

IN THE MATTER OF WARREN PAUL GREEN, solicitor

- AND -

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974

Mr. G.B. Marsh (in the Chair)
Mr. D.J. Leverton
Dame S. Prendergast

Date Of Hearing: 31st October 1995

FINDINGS

of the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal
constituted under the Solicitors Act 1974

An application was duly made on behalf of the Solicitors Complaints Bureau by Geoffrey Williams, solicitor of 36 West Bute Street, Cardiff on 19th July 1995 that Warren Paul Green, solicitor of _____ Market Harborough

might be required to answer the allegations contained in the statement which accompanied the application and that such Order might be made as the Tribunal should think right.

The allegation was that the respondent had been guilty of conduct unbefitting a solicitor in that he had been convicted of murder and sentenced to a life imprisonment.

The application was heard at the Court Room, No. 60 Carey Street, London WC2 on 31st October 1995 when Geoffrey Williams, solicitor and partner in the firm of Messrs. Cartwrights Adams & Black of 36 West Bute Street, Cardiff appeared for the applicant and the respondent appeared in person.

As a preliminary matter, the respondent made an application that the hearing take place in private. The Tribunal heard that application in private. The essence of the respondent's

application was that he had murdered his wife and wished to save her family and, indeed, his own family from having to face further intrusion into their lives which would undoubtedly arise following the reporting of the case. Mr. Williams, for the Solicitors Complaints Bureau, resisted the application. He pointed out that the murder trial had taken place in public. One of the reasons for the public's interest was that the respondent had been made the subject of disciplinary proceedings following his conviction for a serious crime which had not been committed during the course of his practice as a solicitor. The Law Society had always supported the move towards open hearings and would only support an application for a private hearing if the circumstances were wholly exceptional. That was not the case here.

The Tribunal refused the application and the matter proceeded to a full hearing in public.

The evidence before the Tribunal included the admissions of the respondent.

At the conclusion of the hearing the Tribunal ORDERED that the respondent Warren Paul Green, solicitor of _____, Market Harborough be STRUCK OFF the Roll of Solicitors and they further Ordered him to pay the costs of and incidental to the application and enquiry fixed in the sum of £856.05.

The facts are set out in paragraphs 1 to 3 hereunder.

1. The respondent, born in 1965, was admitted a solicitor in 1990.
2. At all material times the respondent was employed as a solicitor by the Crown Prosecution Service.
3. On 16th March 1993, in the Liverpool Crown Court the respondent was convicted upon indictment of murder and was sentenced to life imprisonment. He had murdered his wife. He did not appeal against conviction.

The submissions of the applicant

4. The Tribunal was invited to consider Principle 1.02 contained in the Guide to Professional Conduct of the Solicitors (6th edition) That Principle was "A solicitor is an officer of the Court, and should conduct himself or herself appropriately." The commentary to that Principle was as follows -"A solicitor, whether practising or not, is an officer of the Court. Certain standards of behaviour are required of a solicitor, as an officer of the Court and as a member of the profession, in his or her business activities outside legal practice and even in his or her private life. Disciplinary sanctions may be imposed if, for instance, the solicitor's behaviour tends to bring the profession into disrepute."
5. The Tribunal was referred to the sentencing remarks of Mr Justice Ognall in the Liverpool Crown Court when he said " Murder as a crime varies in its degrees of seriousness and this was a murder of a very grave kind, probably prompted by sex and money. You wanted rid of her and you killed her in a fashion marked by a chilling degree of control and concentration; you then took determined and sophisticated steps in an effort to mislead the police, those steps including maligning your dead wife as a criminal, a drugs dealer. It should be recorded that whatever her failings as disclosed

by the evidence in this trial, she deserved to be remembered as a vivacious, caring and decent young woman. You did not shrink either from pointing the finger of guilt for this terrible crime at S S. Sensibly the jury saw through your wickedness.

The sentence upon you is that you be imprisoned for life and you must not expect in the circumstances to receive even consideration for release on licence for many years."

6. The respondent as a solicitor had been an officer of the Court and had committed the most serious crime of all. Clearly a solicitor himself falls into the greatest disrepute and disgrace in having committed such a crime and the profession suffers because of the publicity attendant upon such a matter when the defendant in a criminal trial is also an officer of the court.

The submissions of the respondent

7. The respondent accepted the allegation and did not seek to go behind the conviction. The respondent sought to explain in some detail what had occurred to the Tribunal. The Tribunal does not feel it appropriate to record here all the statements of the respondent but took note of the apparent contrition of the respondent.
8. The respondent accepted the Judge's description of his late wife that she was a vivacious, caring and decent young woman. The respondent had taken her life and had lost a sizeable part of his. He said that he had devastated two families and was greatly distressed by the hurt which he had caused.
9. He had let down his profession, his former friends, colleagues and his family. He wished to offer his most sincere apologies whilst realising that they were woefully inadequate, he had nothing else to offer.
10. The respondent had worked conscientiously to qualify as a solicitor and had worked hard after qualification. The crime which he had committed had no links with the solicitors' profession.

The Tribunal FOUND this a most distressing case. The respondent had been convicted of a most serious offence the effects of which on a number of people could scarcely be imagined. It was clear that a conviction for such a serious crime was conduct unbecoming a solicitor and it was right that the respondent should be Struck Off the Roll and he should also pay the costs of and incidental to the application and enquiry.

DATED this 23rd day of November 1995

on behalf of the Tribunal


G B Marsh
Chairman

Findings filed with the
Law Society on the 27th
day of November 1995

