

Injustice in Scotland: Case studies

William (Wullie) Beck

Background

William (Wullie) Beck is 46 years of age and lives with his wife Louise and two children in Glasgow. In 1982 he was convicted of Assault & Robbery at Edinburgh High Court and sentenced to six years in prison.

Leave to appeal was refused in 1982 after his QC is alleged to have wrongly said he had no grounds for appeal. Wullie, his wife and brother were dragged out of the high court screaming foul play. Wullie and his family maintain that there are many inconsistencies in the evidence given at his trial.

There was contradictory evidence given as to whether the robbers were wearing balaclavas - only without them would identification have been possible. The police witness claimed they were not being worn.

It is alleged that contradictory evidence was given by the main crown witness. Did he commit perjury at the trial? Was he coached what to say in evidence?

One of the biggest issues to be resolved is the claim that vital witnesses were not called by Wullie's defence team and important evidence was not adduced.

Identification evidence of two people - one an off-duty police officer - was central to the conviction. In this respect it is claimed that an Identification Parade was badly flawed, that witnesses were shown photographs of suspects beforehand, that arresting police officers were present at the parade and that the defence team failed to call an important police witness who was a vital identification witness. A solicitor present is alleged to have given the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (SCCRC) a statement to the effect that he felt the police officer witness viewing the parade might have been coached. These problems were allegedly compounded by Wullie's QC who in his submission to the SCCRC was apparently unaware of such issues.

Wullie and his supporters are making other serious challenges to the actions of his defence team,

the SCCRC and others including allegations of a failure to lead the evidence of a central witness who would have thrown doubt on important prosecution evidence.

It is hoped that the Judicial Review will explore these and other issues, claims that the trial judge mis-directed the jury and the circumstances surrounding the 1982 application for leave to appeal and the subsequent refusal of a second application to lodge Grounds of appeal on 14 March 2006

Further information:

- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/big-wullie/>
- <http://williambeck.blogspot.com/>

Who have questions to answer:

- Livingston Police
- SCCRC
- Trial defence legal team
- Trial judge.

What needs to be done:

- A judicial review of all the circumstances surrounding the conviction.
- Political pressure to determine the facts and ensure that justice is done.
- Review of the SCCRC's powers and membership.

Supporting Politicians.

Bill Kidd MSP