

An evil obsession



Louise Hobkinson: 'Very frightened'

A BLONDE Commons researcher lived in fear of a prisoner who became infatuated with her.

Former model Louise Hobkinson's ordeal began after she sent a photograph of herself to Dale Morris, who was serving 2½ years for burglary.

Morris sent her a string of obscene and menacing letters culminating in a death threat to her boyfriend, a court heard yesterday.

And after he escaped from jail, 25-year-old Miss Hobkinson became so terrified that she fled to Italy.

The language graduate, who worked for Tory MP Bill Cash, was inundated with requests for her photograph after her picture appeared in newspapers during the Conservative Party conference last year. Bow Street Court, in Covent Garden, Central London, heard.

One of the requests was from Morris, 28, who was in Downview Prison, Surrey. After receiving the ex-model's picture he became obsessed with her and began writing letters.

Captured

He wrote around 20 from his cell and while on the run for a month. He was captured at a house in Colliers Wood, South London, in April.

Chuck Nduka-Eze, prosecuting, told magistrates yesterday: 'In October 1993, during the Conservative Party conference Miss Hobkinson's photograph appeared in the media. This picture was from her time as a model, prior to her job in the House of Commons.'

'She received requests from people to sign photographs and she says that one was from Morris.'

Between October 1993 and February 1994, Miss Hobkinson received several letters from Morris, said Mr Nduka-Eze.

He added: 'The letters were initially not frightening but they became more menacing as time went on, culminating in one indicating that he threatened to kill her boyfriend.'

'The letters exhibit infatuation and obsession. About 20 were received. At some stage, she became very frightened.'

Regime

Morris continued writing letters after he escaped from prison, said Mr Nduka-Eze, although they appeared to be 'less threatening and to some extent conciliatory. Some apologies were made in them.'

However, Miss Hobkinson could not 'escape her fear' and fled the country.

Michael Marlow, defending, said: 'Every single one of the letters finishes with Morris expressing his regret.'

'The regime he has undergone to

Commons girl fled to Italy when infatuated prisoner went on run

Daily Mail Reporter

some extent has caused him to act in a way he should have not been behaving.'

Mr Marlow said Morris, a former painter and decorator, had appeared at the Old Bailey on Wednesday in connection with his escape. The case had been adjourned for psychiatric reports.

Morris admitted nine charges of sending obscene letters. Magistrate Nicholas Evans told him: 'There will be a fine of £100 on each of the charges or seven days' imprisonment — concurrent to the sentence you are now serving.'

'What you did has caused a great deal of upset to the victim.'

Morris, wearing a denim jacket and jeans, shouted: 'It's a set-up.'



Tory MP Bill Cash: He employed former model

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Sabotage fears as Mafia witness is linked to air crash

THE FBI fears that sabotage may have been to blame for an air crash in which 132 people died.

Agents have discovered that one of the victims was to give evidence at a Mafia trial.

The USAir Boeing 737 fell from the sky, killing all the passengers and crew, while approaching Pittsburgh a week ago.

Among the dead was Paul Olson, 34, who is thought to have joined the government's witness protection programme when he agreed to betray former accomplices.

He had been arrested for cocaine trafficking in Chicago and received a ten-year jail sentence.

From TONY BURTON in New York

But in return for testimony against alleged drug boss Joseph Autullo his term was drastically reduced and he served only four years.

The informer, recently released from prison, was flying to Pittsburgh from Chicago after meeting prosecutors when the jet plunged 6,000ft to crash just short of the airport.

So far, investigators have found no answer to the question of what caused the disaster and they have turned their attention to Olson.

Sabotage is being considered after they largely discounted the possibility

that the crash might have been caused by reverse engine thrust being accidentally engaged.

'There is no evidence yet of a bomb or detonating device to suggest sabotage,' said a senior investigator. 'But there is no other mechanical or manpower failure either. This is still a mystery.'

Olson was not travelling with a federal marshal, as informants usually do. The government never comments on whether an individual is in the witness protection programme, which is claimed never to have lost an informer to vengeful accomplices.

More than 15,000 informants are living with new identities under federal government protection.