the Trust down to junior nurses will star in the show, which this year will be Robin Wood. After playing Simple Simon in last year's performance, local MP Simon Hughes is back on stage this time playing King Richard.

There are no tickets but there is a programme donation of £3.50. The show is open to the public and under 3s and patients at the hospitals are free from making a donation. First showing is at 7pm, Friday January 10 followed by a Saturday matinee at 2.30pm and a evening performance at 7pm. For more details call 07850 517242.

A New Year message from!

Southwark News
Jan 9th 2003

**A New Year message from:
Harriet Harman MP, Simon Hughes MP, Tessa Jowell MP,
Val Shawcross AM and Southwark Council**

**In 2003 we will continue to
campaign for 1,000 police officers
for Southwark**

Contact us now to pledge your support:

**Telephone 020 7983 4097 Fax 020 7983 5852
Write to Southwark Police Campaign, Rm 7.11, City
Hall, Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA
Email valerie.shawcross@london.gov.uk**

The campaign is supported by local groups in Southwark, including the Police Sector Working Groups

Southwark News
Jan 9th 2003

57 HARRIET HARMAN MP SOLICITOR GENERAL

The QC who has learnt to keep her own counsel may yet earn a return to Cabinet

HARRIET HARMAN'S ministerial red box lies open on her desk. Her conversation is peppered with references to Tony. The message is clear – the Member of Parliament for Camberwell and Peckham is back at the heart of Government and proud of it.

Eighteen months ago, Ms Harman, one of New Labour's best-known faces, was languishing on the back benches, having been dropped from the Cabinet in Tony Blair's first reshuffle after the landslide election of 1997.

Many suspected that New Labour's Secretary of State for Social Security had paid the ultimate price for not believing in some of the policies she had been asked to enforce.

Ms Harman's Radio 4 interview with John Humphrys over cuts to lone-parent benefits, in which she demonstrated an inability, or unwillingness, to mount a cogent defence, was held up as evidence of her disloyalty. So was her decision to send her eldest son to a distant grammar school instead of the local comprehensive.

Throughout her exile on the back benches, she took her medicine without protest while at the same time skilfully distancing herself from any old Labour plots to embarrass their New Labour masters.

Last year, Ms Harman's loyalty was rewarded when she was appointed Solicitor General, the first woman to attain such a rank.

Since then, her profile has remained low key, leading many to suspect that in return for an early return to the Government she has promised to keep her counsel. Does Ms Harman think she has been silenced?

"Absolutely not," she says. "I think the law officer's role is a very important role. It's not just a place to be quiet in Government. I did actually say that if I was to be returned to Government I should be given a job to do with the law, which would have either been in the Lord Chancellor's Department or here [Law Officers' Department]. I think it's just the way things fell.

"I would have been more than happy to have found myself in the Lord Chancellor's Department. I don't believe the fact it is a behind-the-scenes

BY ROBERT VERKAIK
Legal Affairs Correspondent

role has anything to do with me having being given it. Nor do I think there was any intention of having me in Government but behind the scenes."

The very different demands and unique constitutional position of the Solicitor General mean that Ms Harman has spent her first year learning the ropes of her job. As one of the Government's most senior law officers, the Solicitor General devotes much of her time to providing confidential advice to ministers – not the sort of work that lends itself to press releases or lobby gossip.

Ms Harman is acutely aware of the need to respect the sensitivities of her post. "I have wanted to make clear to everyone I deal with, the Bar, the judiciary and other departments, that this is not just an unbroken line of me being in

can't live up to its commitment to tackle violent crime unless it tackles domestic violence."

The time has come, she says, for a change in public attitude so people no longer turn a blind eye to wife beaters. "Once upon a time people thought it was not only all right for a husband to beat his wife it was also a man's duty," she says. "Then it was not legal to beat his wife but if he did, she must have brought it on herself. I can remember that attitude from my mother's generation. Now it's in its third phase – it's a bad thing but we probably can't do anything about it because it's behind closed doors and it's all too difficult."

Ms Harman is fighting to bring about a fourth phase. "Domestic violence is something that the criminal justice system can do something about and must do something about."

One way the Solicitor General, and her boss, the Attorney

General, Lord Goldsmith QC, can help to bring about this change is by referring to the Court of Appeal sentences that they believe are unduly lenient and undermine the public confidence in the criminal justice system.

In recent months, the law officers have enjoyed mixed success. This summer the Court of Appeal increased sentences imposed on two men convicted of beating up their wives. One was a retired professor aged 66 who broke his wife's ribs, punctured a lung and put her in hospital for four days. The judge took account of the man's depression, partly a result of his wife's decision to leave him for another man, his public service and his exemplary career, and imposed a community rehabilitation order. The professor had to have psychotherapy and 60 days of domestic-violence training but he avoided jail.

When the case came before the judges in the Court of Ap-

peal, they agreed with the law officers that the level of violence would have justified a prison sentence and he was given a six-month jail term. In another domestic violence case heard the same day, a two-year sentence was increased to three.

But the traffic has not been one way. This month, a plea by the Attorney General for longer prison sentences for husbands who kill their wives was rejected. The court declined to interfere in three cases where the offender killed his spouse or partner in a ruling that makes clear a judge must be free to consider all the mitigating and aggravating circumstances in a case of domestic manslaughter. The issue is expected to go to the Sentencing Advisory Panel, which guides the Court of Appeal on length of sentences.

Ms Harman knows these are very difficult questions for the courts and the Crown Prosecution Service. In many cases, she says, even when the beaten wife or partner is in hospital she is still begging the Crown prosecutor to drop the case. "She knows she has got to get better to look after her children. The last thing she wants is to have the stress of giving evidence. The prosecutor then has to decide whether to witness-summons her or whether to drop the case. Where does the public interest lie when she wants to drop the case and the couple are at the back of the court holding hands in love?"

More is now being done by the Government to tackle domestic violence, including the establishment of a ministerial committee where all departments work together. New Crown Prosecution Service guidance means that prosecutors don't automatically drop the case when the police say that the complainant is retracting her testimony.

So why the sudden interest in this hidden crime? "I think that has come about because there are many more women MPs. In the last two out of three Prime Minister's Questions, women have asked Tony about domestic violence. When I was first elected if you raised domestic violence once it was regarded as irrelevant, if you raised it twice you were regarded as obsessed. The fact



Harriet Harman denies she has been silenced by being given a behind-the-scenes role

Andy Paradise

there are more women MPs changes the climate in which this issue is discussed."

It is easy to see how Ms Harman's legal and political career has provided her with an apprenticeship for the job of Solicitor General.

Before she came to government she was an active civil rights campaigner, busy taking ministers to court when she thought their decisions were wrong or unreasonable. In this

way, the law officers, who represent the Government of the day in legal actions, and Ms Harman had more than a passing familiarity of each other's work.

In the early 1980s she was on the receiving end of a contempt of court action brought against her by the former attorney general Sir Michael Havers QC. Ms Harman represented a prisoner against the Home Office, which she

claimed was in breach of the rules on solitary confinement. Documents were read out in court, which she later showed to a journalist who had been present at the hearing. The Government said that by disclosing the documents outside the courtroom she was in contempt and successfully prosecuted her.

But Ms Harman won the day when she took her case to the European Court of Human

Rights in Strasbourg and successfully argued that the prosecution had breached her right to freedom of expression. In the field of public law, Harman v United Kingdom is still a well-known case that is cited in textbooks. But Harriet Harman has ambitions beyond legal textbooks and her reward for not causing any waves as the first female Solicitor General may yet include a place in Tony's next Cabinet.

THE INDEPENDENT

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Healing the scar on the conscience of the world demands leadership now

LEADERSHIP IS easy when people are begging to be told what to do. Thus the Prime Minister's failure to demonstrate this important quality over the England cricket team's matches in Zimbabwe is all the more puzzling.

Nasser Hussain's somewhat unedifying plea yesterday for someone else to make an "informed moral judgement" for him should have prompted an instant response from Tony Blair. Yet he left it to the Foreign Office minister, Mike O'Brien, to underline the disapproval previously expressed by Clare Short and various unnamed spokesmen by reiterating that it is not up to the Government, but that the Foreign Office would prefer it if England didn't go.

It is not as if this were a question that has suddenly sprung from between the paving stones and demanded an instant decision. *The Independent* called on Mr Blair in August to ask the cricketing authorities to refuse to play in Zimbabwe in February. Richard Caborn, the sports minister, had merely asked the England and Wales Cricket Board to "reconsider" it.

Since then, Mr Caborn has shown all the moral fibre of a wet blanket, saying it was up to the International Cricket Council (ICC) to decide whether the World Cup "pool" matches should be played in Zimbabwe. Yet the ICC only decided that it would be safe for players and journalists, which is not the issue at all.

The real issue is this: anyone committed to democracy and human rights should refuse to confer legitimacy on Robert Mugabe's odious regime in Zimbabwe. He is a tyrant who has ruined his country, starved his people and stolen an election.

In the endless debate between engagement and isolation, the Cricket World Cup is an easy call: don't go. Dictators crave international re-

spectability and this competition will give it to this dictator. A boycott, on the other hand, would draw attention to his pariah status. On a more cynical level, it is not even as if the England team has much chance of winning.

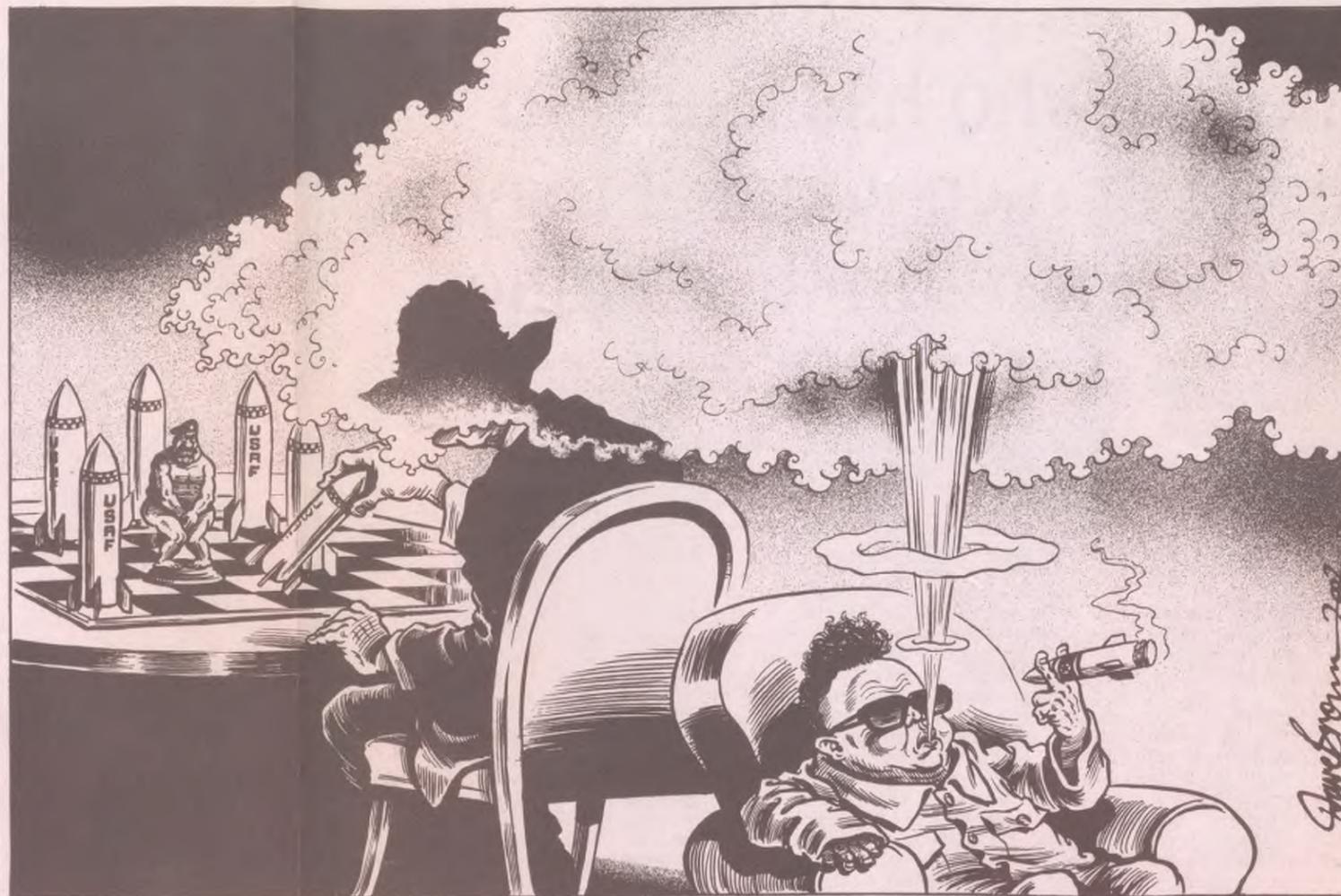
Yes, there are counter-arguments. An England boycott would reinforce Mr Mugabe's anti-white and anti-British propaganda. But we have moved beyond such fine calculations by now.

This sporting event has become a test of the fine sentiments expressed in the rich world about Africa. For it became even clearer yesterday that the whole continent cannot be written off as a basket case run by dictators, in which corruption is endemic and any aid effort doomed simply to line the pockets of a plutocracy.

In Kenya, power changed hands in a peaceful clear-out on the classic democratic model. Daniel Arap Moi was one of the Mugabe generation of African leaders, once hailed as an enlightened and benevolent ruler but whose record faltered. As corruption spread, Kenya faced a choice between the slide into tyranny or democratic renewal. Mr Moi, deeply unpopular as he was, proved himself in his eventual decision to bow out.

It was Mr Blair who rightly declared last year: "The state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world. But if the world as a community focused on it, we could heal it." On the symbolic but important question of whether England should play cricket in Zimbabwe, he has failed to focus on it.

It now seems inevitable that the England players and managers will decide among themselves not to go. But their decision would have had much more impact if it had been fed by a clear request from the Prime Minister some time ago to help to isolate the Mugabe regime.



War with North Korea is now the unavoidable choice facing America

As usual, the Europeans are wrong. In their determination to convict President George Bush of serial naivety, a number of European commentators have been accusing the United States of concentrating on the wrong enemy. Why go to war against Saddam, on the suspicion that he might eventually acquire weapons of mass destruction, while ignoring North Korea which is on the verge of possessing nuclear weapons and already has the missiles to deliver them?

But this charge against the Americans is based on two false assumptions. It underestimates both their realism and their power. It seems as if some Europeans only became aware of the North Korean threat within the past few weeks. That was not true in Washington. I was told in late 2001 that the administration was fully apprised of the need to keep one eye on Kim Jong Il, and North Korea was included in the "axis of evil". The Americans are fully aware of the risk that Kim Jong Il might decide to indulge in some provocation during the invasion of Iraq. If so, he would be underestimating his adversary. The Americans possess more than enough firepower to make war on North Korea and Iraq simultaneously - though North Korea would be the harder target.



BRUCE ANDERSON

There seems no hope of a benign outcome. Kim Jong Il is bent on provoking America, which has no alternative but to respond

into the present as well as the past. It might help teach us how to deal with such degraded dictators.

In Mugabe's case, little can be done as long as his fellow African leaders refuse to face up to his destructive malice. It would be hard to create a military option without the local equivalents of Kuwait and Qatar. Moreover, containment is an option in Zimbabwe, albeit a profoundly uninspiring one. After all, Mugabe can do no more than wreck his own country and bring discredit on sub-Saharan Africa (which its governments deserve, unfair though it is to their peoples).

But containment has not worked against Saddam, nor against Kim Jong Il. It appears that the latter has set himself on a course which can have only one outcome: a collision with America. If so, we will be facing a war that makes Desert Storm II seem like a picnic in the desert. There is every reason to hope for another walkover against Saddam. There is no hope of a walkover against North Korea.

The military options are already being considered in Washington, and they all involve great risks. Even if the answers are secret, some of the crucial questions are obvious. Does the administration know where Kim Jong Il's nasties are stored? If

throw back the onslaught and destroy the artillery? Is it not inevitable that any conventional war lasting more than a few hours would involve thousands of American casualties, tens of thousands of South Korean casualties, and many tens of billions worth of destruction of property? In short, is there any sensible way of fighting a war with North Korea without a massive pre-emptive attack, and would conventional weaponry be enough to make that attack effective?

Apart from the military hazards in North Korea, there could also be diplomatic complications. The Chinese regard Korea as part of their sphere of influence, and would be disturbed by any dramatic manifestation of American power there.

Some Chinese leaders would be tempted to bargain a trade-off: North Korea for Taiwan. Here, the Korean imbroglio connects with the general issues of American/Chinese relations. The US view is simple. These days, there is little sentimental attachment to Taiwan and no reluctance to contemplate a long-term reunion of the two Chinas, but only on the right terms. Rape will not be permitted; no union by force.

The Chinese use aggressive language, especially when they believe that they are

Britain can be safer without turning millions into criminals

ONE PREDICTION that can be made with certainty is that next year there will be more criminals in Britain than there are now. This is not because the

to go on a driving course rather than have points deducted from their licences. This is worthy enough, but seems like a gimmick designed to draw

riars' rationalist propaganda has undermined political will. From the mid-19th century...

59 HARRIET HARMAN MP SOLICITOR GENERAL

The QC who has learnt to keep her own counsel may yet earn a return to Cabinet

By ROBERT VERKAR
Legal Affairs Correspondent

HARRIET HARMAN'S ministerial red box lies open on her desk. Her conversation is peppered with references to Tony Blair. The message is clear — the Member of Parliament for Camberwell and Peckham is back at the heart of Government and proud of it.

Eighteen months ago, Ms Harman, one of New Labour's best-known faces, was fanning on the back benches, having been dropped from the Cabinet in Tony Blair's first reshuffle after the landslide election of 1997.

Many suspected that New Labour's Secretary of State for Social Security had paid the ultimate price for not believing in some of the policies she had been asked to enforce.

Ms Harman's Radio 4 interview with John Humphrys over cuts to lone-parent benefits, in which she demonstrated an inability, or unwillingness, to mount a cogent defence, was held up as evidence of her disloyalty. So was her decision to send her eldest son to a distant grammar school instead of the local comprehensive.

Throughout her exile on the back benches, she took her medicine without protest while at the same time skilfully distancing herself from any old Labour plots to embarrass their New Labour masters.

Last year, Ms Harman's loyalty was rewarded when she was appointed Solicitor General, the first woman to attain such a rank.

Since then, her profile has remained low, key leading many to suspect that a return to an early return to the Government she has promised to keep her counsel. Does Ms Harman think she has been silenced? "Absolutely not," she says. "I think the law officer's role is a very important role. It's not just a place to be quiet in Government. I did actually say that if

can't live up to his commitment to tackle domestic violence.

The time has come, she says, for a change in public attitude so people no longer turn a blind eye to wife beaters.

Once upon a time, people thought it was not only alright for a husband to beat his wife, it was also a man's duty," she says. "Then it was not legal to beat his wife but if the wife must have brought it on herself, I can remember that attitude from my mother's generation. Now it's not a three-phase — it's a bad thing but we probably can't do anything about it because it's behind closed doors and it's all too difficult."

Ms Harman is fighting to bring about a fourth phase. "Domestic violence is something that the criminal justice system can do something about and must do something about."

One way the Solicitor General and her boss, the Attorney

General, agree with the law officers that the level of violence would have justified a prison sentence and he was given a six-month jail term. In another domestic violence case heard the same day a two-year sentence was increased to three.

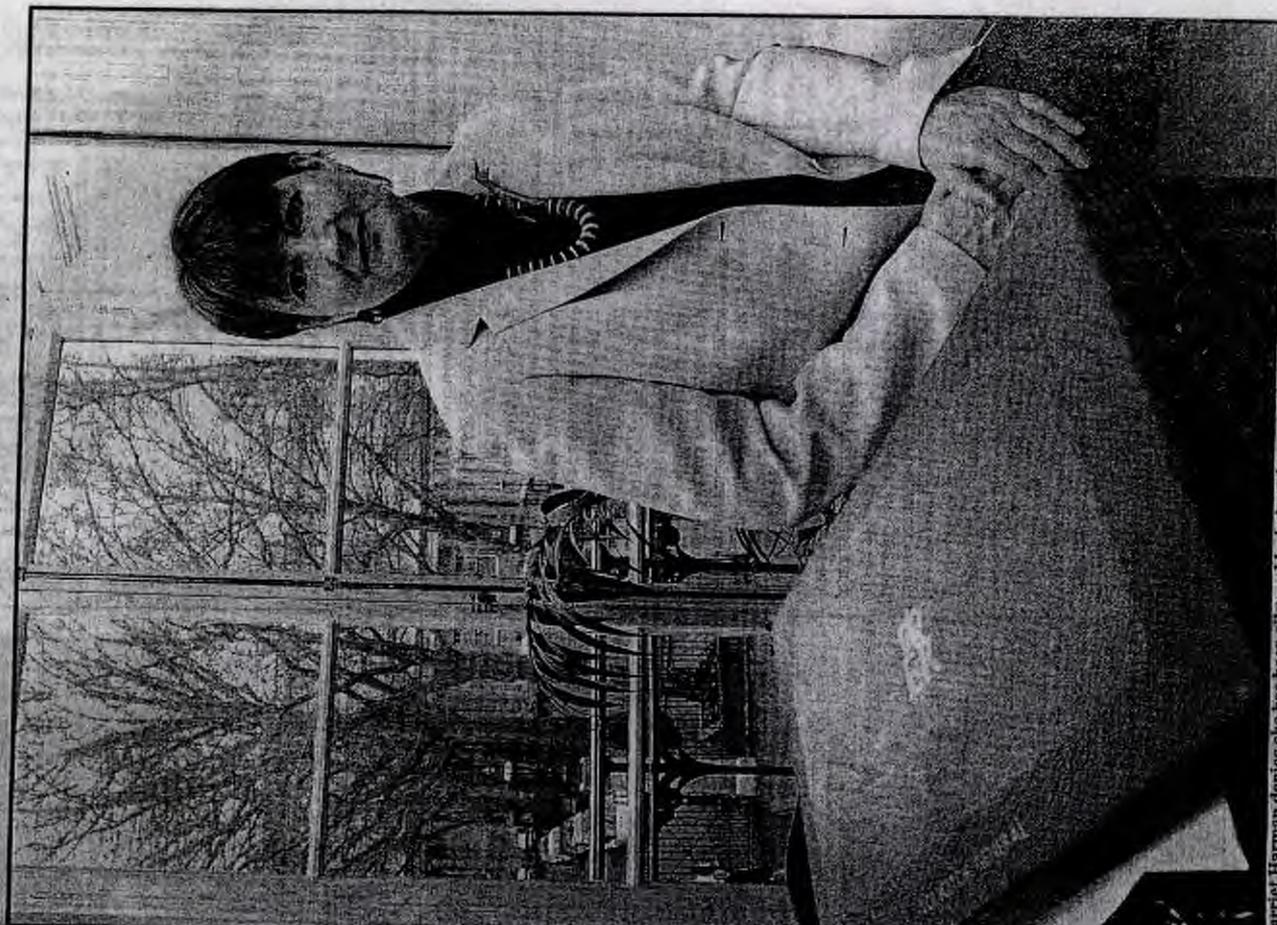
But the traffic has not been one way. This month, a plea by the Attorney General for longer prison sentences for husbands who kill their wives was rejected. The court declined to intervene in these cases where the offender killed his spouse or partner in a killing that makes clear a judge must be free to consider all the mitigating and aggravating circumstances in a case of domestic manslaughter.

The issue is expected to go to the Sentencing Advisory Panel, which guides the Court of Appeal on length of sentence.

Ms Harman knows these are very difficult questions for the courts and the Crown Prosecution Service. In many cases, she says, even when the beat-

en wife or partner is in hospital she is still begging the Crown prosecutor to drop the case. "She knows she has got to get better to look after her children. The last thing she wants is to have the stress of giving evidence. The prosecutor then has to decide whether to witness summons her or whether to drop the case. Where does the public interest lie when she wants to drop the case and the couple are at the back of the court holding hands in love?"

More is now being done by the Government to tackle domestic violence, including the establishment of a ministerial committee where all departments work together. New Crown Prosecution Service guidance means that prosecutors don't automatically drop the case when the police say that the complainant is retracting her testimony.



Harriet Harman denies she has been silenced by being given a behind-the-scenes role there are more women MPs, was the former office worker. Andy Paradise

Keep her own counsel may yet earn a return to Cabinet

BY ROBERT VERKAIK
Legal Affairs Correspondent

role has anything to do with me having been given it. Nor do I think there was any intention of having me in Government but behind the scenes."

The very different demands and unique constitutional position of the Solicitor General mean that Ms Harman has spent her first year learning the ropes of her job. As one of the Government's most senior law officers, the Solicitor General serves much of her time providing confidential advice to ministers - not the sort of work that lends itself to press releases or lobby gossip.

Ms Harman is acutely aware of the need to respect the sensitivities of her past. "Domestic violence is something that the criminal justice system can do something about and must do something about."

One way the Solicitor General and her boss, the Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith QC, can help to bring about this change is by referring to the Court of Appeal sentences that they believe are unduly lenient and undermine the public confidence in the criminal justice system.

In recent months, the law officers have enjoyed mixed success. This summer the Court of Appeal increased sentences imposed on two men convicted of beating up their wife. One was a retired professor aged 65 who broke his wife's ribs, punctured a lung and put her in hospital for four days. The judge took account of the man's depression, partly as a result of his wife's decision to leave him for another man, his public services and his exemplary career, and imposed a community rehabilitation order.

The professor had to have psychotherapy and 60 days of domestic violence training but his wife's decision to leave him for another man was not a mitigating factor.

She says 25 per cent of homicides have a domestic context. "The Government should be looking at the need to tackle domestic violence."

She says 25 per cent of violent crime and a third of homicides have a domestic context. "The Government should be looking at the need to tackle domestic violence."

case live up to its commitment to tackle violent crime unless it tackles domestic violence."

The time has come, she says, for a change in public attitude so people no longer turn a blind eye to wife beaters. "Once upon a time people thought it was not only all right for a husband to beat his wife it was also a man's duty," she says. "Then it was not legal to beat his wife but if he did, she must have brought it on herself. I can remember that attitude from my mother's generation. Now it's in the third phase - it's a bad thing but we probably can't do anything about it because it's behind closed doors and it's all too difficult."

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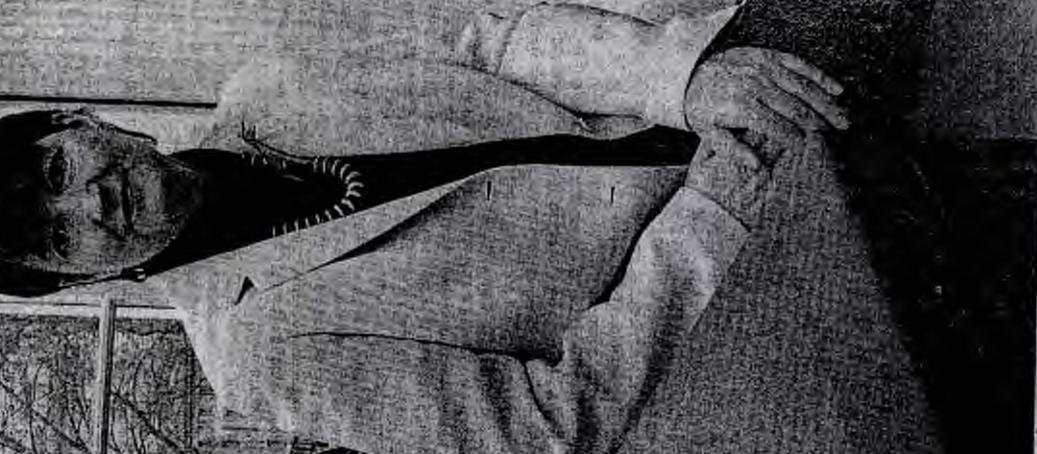
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So why the sudden interest in this hidden crime? "I think that has come about because there are many more women MPs in the last two out of three Prime Minister's Questions. Women have asked them about domestic violence. When I was first elected if you raised a domestic violence issue it was regarded as irrelevant. If you raised it twice you were regarded as obsessed. The fact

there are more women MPs changes the climate in which this issue is discussed. It is easy to see how Ms Harman's legal and political career has provided her with an apprenticeship for the job of Solicitor General.

Before she came to government she was an active civil rights campaigner busy taking ministers to court when she thought their decisions were wrong or unreasonable. In this



Harriet Harman denies she has been alienated by being given a behind-the-scenes role
Andy Paradise

Rights in Strasbourg and successfully argued that the prosecution had breached their right to freedom of expression. In the field of public law, Harman v United Kingdom is still a well-known case that is cited in textbooks. But Harriet Harman has ambitions beyond legal textbooks and her reward for not ceasing any waves as the first female Solicitor General may yet include a place in Tony's next Cabinet.

way, the law officers, who represent the Government of the day in legal actions, and Ms Harman had more than a passing familiarity of each other's work.

In the early 1990s she was on the receiving end of a contempt of court action brought against her by the former attorney general Sir Michael Havers QC. Ms Harman responded a pitilessly against the Home Office, which she

claimed was in breach of the rules on solitary confinement. Documents were read out in court, which she later showed present at the hearing. The Government said that by disclosing the documents outside the courtroom she was in contempt and successfully prosecuted her.

But Ms Harman won the day when she took her case to the European Court of Human

Since her appointment, her profile has remained low key, leading many to suspect that, for an early return to Government, she has promised to keep her counsel

Government - this is a very big break and a very different role. The unifying restaurant that got with Ms Harman's second job in government were tested to the full during the Darrell Taylor case. Although the boy's killing took place in the heart of her constituency, Ms Harman's opinions on what went wrong with the subsequent police investigation and prosecution have been conspicuous only by their absence.

As one of the law officers responsible for the Crown Prosecution Service, the agency at the centre of criticism after the case, she could not make her feelings public.

Nevertheless, Harriet Harman QC has found some time and leeway to work on the kind of political issues for which she has built her career. At the top of her agenda is the need to tackle domestic violence.

She says 25 per cent of violent crime and a third of homicides have a domestic context. "The Government should be looking at the need to tackle domestic violence."

Eighteen months ago, Ms Harman, one of New Labour's best-known faces, was languishing on the back benches, having been dropped from the Cabinet in Tony Blair's first reshuffle after the landslide election of 1997.

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"Absolutely not," she says. "I think the law officer's role is a very important role. It's not just a place to be quiet in Government. I did actually say that if I was to be returned to Government I should be given a job to do with the law, which would have either been in the Lord Chancellor's Department or here in Law Officers' Department. I think it's just the way things fall."

"I would have been more than happy to have found myself in the Lord Chancellor's Department. I don't believe the fact it is a behind-the-scenes



MERRY CHRISTMAS



**AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM HARRIET HARMAN MP AND
HER TEAM**

Surgery Times –
January, February, March 2003

Friday 10 th January	10:00 am
Friday 17 th January	10:00 am
Tuesday 28 th January	6:00 pm
Friday 7 th February	10:00 am
Friday 14 th February	10:00 am
Tuesday 25 th February	6:00 pm
Friday 7 th March	10:00 am
Friday 14 th March	10:00 am
Tuesday 25 th March	6:00 pm

All advice surgeries held at:
Southwark Town Hall
Peckham Road
SE5 8UB
Tel: 020 7525 5000

or email
harmanh@parliament.uk

or telephone
020 7219 4218

Southwark News

19/12/02

a number of housing officers and site managers, and I've now told the council's construction consultants and their new building company," he said. "In November 1999 Simms told me they would find alternative ways to fit the windows without destroying all my work, then the next January they went into liquidation. In October, the clerk of works told me they would rip it out but then replace it, but a month later, he had gone, and I was told the council would not do this."

Now, with the council insisting that the improvement work is removed so that windows

will never be able to make her home comfortable. "I was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour ten years ago and who knows what time I have left? I am now beginning to think I may pass on, but still the work won't be finished on this estate."

The 'News' asked the council if it had taken account of any previous warnings from John about the work he had carried out. In addition, an update was sought on how much compensation, if any, has been paid to long-suffering Canada Estate residents, as was promised by

In the Dock

Prison for girlfriend beating

A Nunhead cabbie who was said to have punched his girlfriend in the chest and nose after knocking her to the ground, was given a four-month jail term.

Black cab driver Robert Gale, 42, of Hichisson Road, was alleged to have used his fist in the first of two incidents, which occurred on May 12 and 15, in Peckham Rye.

The Defence Counsel argued that Gale's violent behaviour had only appeared at the end of the relationship, and he had never hit any of his previous girlfriends.

District Judge Stewart Black accepted that Gale had never been in trouble with the law before, but felt compelled to give him two consecutive two-month sentences.

He said: "It is with great regret I have to pass it. It was very seri-

ous, and you caused physical injury."

The Defence Counsel indicated their plans to appeal against the sentence.

Alleged crack dealer spends Christmas in custody

An accused Kennington-based crack dealer will spend Christmas in custody after he appeared in the Dock last Thursday.

Yusif Kamara, 24, of Benzance House, Seaton Close, was up for three counts of dealing at the Choumet Grove Car Park, Peckham, on two separate days.

It was alleged that on November 12, he supplied one rock and 152 mgs of crack cocaine, and two days later dealt a rock and 145mgs of the same banned class A substance.

Kamara was remanded to return

to Tower Bridge Court on January 3.

Handling stolen designer goods?

Handling £2500 stolen designer goods charge faced by a well man at Tower Magistrates Court Thursday.

Tony Atkins, 23, of N Road, was up for the charge allegedly took place on Drovers Place, Peckham.

He was expected to appear at Camberwell Magistrates Court this week, for his next

Drink driving charge

A 25-year-old woman was up for a drink driving charge at College Road Magistrates Court Thursday.

Ruth Trickey, of Gai

11 DEC 2002

Harriet Harman
Ms Harriet Harman M.P.
House Of Commons

London
SW1A 0AA

Harriet Harman

Tuesday 10, December 2002

Keyword	Publication	Page	Date	A4s
<u>Harriet Harman</u>				
Clip	The People	22	Sunday 8, December 2002	1
Clip	The Times	10	Wednesday 4, December 2002	2
Clip	Western Mail (Cardiff) (Supplement)	4,5	Wednesday 4, December 2002	2
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Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 1 of 1



HUNT VETO: Foxes safe

Fox-hunt ban WILL happen

FOX-HUNTING in England and Wales is facing a total ban – despite Tony Blair's bid to appease opponents of an outright veto.

Rural Affairs Minister Alun Michael introduced a Bill last week to allow limited licensed hunting.

And the PM made it clear he expects Ministers and their Parliamentary Private Secretaries to support the Government.

Yet EIGHTEEN of those aides are among 159 MPs who have signed a motion backing a complete ban.

They include the PPSs to Cabinet Ministers Jack Straw, Clare Short, Robin Cook, Lord Chancellor Lord Irvine plus Solicitor General Harriet Harman.

"These people are not natural rebels but they will follow their consciences," said revolt leader ex-Sports Minister Tony Banks.





Jail sentences for domestic killings 'are too lenient'

By Melissa Kite
Political Correspondent

THE Government went to the Court of Appeal yesterday in a landmark attempt to increase the sentence handed down to a man who stabbed his wife to death in front of their children.

The case of Leslie Humes, a solicitor who killed his wife in a jealous rage, is one of three domestic killings in which the Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith intervened, claiming that sentences were unduly lenient.

Humes was sentenced to seven years after admitting manslaughter by reason of provocation. He will be eligible for parole in three years.

He claimed that he was driven to attack his wife by her revelation that she was in love with another man. The Government argued yesterday that in a modern society the

ending of a relationship should not be seen as an excuse for a man to kill his wife.

Ministers are hoping to set an important precedent, limiting the extent to which men who kill their partners can claim provocation. If successful, it could lead to longer sentences being handed down.

The case has been championed by female Labour MPs, including **Harriet Harman**, the Solicitor-General.

David Perry, QC, acting for the Government, told the court that over the past decade a sentence of up to seven years in such cases had become almost the norm.

"The level of sentencing does not reflect the sanctity of life to which a civilised society should have regard," he said.

Humes, 40, a senior partner in a firm of Yorkshire solicitors, was jailed at Sheffield Crown Court in July. He had

been charged with murdering his wife Maddy, 36, in front of their four children, all aged under 14, on December 30, 2001.

After flooring his wife with the first knife blow, he continued stabbing her as she lay on the floor. At least three of the wounds went straight through her body.

At one point he walked away, then returned to stab her again as she lay unconscious on the floor and as her 14-year-old daughter tried to resuscitate her.

A tape recording of her daughter as she spoke to emergency teams on the telephone was played to the court.

But Humes was allowed to plead guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of provocation. He claimed that Mrs Humes had asked him to leave the family home and told him she was having an affair with her karate instructor.





Mr Perry said: "The degree of provocation was slight. Society expects a higher degree of self-control in circumstances where a relationship has broken down." Mr Perry urged

the sentence be increased to ten years.

Appearing for Humes, Robert Smith, QC, said he had been a loving husband, who lost control after being told his marriage was over. He urged the court to consider the interests of the children and the fact that their one remaining parent intended to re-establish a relationship with them when he was released.

Lord Justice Mantell, Mr Justice Bell and Mr Justice Andrew Smith will consider three sentences in all, including that of Darren Suratan, 35, of Stockport, Greater Man-

chester, who was jailed for 3½ years at Manchester Crown Court in May after being convicted of the manslaughter of his 33-year-old partner Sarah, who suffered a haemorrhage after punches to the head.

Suratan denied that it was a sustained attack or premeditated. The Attorney-General is asking for a sentence of six years to deter others and reflect public concern.

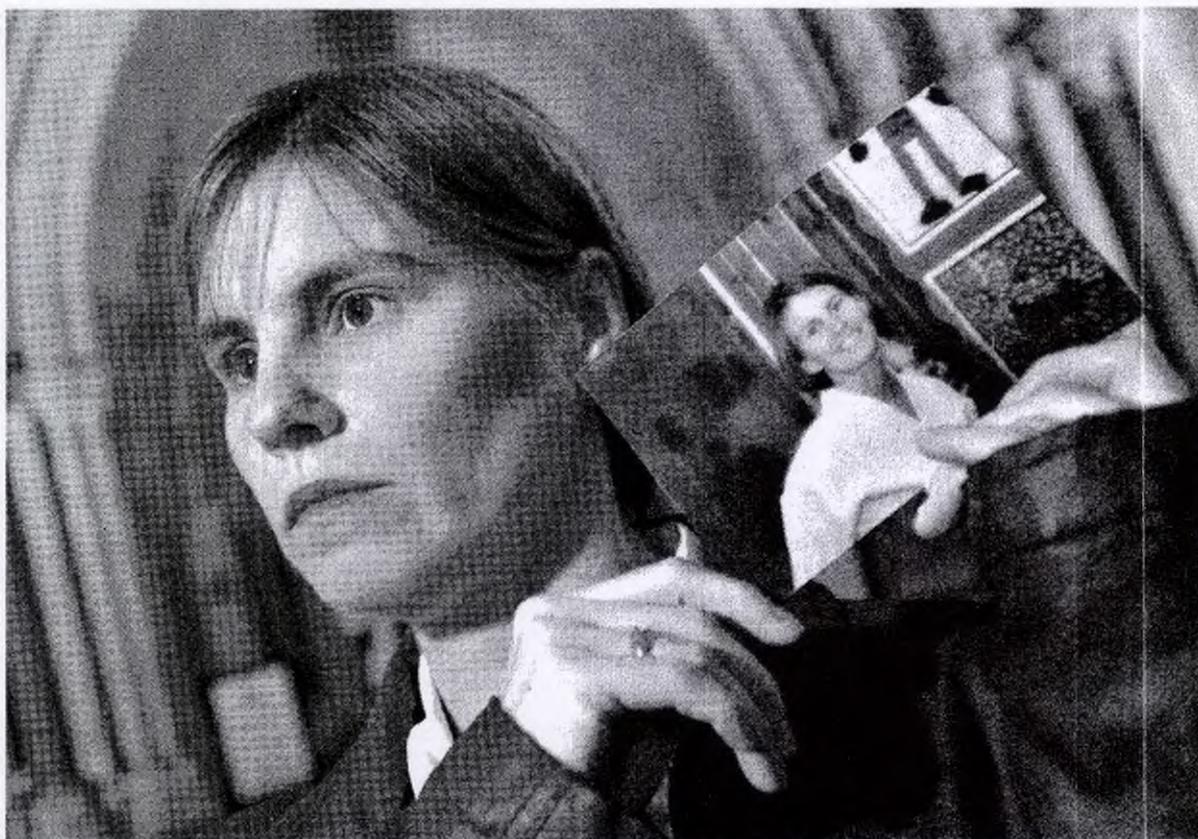
The third case involves Mark Wilkinson, 27, of Liverpool, who was convicted of manslaughter by reason of provocation and jailed for four years at Liverpool Crown

Court in September. He suffocated his victim, Nicole Lewis, 24, the mother of his two children, after she went to an address she had shared with him in the belief that she was meeting a counsellor.

Wilkinson, who was of previous good character, said he lost control when she spoke of her plans to move away and start a new life with a boyfriend. Mr Perry said that an appropriate sentence would be between six and seven years.

All three men waived their right to attend the hearing.

The court will hand down its findings before December 20.



Paula Watt demonstrates outside the court in London yesterday with a photo of her sister, Madeleine Humes

The university of Glamorgan law school

The Confederation of South Wales Law Societies is based within the Law School at the University of Glamorgan and offers continuing professional development for solicitors within South Wales.

The school is based in a modern, purpose-built building. It boasts excellent lecture theatres, a fully equipped mock-courtroom, student computer labs, student lounge and a refectory.

A wide range of Courses

The Law School offers a wide range of courses, all of which aid your future employment prospects.

The LL.B (Hons) programme, which is by far the largest in the school, is recognised by both the Law Society and General Council of the Bar. It is a qualifying degree and allows students to proceed on to professional qualifications, should they wish to become a barrister or solicitor.

Other courses include the HND in

Legal Studies, which places greater emphasis on vocational skills. Successful completion of this course would allow a student to enter the 'fast-track' LL.B programme, and proceed to a qualifying degree.

The foundation degree in Law provides a bridge between the HND and the LL.B. It focuses upon key skills that will increase student employability and uses work placements as a mode of assessment.

At postgraduate level, the school offers the Legal Practice Course, the final examination for qualification as a solicitor, and the postgraduate diploma in Law (Common Professional Examination), which is a transitional course for those with degrees in other disciplines who want to enter the legal profession. Postgraduate students can also opt for one of two LLM programmes in European Union law and employment law and practice.

There's much more!

Students regularly take part in mooted competitions and we have an active Student Law Society, offering many social events, including an end of year formal dinner and ball and law-related trips.

The Law School also has links with more than 40 firms and legal departments, which offer student placements, some of which have led to permanent employment. The school's sponsor, Leo Abse and Cohen, also offers a number of opportunities for work experience and training contracts.

The Law School is building up an enviable reputation for the quality of its students: earlier this year Solicitor General Harriet Harman QC attended the school to congratulate postgraduate students Victoria Giblin and Simon Morea for their success in gaining a special award in the Student Pro Bono Challenge.



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Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 2 of 2



ROLE MODEL: *Harriet Harman QC*



Spotlight on domestic violence

The shocking toll of domestic violence was highlighted at a conference in Coventry.

The event was organised by city-based Baby Lifeline and attracted high-profile speakers including Solicitor General, Harriet Harman.

Judy Ledger, chief executive and founder of Baby Lifeline said: "The whole conference has been fantastic." Harriet Harman really took the delegates by storm. This area of domestic violence, particularly during pregnancy, is something Baby Lifeline is going to be getting more involved with. "We want to try to organ-ise more training for health professionals and work with the police and other agencies in tackling this important issue." The event was hosted by Jaguar Cars at its new Brown's Lane conference centre.

Chief Supt Bob Minshull, of West Midlands police, based at Stoney Stanton Road police station, was among those attending, along with other police representatives, health professionals, lawyers, domestic violence service agency workers and charity members.

He said Coventry was leading the way in tackling domestic violence with initiatives such as working with perpetrators.

<http://iccoventry.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/0100localnews/page.cfm?objectid=12422622&method=full&siteid=50003>

Southwark News

05/12/02



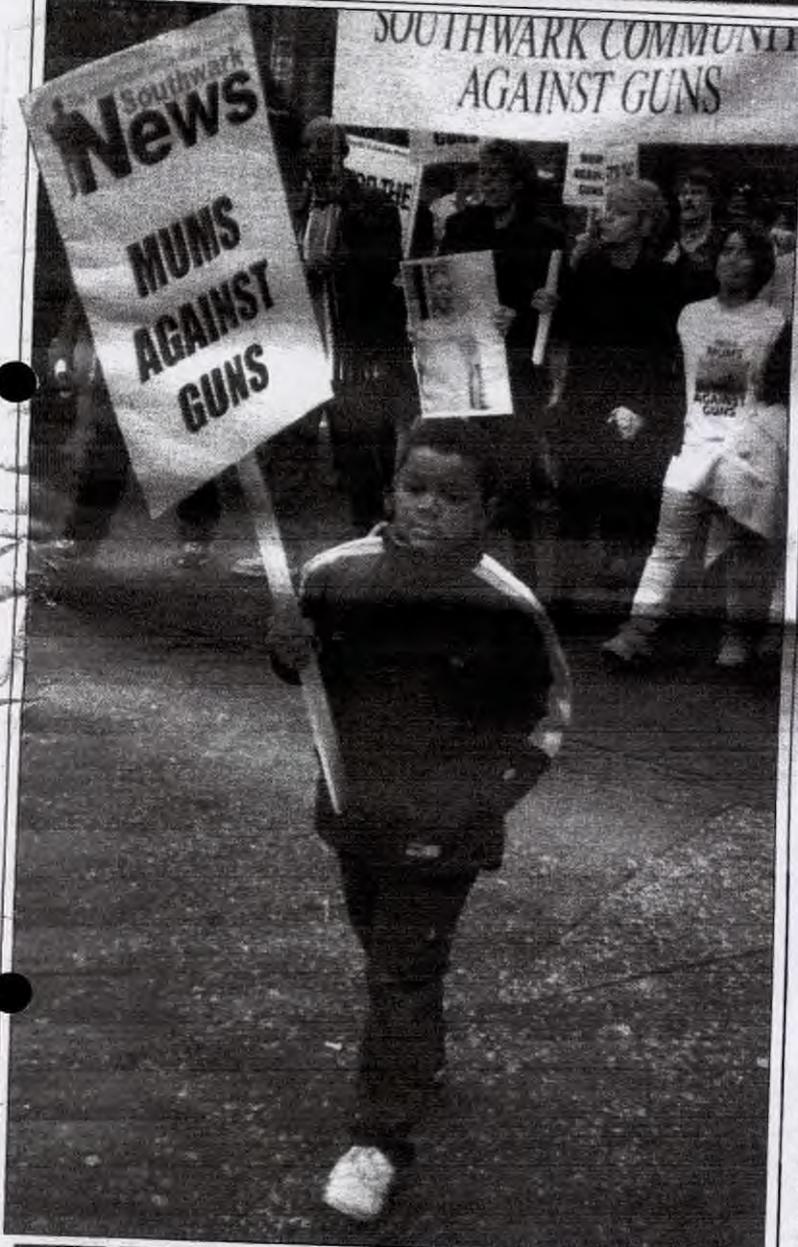
MP tours regen site

CAMBERWELL and Peckham MP Harriet Harman joined residents, councillors and housing officers from the Elmington estate in a walkabout to address regeneration issues last Friday.

The walk started at

Harris Street, and residents had questions regarding recreation, safety and allocation of future places on the Camberwell estate, which will see existing flats demolished to make way for new properties over the next couple of years.

TA member Phil Gannon said: "We have to draw a line about what's happened before and move forward. We want better housing, communities and facilities and hopefully we are more optimistic about the future."



MAURICE O'SULLIVAN TRIAL OPEN

ENOUGH!

THE 'MUMS Against Guns' march this weekend was marred by shootings.

The community march had to be re-routed on Saturday morning as two men were shot in the early hours after a private party in a pub on the main road. And just days before the march, organised by mum Lucy Cope, gangs opened fire at one another in the middle of the afternoon in yet another incident near her family home.

By Kevin Quinn

These scenes have illustrated just how prevalent the problem is. Despite the anguish of mothers determined to fight the menace and a growing emphasis in the police force to nail the gunmen, it is feared that Peckham in particular is becoming a battleground for black-on-black killings.

Continued on page 10

POLICE OFFICERS described to jurors at Kingston Crown Court this week the last desperate moments of Walworth man Maurice O'Sullivan's life.

By Sarah Crooks

The 28-year-old labourer was stabbed to death outside a minimarket on Walworth Road in the early hours of Sunday, May 19, this year.

Officers told how Maurice O'Sullivan staggered towards their squad car on Walworth Road, lifted his shirt to reveal his bloodied chest, and said: "I've been f***ing jumped. They've f***ing stabbed me".

PC Adrian Rafferty was on duty at the time. At 1:35am, he and his colleagues PCs Thompson, Sullivan and Dumper were driving along Walworth Road on their way to a call-out when they noticed a crowd had congregated outside the supermarket opposite Liverpool Grove.

"I saw a group of black males on the right of the pavement and a group of white males on the left," said PC Rafferty. "We stopped to show presence and the crowds dispersed. There was a dark saloon car and a man and woman left behind as the others walked away. I'm not very well," the man told us. He was holding his abdomen and there was a flow of blood when he moved his hand."

The court was told that O'Sullivan's frantic cousin, Claire Lawler, looked on as the officers rushed to give first aid, using nearby crates to elevate his legs in an attempt to minimise the blood loss.

He was taken to King's College Hospital where doctors battled to save him but O'Sullivan was pronounced dead at 4:10am.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10