

Submission 28

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BY: *G. E. Gould*

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37 Quilter Drive,
Duncraig,
W.A. 6023

Ph: 08 9447 7387

The Committee Secretary,
House of Representatives Standing Committee
On Legal and Constitutional Affairs
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

29/7/02

Dear Sir/Madam,

MISSING PERSON – WILLIAM MADDISON FRENCH d.o.b 13/3/73

In December, 1997 our son went missing. The last contact was a phone call on the 17th of that month from Carnarvon, WA. He travelled with Miro (also known as Marco) Petrovich Dragovich between 12/12/97 and 19/2/1998 and police believe he knows what happened to our son.

His disappearance was the start of a bureaucratic nightmare in dealing with the States (NSW and WA) and the Federal systems to try to locate him and at a time when our family were traumatised by the circumstances.

The following reports are attached for your information and investigation.

- (1) Grievances relating to the Police Service
- (2) Grievances relating to the Justice System
- (3) Profile of Miro Petrovich Dragovich collated from Press reports
- (4) Profile William Maddison French

When your investigations are completed I would appreciate it if you could give me an account of the results and answer my questions.

No words can express the deep devastation and grief I and my family bear and I particularly have a desperate need for everything possible to be done to solve this case and to see Dragovich be made accountable.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret French (Mrs)

Margaret B.S. French

Ref:BishMad

(1) **REPORT ON GRIEVANCES AGAINST THE POLICE SERVICE**

Missing Person – William Maddison French

We reported our son Maddison missing in February, 1998, but the matter was not taken seriously, the police advising that my son may well not want to be contacted.

WA Missing Persons Bureau did nothing initially, but when pursued they obtained Maddison's bank statements, but considered there was little cause for concern as withdrawals of his disability allowance were being made in the usual regular pattern. This assumption was later proved to be very wrong. In June, 1998 Snr Con Sharon Smith, WA Missing Persons, suddenly recognised that withdrawals had stopped on the 19th March, 1998

GRIEVANCE - 1. No active pursuit of my son's whereabouts had been undertaken.

2. 3 months had elapsed before it was recognised withdrawals from his bank account had stopped.

3. No investigations were made in Carnarvon, the last point of contact and which should have been the first point of enquiry, until 2 ½ YEARS later, in spite of repeated requests.

The case was then handed over to the NSW Missing Persons as the trail of withdrawals from Carnarvon in WA north to Port Hedland, on to Alice Springs, to Victoria finally ended at the Sydney Airport.

The police there established that Maddison's Perth address, lodged with Centrelink, had been changed to a block (we were informed) of some 400 units in Sydney and Snr Con Glen Drake, NSW, in liason with Snr Con Sharon Smith WA, considered the delay in advising the outcome of enquiries was understandable due to the number of units and logistics of interviewing tenants.

On later contacting NSW office I discovered my son's file had been handed over to Snr Con Sean Lammerton and Det Barry Hill at Parramatta who, in turn, advised that, unfortunately, enquiries at the units had been fruitless

GRIEVANCE. When we subsequently visited the block ourselves we found, (contrary to police advice) that:

1. There were only a total of 9 UNITS – Not 400

2. According to the three tenants we interviewed, they

(a) had not been approached,

(b) had not heard of any police activity,

(c) had not seen any wanted posters on the notice boards

(d) there had not been a doorknock

3. **Snr Con Glen Drake**, was specifically advised that my son was known by his second name **Maddison**, nevertheless arranged television coverage on **Australia's Most Wanted** under his first name, which made it almost a useless exercise.
4. **The surveillance Video tape** revealing identity of person making last withdrawal from our son **Maddison's** bank account at an **Airport bookshop**, when **Dragovich** departed **Australia** in **March 98**, was not timeously examined by police. Thus this vital piece of evidence was wiped.

QUESTION: Why were we given the incorrect information?

In Early June, 1998 we were anxious to go to Sydney in an to endeavour to locate our son, but were denied information about this last known address under the Freedom of Information Act. The police advised that we would need to get Ministerial Consent to have it released to us.

On the 24th June, 1998, I sought the assistance of **Mrs Katie Hodson-Thomas** **MLA**.in in this regard and she sent an urgent letter to the **WA Minister of Police**, **Mr John Day** on the **3/7/98**.

On the 8/7/98, not having heard, and as the **Hon. John Day** was not available, I spoke with **Chief of Staff Robert Reid** and implored him to pursue a response. He thought **NSW Minister of Police** should be the one to concur, but said he would take it up.

On the 10/7/1998 I received a letter on behalf of the **Hon. John Day** stating he would "respond as soon as possible"

On the 15/7/98– fax to **Snr Con Sharon Smith**– documenting proceedings.

On the 15/7/98 Having heard nothing further the **Hon John Day** I sent a fax to him emphasising that "time was of the essence". Leads to my son, already cold, would evaporate altogether. However, the Minister, in the process of changing portfolio and office, omitted to have his correspondence redirected. Thus his letter, date stamped **28/7/02**, was received was only received by me on the **7/8/98**.

On the 20/7/98 in pursuance, I requested an appointment with the **Hon John Day**.

On the 22/7/98 I again made the request for an appointment, but instead a message was conveyed that **Chief of Staff Robert Reid** "wanted to take our case on board", however he would be away until the following week.

On the 27/2/98 fax to **Mrs Hodson-Thoma** **MLA** – three weeks elapsed, but no word from the Minister.

On the 28/7/98 –advised **Snr Con Glen Drake** name screened on **Australia's Most Wanted** programme

On the 28/7/98– requested name be rectified on **Australia's Most Wanted** –s.b. **Maddison**.

On the 31/7/98 I phoned **Chief of Staff Robert Reid**, but he was not available and a staff member gave me a firm commitment he would phone the following morning.

He did not phone, so I did and the message was conveyed to me that "he was aware I was on the phone, but was busy and would call back."

He did not call back and at 5.40pm that evening I phoned, to his surprise, as by chance he answered the call. He asked "**What can I do for you?**".

He then informed me a letter had been prepared, but was still unsigned by the Minister which stated that the FOI Act prevented him from providing the address.

He confirmed he had sent a request to the Minister of Police NSW who was the authority proper authority to be consulted for consent

Mr Reid conceded that he was not well informed about the background.

(Note: background details had been attached to the letter to the Minister on the 15th of July, 1998)

On the 3/8/98 - Wrote to Radio 6PR about our frustration over lack of Ministerial response, granted time on air, Howard Sattler said he would take it up on our behalf.

On the 4/8/98 I again contacted the Ministry and requested a copy of the NSW Minister's reply as well as a response from the WA Minister.

On the 7/8/98 a reply was received (incidentally date stamped 28/7/98) from the Hon. John Day which and stated the **Western Australia Police Service** are unable to provide the address and advised that "neither the he nor the NSW Minister of Police had the power to consent to the release of information"

GRIEVANCE: 1. I was not correctly advised by any of the qualified people (Police Service, MLA's and aids) consulted that my application for consent was being misdirected. This reflects total lack of co-ordination.

2. From the beginning of June to the end of July was 2 months wasted to get the same refusal from the original source albeit a different office. This makes a mockery of the whole Police Service and creates inconceivable distress for Victims.

3. The Minister's Appointment Secretary did not respond to a request for an interview.

4. (a) Chief of Staff Robert Reid handling of our enquiries was shocking. The run around he gave me was unbecoming
(b) In quoting from the Minister's prepared letter he stated the FOI Act prevented the Hon John Day from consenting".

At the same time he confirmed he had sent a request to the NSW Minister, in the belief he was the proper authority.

He obviously did not refer to the FOI Act to establish the facts, nor did he read the Minister's prepared letter, which he had just quoted from, or he would have noted NSW Minister, also, did not have the power to consent.

- 5. I was aware the FIO Act prevented Ministerial Consent but the qualified advice to me all round was that he could, nevertheless, exercise his discretion.**

On the 10th August, 1998 I applied to the Information Commissioner for an external review of the Minister's decision

On the 15/8/98 In desperation I faxed a letter to the Hon. Kevin Prince for a review.

On the 7/9/98 Hon Kevin Prince LLL.B MLA. sent satisfactory reply.

On the 16/8/98 I received a letter from the Information Commissioner informing me that my letter to The Hon John Day Minister for Police did not state state I was making an FOI application and that his reply was merely an answer to my queries.

- GRIEVANCE:**
- 1. The Minister was well aware my request was being restricted by the FOI Act which he, in fact, mentioned in his reply!**
 - 2 Mrs Katie Hodson-Thomas MLA her letter to the Minister on the 3/7/98 clearly referred to the "privacy of information" problem and, therefore was seeking his assistance to authorize release.**
 - 3 When the Minister did reply, he simply stated that the "West Australian Police Service were are unable to provide me with the address". A fact I was blatantly aware. I was seeking discretionary consent to supercede the Act as stipulated in the letter and which I had fully explained.**

QUESTION: Why did the Hon John Day on the 10/7/98 not give the fitting response given by the Hon Kevin Prince on the 7/9/98, which would have prevented a further 2 months of delay and frustration ?

The Commissioner advised me to and apply to the FOI Co-ordinator, Police Service of Western Australia, Freedom of Information Service and finally got a result. Chief Inspector Mick Ray was extremely apologetic for the bureaucratic bungling and promptly provided the requested information.

On the 19/8/98 I made the application to the FOI Co-ordinator.

On the 25/8/98 - Chief Inspector Mick Rae replied and promptly paid me a visit, was very apologetic about the bureaucratic bungling and provided the requested information.

On the 21/9/98 - wrote Snr Con Lammerton about investigations at units.

On the 29/9/98 faxed Snr Con Lammerton questioning whether police were aware at the various places enroute to Sydney that my son was missing and if they were conducting enquiries at the points where he stopped.

On the 8/10/98 received a letter from Snr Sgt Mintern-Lane, Victoria Police. The only response received from the extensive enquiries I had personally conducted along the route travelled throughout Australia by Dragovich and my son.

On the 11/11/98 Miro Petrovich Dragovich was arrested in Sydney". The condition of release was that he report twice a week. . **Also, he was** fingerprinted and two passports were seized in name of Dragovich and was bailed. Two weeks later changed his name to Peter Morgan by deed poll and applied for replacement Australian Passport and fled to New Zealand.

GRIEVANCE: 1 Snr Con Sean Lammerton did not inform us that Dragovich had been arrested at Maroubra Centrelink Office posing as my son nor that the balance of funds had been drawn from his Bank account. I found out when I contacted him.

2 When arrested I was advised Dragovich had "refused to be interviewed, thus could not be charged and was released". However, at the extradition hearing in NZ it was revealed that Dragovich initially told two officers his name was William Maddison French, but after questioning admitted he was actually Miro Petrovich Dragovich. He had also been fingerprinted and his prints and my son's bank card confiscated by the police.

QUESTION: Why was Dragovich not charged at the time of his arrest ? when he admitted being an imposter and was in possession of my son's bank card?

25/11/98 - Contacted Missing Persons Unit Canberra (National) for advice on co-ordination of Investigation.

2/2/99 concerned about lack of contact I faxed Sen Con Lammerton. We had been astonished to see, when we received Maddison's bank statement, that all the remaining money had been withdrawn on the 6th and 9th November, 1998. and neither he Snr Con Barry Hill had thought it necessary to advise us, nor was this mentioned when I spoke to both him and Snr Con Hill at the end of November about the response from Interpol Also, the opportunity to know more of son having vanished, I raised the following questions - *which I again question now* .

16/2/99 Snr Con Lammerton stating "his (Dragovich's) decision to make no comment prevented investigation prevented Detectives from imposing stricter Bail conditions". *A statement later contradicted during the Extradition Hearing in New Zealand.*

- QUESTION:**
1. Why was no *cash* bail posted?
 2. Why was Dragovich not held in custody?
 3. Why was he allowed to escape?

Further:

- QUESTION:**
1. Why was Dragovich issued passports under false names and allowed to change his name by deed poll at will?
 2. Why was he allowed to do the above especially when he was on the run?

In November 1998 –I later gathered that the case had been handed over to **Homicide in Western Australia** but it was the 9/2/99 before our statements were taken and those of others even later. More than a year after we reported Maddison missing..

- QUESTION:** In view of previous protracted delay why was the case my son's case not given priority.? I had persistently requested the police to initiate enquiries in Carnarvon, the last point of contact with my son.

In March we were advised our son's story was to be reviewed and put to air on Australia's Most Wanted

On the 22/4/99 Having had no action since November 1998 except giving a statement believing we were to be kept I faxed Det Sgt Kerry French, **Major Crime Investigation** about the progress what has developed with the lead about Marco Crime Stoppers appeal, etc and advised the police were waiting for Dragovich to turn up in Perth.

On the 6/7/99 I contacted Det Dean Bailey, Homicide Squad, to pursue the screening.

On the 15/7/99 I faxed Det Dean Bailey and again enquired about the screening

On 4/10/99 Det Sgt Kerry French advised it would be another 4 weeks before case could have attention

On the 26/10/99 - I faxed the following to Major Crime Investigation

Dear Det Snr Sgnt Byleveld,

My son's case was handed over to Homicide a year ago and I would be pleased if you could tell my why it has been put on the back burner for so long.

I am constantly being informed that other cases have priority and after your department undertook a cursory investigation you have still not reached first base.

First base would be Carnarvon where Maddison last made contact with his girlfriend. Nothing has been done about enquiring there, nor has the person who had knowledge of the the individual my son could have left Perth with been interviewed, in spite of continued requests. Don't you think he could be long gone by now? That was about 8 months ago.

Further, the person arrested in Sydney in possession of my son's credit card and representing himself to be Maddison French committed an offence, but he was not obliged to provide information. No explanation can justify this to me. It seems quite acceptable to the authorities that he is free and we are not. This person held the key to the rest of our lives and he has slipped through the fingers of the police and, after that, the Homicide Division has let the trail go cold. You obviously have no idea of what we have to live with and please do not send me a letter that "you know how frustrated I feel" it would be an insult. I have been frustrated with the police handling of the whole matter virtually from the beginning.

Det. Kerry French was due to go to Carnarvon about the 23rd September. She did not, but instead informed me it would be another four weeks before she could get back to our case. Also, Kerry did not keep an appointment with my husband on the 15/10/99, nor has he heard from her since. This may be a reflection on Detective French, but on the other hand she is following your orders.
Yours faithfully,

**GRIEVANCE: Maddison's case was put on the back burner for so long that that crucial evidence was obviously destroyed.
After a year were other cases still receiving priority.**

On the 22/11/99, (a month later) I received his bland reply which *did not* address why no investigations of any consequence had taken place in the six months between November, 1998 and April, 1999, but mentioned he had directed Det Sgt French to attend to other urgent matters – "a necessary and appropriate course of action as Major Crime Investigation is charged with investigating the most serious crimes defined within the Criminal Code of WA."

**QUESTION: 1 Why was my son's case handed to Major Crime Inv if it was not serious enough?
2 Why was it not considered urgent?**

19/8/00 – First Press release.

2 ½ years after we reported the disappearance of Maddison police action became intense. This I believe was due to the notorious character of Dragovich and the international interest.

GRIEVANCE: 1. It appeared that only when the case took on international significance and the media became involved when Dragovich was arrested in NZ that real resources were applied to solving the case

2. That my son's disappearance was not important enough to warrant conscientious attention initially was a soul destroying realization.

October 2000 Det Sgt Kerry French went to Carnarvon and north and carried out extensive investigations. The exercise produced one piece of concrete evidence relating to my son and that was located at Carnarvon.

On the 14/5/01 again Det Sgt French went north to continue the investigations.

On the 20/7/01 Mrs Katie Hodson-Thomas MLA sent letter to DPP to pursue extradition application at my request.

On the 28/5/01 - Mr Katie Hodson-Thomas MLA at my request sent a letter to the Attorney General the **Hon Daryl Williams, AM QC** questioning whether an Extradition Order could be rendered.

On the 12/6/01 - faxed pursuing reply and highlighting that no action had been taken by police to go to Carnarvon in 1998

On the 27/6/01 - Senator the Hon Christopher Ellison replied providing necessary information and assistance.

On the 12/7/01 - Requested Mrs Hodson-Thomas MLA to approach Australian Federal Police.

On the 19/7/01 - Mrs Hodson-Thomos wrote to Interpol

On the 20/7/01 - Mrs Hodson-Thomas redirected the enquiry to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

On the 3/8/01 - Gabrielle Drennan, Senior Assistant Director advised they were not involved in the investigation (which is not a matter for the federal authorities); nor is any proposed upgrade of outstanding charges

Other Grievances: The labyrinth of the Federal and State Justice Systems are very unwieldy.

There was no media launched by the police in the Eastern States

CONCLUSION

Det Sgt Kerry French has dedicated herself to solving our case in a commendable fashion after the initial delays and has pieced together an extremely complex trail of Dragovich's deception with intelligence gathered from Federal police, government departments and international policing authorities, including, comprehensive investigation in WA, flying to Auckland last June to interview Dragovich and later travelling to Britain to locate witnesses and finally leading to his extradition to Australia on the 17/1/2002. We are truly thankful to her for the tenacity she has shown.

Unfortunately it all seems to have come too late as Dragovich is nearly off the hook initial protracted investigations and indulgent penalties. Time is running out and it seems we have little hope of recompense and no hope of closure.

Ref:BishChgs

GRIEVANCES AGAINST THE JUSTICE SYSTEM
CHARGES AT TRIAL OF MIRO PETROVICH DRAGOVICH ON THE 18/5/02

MIRO PETROVICH DRAGOVICH was charged with the following 13 Commonwealth and State charges which were serious enough to warrant international extradition.

CHARGES

Sec 234(1)(b) Migration Act 1958

3 charges – Application for Protection Visa in name of Todorovic – 23/11/95, 7/12/95, 11/12/95, when already granted Refugee status under name of Miro Petrovich Dragovich.

Sec 11 of Statutory Declarations Act 1959.

4 charges – Willfully making false statements in 1995 and 1996.

Sec 491(1) Migration Act 1958

1 charge – Escaping from Villawood Detention Centre, NSW 30/9/96.

Sec 29 B of Crimes Act 1914

1 Charge – At Maroobara, NSW, Centre Link represented himself as William Maddison FRENCH in attempt to receive Disability Support Pension.
(MAXIMUM PENALTY ON INDITEMENT IS 2 YEARS)

GRIEVANCE: The sentence is far too lenient. This man has impersonated my son, Maddison, a real person, and did not just use a bogus name. Why is there is no distinction? Impersonating a real person is much more serious.

Sec. 178(BA) Crimes Act 1900 NSW

3 Charges – Dragovich used W. Maddison French’s bank card to withdraw funds on the - 6/11/98 - \$1000
9/11/98 - \$1400

(FOUND GUILTY - MAXIMUM SUMMARY SENTENCE 12 MONTHS)
The indictable sentence 5 years. The Summary sentence 12 months.

GRIEVANCE: The sentence is far too lenient

Sec 10(1)(a) Passport Act 1938

1 charge – Obtaining Passport in name of Peter Morgan
(seized when arrested at Marooobra)

The indictable sentence 2 years

The sentence imposed for such serious offences is far too lenient.

This character, known to have at least 26 aliases, has manipulated and scorned nearly all Australian Government systems by abusing Immigration, Passport Laws, Social Security, Refugee, Court Systems, etc., eluded the Police, wasted the resources of State and Federal Agents involved in investigations and pursuit all over the world, with eventual costly extradition from NZ, but he is now very comfortable in the knowledge that in a month or two he could be free to pursue his despicable course again.

The justice system is a joke! Dragovich was supposed to be tried by judge and jury over 4 days with over 30 witnesses, who were on standby, to be called in Australia and overseas on what was considered to be very serious charges, but at the eleventh hour he choose to be tried Summarily, which only required him to appear for an hour or two before a Magistrate in NSW. He must be laughing.

In passing sentence (news cutting enclosed - "Conman jailed over NSW frauds") Judge Alan Moore admitted to the court "that he was amazed the sentence for such serious offences was so light". (12 months)

It is an affront to the judiciary, don't you think, although I gather they will be taking a stance, to have sentences increased.

The most serious consequence of all is that this miscreant has observed his right to remain silent, which, in effect sentences our family to the "term of our natural lives." He holds the only key to our son Maddison's disappearance. He should be obliged by law to speak.

Dragovich has served a sentence of 12 months (held in custody), a further 8 months in NZ between 31/5/01 and 17/1/02 when he was extradited, and to date six months in Australia. A total of 24 months and he is now appealing for release.

The punishment for the crimes have been far too indulgent and we feel extremely bitter about the justice system.

Ref: BishCuts

PROFILE OF MIRO PET COLLATED FROM MEDIA COVERAGE
AUSTRALIA

The West Australian – 19/8/00 – Front page

International Impostor – scam artist – One man 16 faces - may hold key to solving suspicious disappearance of Wesley College student William Maddison French in WA's North-West two years ago. – several passports in different names – befriends people – tales of life as refugee from Eastern Europe. – He has told people he is a refugee from Kosovo, Albania, Chechnya, Bosnia and Russia. Speaks English with Irish brogue. **Police in at least 9 countries have launched investigations – Canada, Spain, England, Ireland, Australia, France, Germany, the United States and New Zealand** Suspicious clues uncovered – Major Crime - 2 years investigation spanning globe 2nd pge. – woven an international web of deceit, and false identities . – police sources said Dragovich was financially sophisticated, highly intelligent and enjoyed the high life. Spoke with Eastern European accent. Twice applied for refugee status in NZ, claiming he was from Chechnya and using names Abraham Adem Morina and Shamil Jusef Azizov. – mail order Cookbook scam in Wellington

The West Australian – 21/8/00

Det Sgt Kerry French and Det Sgt Steve Brown - more than 23 identities. In jail in NZ fraud charges

The West Australian – 22/8/00 – Front page

Press Conference - Parent's appeal. – Maddison, interested in languages and cultures - had wanderlust – trusted and took people at their face value.

The West Australian - 24/8/00 – Front page

17th Face of elusive international conman Dragovich. Mr French contacted girlfriend from Carnarvon in Dec. 1997 – said he was travelling with man named Marco. Remanded to face court NZ – October 6.

The West Australian - 9/9/00

Master of disguise – Dragovich visited Coral Bay, Exmouth and the Nanutarra Roadhouse after leaving Carnarvon. Aliases: Chris Morgan, Chris Smith, Kevin James Lewis, Pavel Dimitrov, Shamil Azizov, Chris Harman, Ivan Grosev, Michal James Cooper, Andre Craboulski, Chris Robinson, Vincent Paul Fitzgerald, Joshua Timothy Davis, Abraham Adem Morina, Chris Alexandrov, V. Rutsatz and Collimore. *Bail denied in High Court this week - prosecutor Mike Heron.*

The West Australian - 12/5/01

Major Crime travel to Karratha 15/5/01 – At least 16 disguises. Also used name Peter Merlow – in 1997 – Arrested on plane in Auckland NZ with 3 passports, 5 drivers licences. Admitted stealing 2 passports – Joshua Davis and Vincent Fitzgerald and forgery expert to tell how photos had been cleverly laminated.. Det believe pair continued travel north of Carnarvon

Sundy Times - 20/5/01

Dragovich, travelling as Marco Dawson settled on Qantas flight from Auckland to Brisbane (31/5/01) – came within minutes of slipping back into obscurity - was carrying autobiography of British drug dealer Howard Marks – 43 aliases. Convicted 18/5/01 on 24 counts using document with intent to defraud, two counts of altering doc with intent to defraud and two of possessing false passports. - Preyed on unsuspecting customers who gave Cr Card details to buy cookbooks, CD'S, camping gear, advertising on the Internet and in newspapers. Facing 10 years behind bars and may be deported

The West Australian – 19/5/01 – Front page.

NZ Trial – 18/5/01 – found guilty (Dragovich/Marco Dawson)

Trial witnesses impressed by his nice suit, expensive jewellery, suitcase and briefcase..

Looked out of place in backpacker hostels. Once fled a hostel after two Japanese accused him of stealing their passports and airline tickets. Stole personal documents, swapped passport photos – cleverly manipulated banking and bureaucratic systems.

Found fingerprints on 48 documents in several names. Used credible accent to match Irish passport stolen from backpacker in Queensland. Answered Natalie Soyano ad for flatmate in June 1999 calling himself Chris Azizov answered ad for flatmate in June 1999.- convinced her he was a Russian orphan – she was studying Russian and he spent two hours helping her with translation and pronunciation. – phoned to say he was staying with his parents. – his adoptive parents. – motive to use Soyano's address for driver's licence in name of Azizov to be mailed to him. With this he went to registrar of births and deaths and had the name Azizov changed by deed poll to Chris Martin Harman.

Driver's licence used to register company and open bank account to prepare of cookbook scam.

Detectives .past week combing records hotels, roadhouses, businesses in North West.)

Detectives in Port Hedland 18/5/01 - big task tracking four years ago

West – 26/5/2001

NZ judge Mary-Beth Sharp's efforts to save justice system money may see **Dragovich go free within two months.** Under parole laws may serve only third of 3^{1/2} years, could be free in July. Cost NZ taxpayers fortune NZ. Dragovich claimed he was Yugoslav, raised in orphanage. Judge Sharp said he was motivated by greed and had an extravagant lifestyle

The West Australian – 12/6/01 – Conman's bid to escape Jail.

Offered prison guard big sum of money to escape Mt Eden Prison – was moved to maximum-security Paremoremo Prison. Caught surveying doors and windows as if planning escape. Police believe he has hidden stash of money.

The West Australian – 4/8/01 – Front page

Imposter and conman illegal immigrant escaped from Villawood Detention Centre NSW 5 years ago when it was believed his name was Dragon Tudorovic.

Federal Police mounted operation yesterday to have him extradited from NZ under C/W Crimes Act. Extradition Application to be heard Friday. Sgt French pieced together trail of deception with intelligence gathered from Federal police, govt. departments and international policing authorities. He had been detained for breaching immigration regulations.

Staged daring escape from NSW centre in 1996 – big hunt -at time After escape applied for citizenship - Authorities did not realise dealing with wanted man. and accepted application effectively endorsing new identity. Had twice applied unsuccessfully for refugee status in NZ. Allegedly stole identification from guests at backpacker hostels. Police in Canada, Spain, Britain, Ireland, France, Germany and United States have been on the alert for the imposter.

The West Australian - 21/11/01

Imposter's and detention centre escapee Miro Petovich Dragovich assumed the identity of a WA man police fear is dead after travelling WA's North-West with convicted fraudster. Federal police documents at extradition hearing in NZ – repeatedly breached Australia's security, banking, immigration and justice systems over 4 years. *Officials issued Dragovich passports under false names and allowed him to change his name by deed poll at will, despite being on the run from immigration officials after escaping from Sydney's Villawood detention centre in Sept. 1996.*

While on bail for impersonating he was allowed to leave Australia and travel the world , applying for refugee status overseas. In Nov 1998 – Centrelink Maroubra, NSW – tried to have disability allowance reactivated, telling them he was William Maddison French and requested backpay. Triggered computer alarm and alerted NSW Missing Persons. Initially told two officers his name was William Maddison French but after questioning admitted he was actually Miro P Drag. Arrested and fingerprinted and seized two passports in name of Miro Petorovich Dragovich. Bailed to appear on November 11, 1998. Two weeks later changed his name to Peter Morgan by deed poll and applied for replacement Aus. Passport.

The West Australian – 22/11/01

Maddison French may have travelled thousands of kms through Australia's red centre – Police suspecthe (Dragovich) knows what happened to Maddison French. Evidence uncovered - travelled from WA's North West in Dec 1997 into Northern Territory then to Alice Springs. At Airport March 19, 1998 – money withdrawn.

The West Australian – 26/12/01

Police fear WA man dead. NZ will extradite. Tried to trick Centrelink staff to reactivate Disability Allowance. Used French's bank card to withdraw money three times in a month.

Daily Telegraph 18/1/2002 (Sydney)

Keen to question conman extradited to NSW

WA police say Dragovich will face NSW court on 13 fraud related charges and escape from Villawood Detention Centre.

Herald Sun 18/1/02 (Melbourne)

Police want to question Dragovich

The West Australian Newspaper - 4/3/02

Report WA police had begun review of most controversial cases in readiness for the Royal Commission into police corruption.

NOTE: One of these cases is that of my son

The West Australian – 22/5/02

Refugee on protection visa abused privileges of citizenship: judge.

Detectives believe Mr French is dead and suspect Dawson knows what happened.

Jude Alan Moore said "I don't wish to make any statements in terms of the availability to persons who are suppressed in other countries to avail themselves of facilities in this country, but here we see you have exceeded that which is on offer.

He jailed Dawson for 12 months saying he was amazed the penalty for such serious offences was so light.

Other Information

He had 75 charges filed against him but justice system set a limit of 28 to be tried.

He twice unsuccessfully applied for refugee status in NZ (The West Australian) 4/8/01)

NZ charges - 5 were passport charges

Interpol alerted 26/11/98

Listing on Police Missing Persons website.

BishCutsNZ

PROFILE OF MIRO PET COLLATED FROM MEDIA COVERAGE
NEW ZEALAND

Independent Newspapers – Wellington 14/7/00

Cookbook scam suspect arrested

Police believe Chris Martyn Smith is the man they've arrested.

All the companies, South Island Marketing Ltd., Lewis and Parners Ltd, Book Distributors Ltd and Antarctic Marketing Ltd. All the companies have directors with names included in the police list of aliases.

Evening Post – 29/8/00***Prisoner Suspect in Murder***

A prisoner(Dragovich) in Auckland is suspected of murdering an Australian (Maddison French) and burying his body somewhere in the West Australian desert in 1997

The Evening Post - 14/7/2000

Det Sgt Shawn Rutene – Auckland central fraud squad. – Hundreds of people fell victim to elaborate scam - cookbook offer made by Harbour City Marketing. Company director was Chris Smith – Wainuiomata address. – woman there duped into letting him use address. – arrest 31/5/00 - 27 year old - - Chris Martyn Smith – using name Marco Dawson. – believed to have run several companies. – Fraud of 250,000 Cust weren't liable for the 1000 credit-card charge – ASB Bank Wellington to foot. Had recovered all but 36,000 Identified four others – South Island Marketing Ltd., Lewis and Parners Ltd, Book Distributors Ltd and Antarctic Marketing Ltd. Total alleged fraud more than \$400,000.. Dealt with woman. "This guy is so approachable" – aliases Miro Petrovich Dragovich, Ivan Grose, Pavel Dimitrov, WMF, Peter Morgan, Shamil Jusef Azizov, Chris Martyn Smith, Christopher Martyn Harman, Chris Alexandrov, Marco Adem Morina, Marco Dawaon, Kevin James Lewis, Vincent Paul Fitzgerald, Joshua Timothy Davis, Abraham Adem Morina, Andrea Craboulshki, V Rutsatz, Mr Collimore, Kevin James Smith, Hristos Manas and Vincent Paul Fit-Gerald.

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Herald NZ - 3/8/00

Dragovich suspected of murdering a West Australian (Maddison French) and burying his body somewhere in the vast desert in 1997. Australian authorities suspect the man assumed Mr French's identity and used his bank accounts for several months after killing him. Lawyer arranged for psychiatric assessment. Enquiries conducted in NZ and had tracked movements throughout America and Europe. As yet no plans to search for body. Detectives flew to Auckland in June.

Evening Post – 29/8/00***Prisoner Suspect in Murder***

A prisoner (Dragovich) in Auckland is suspected of murdering an Australian (Maddison French) and burying his body somewhere in the West Australian desert in 1997.

Australian Authorities believe he assumed Mr French's identity and used his bank accounts for a few months after killing him

Email to Herald 8/5/01

28 charges out of 75

The New Zealand Herald – 12/6/01

Conman may be released in July

Migrants fleeced by conman

Judge said "rather inviting" to hand down tougher sentence,

but would not do that. Public better served by shorter sentence, so Dawson could be deported minimising taxpayer money spent on him

Two week trial

272 Wellingtonians sent cr card details.

Heather Lord of Wellington was shocked, she had considered him a trustworthy friend.

Constant repetitive offending.

National News NZ – 3/8/01

At least 24 false identities.

Extradition papers served yesterday

National News NZ – 4/8/01

Dawson in jail since arrest at Auckland Airport 15 months ago.

National News NZ – 22/11/201

Judge Robert Kerr – con man Marco Dawson - Sentenced to 3 ½ in May – 24 counts credit card scams – Australian charges include making false written statements, declarations, dishonestly obtaining money, escaping from detention and making false statement for Australian passport

ATTACHMENTS: News articles

The West Australian news article, 19/8/00 showing sixteen faces of Miro Petrovich Dragovich

The West Australian 22/5/02 -Jail for Conman in Missing Man Case

The West Australia 22/5/02 - Conman jailed over NSW frauds



Jail for conman in missing man case

Refugee on protection visa abused privileges of citizenship: judge

BY SYDNEY
By Rebecca Rose

A CONMAN with at least 25 identities and linked to the mysterious disappearance of a Perth man has been jailed for a string of frauds in New South Wales.

Marco Dawson — also known as Miro Petrovich Dragovich, Dragan Todorovic and Tony Morgan — was jailed for a year for 10 crimes, including stealing from the bank account of missing man William Maddison French, 24, and trying to steal his disability pension.

Dawson, who was given refugee status in 1994, was found guilty of escaping from Villawood detention centre, where he had returned in 1996 to apply for another protection visa under a different name.

After his passport was taken, Dawson fled from Australia with another passport

under yet another name — obtained after he told authorities he had lost the original.

Judge Alan Moore said he was at a loss to explain why a man with refugee status would seek another protection visa. Dawson had abused the privileges of citizenship.

"I don't wish to make any statements in terms of the availability to persons who are suppressed in other countries to avail themselves of facilities in this country but here we see you have exceeded that which was on offer," Judge Moore said.

He jailed Dawson for the maximum 12 months, saying he was amazed the penalty for such serious offences was so light.

The man with so many different names sat quietly in court, wearing a beige turtle-neck jumper and jeans.

Dawson was extradited to NSW from New Zealand, where he is serving a three-

year sentence for similar offences. Australian and NZ authorities are arguing about where Dawson will serve his time.

Dawson claims he bought Mr French's credit card in Kings Cross for \$50.

But Sydney Central Court was told yesterday that he had befriended Mr French in a WA hostel in April 1997 and there was evidence they met again later. Mr French has not been seen since December 1997.

In March 1998, Dawson used Mr French's bankcard to get money from an ATM at Sydney International Airport before fleeing the country. The day he returned in November, he withdrew \$2400 from Mr French's account.

WA police officer Kerry French, who was at Dawson's court appearance yesterday, said WA authorities would continue investigating Mr French's disappearance.

Detectives believe Mr French is dead and suspect Dawson knows what happened to him. They have evidence that Dawson and Mr French, or someone purporting to be him, went from the North-West of WA in December 1997 into the Northern Territory, south to Alice Springs, on to regional Victoria, ending at Sydney Airport on March 19, 1998, when Mr French's bankcard was used to withdraw money.



Who's who: Some of the many faces of conman Marco Dawson.



Conman jailed over NSW frauds

Money stolen from
bank account of
missing Perth man

■ SYDNEY
By Rebecca Rose

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In November, he returned to Australia and withdrew \$2400 from Mr French's bank account on the same day.

WA police officer Kerry French, who was in court for Dawson's appearance yesterday, said WA authorities would continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Mr French.

Detectives suspect Dawson knows what happened to Mr French, whom police believe is dead.

They have uncovered evidence that Dawson and Mr French, or someone purporting to be him, travelled from WA's North-West in December 1997 into the Northern Territory then south to Alice Springs.

The journey continued into regional Victoria and ended at Sydney Airport on March 19, 1998, when Mr French's bankcard was used to withdraw money.

JUDGE TO TAKE UP.
WITH JUST. DEPT, NSW.

(H)

Ref: BishPro WMF

PROFILE - WILLIAM MADDISON FRENCH

South Africa born, immigrated to Australia 1986, Australian Citizenship 1988, 24 years of age, Wesley College Old Boy and Australian Business College graduate.

Interests: Travelling, Cultures and languages, Fishing and Weight lifting.

Health: Suffered depression.