

Botched up cases free traffickers

BY JAMIE LYONS

HUNDREDS of gangsters who trafficked tens of thousands of people into Britain have escaped prosecution because of mistakes by immigration officials.

An internal Home Office memo warns **DELAYS** in assembling paperwork, **LOST** evidence and basic technical **MISTAKES** caused havoc in court cases.

In five years there have been 568 arrests for people trafficking with just 114 convictions – a success rate of just 20 per cent.

Many of the people traffickers are smuggling women in to Britain to work as prostitutes and children who are being used for illegal labour.

The memo warns: "Extra training and closer supervision is now a vital priority to ensure the rate of conviction rises as soon as possible. In too many cases the standards of evidence-gathering deployed by UK Borders Agency staff fall far below what is expected."

Earlier this summer a case in Folkestone underlined the system failures.

Slavery

A German accused of smuggling two women had the charge against him dropped after prosecutors failed to supply any evidence against him. Stefan Giese, from Berlin, pleaded not guilty and appeared in court four times. He was cleared after lawyers kept asking for more time to prepare evidence.

Tory candidate for Dover Charles Elphicke said: "Many of these cases amount to modern day slavery. It's the biggest scandal in this country today."

SUNDAY

GEORGE VI's giant 1939 Lanchester limo is set to fetch up to £35,000 at auction in Beaulieu, Hants today.

QUICKIE

VICAR ON PERV RAP

A VICAR has pleaded guilty to possessing 1,145 indecent images of children on his computer.

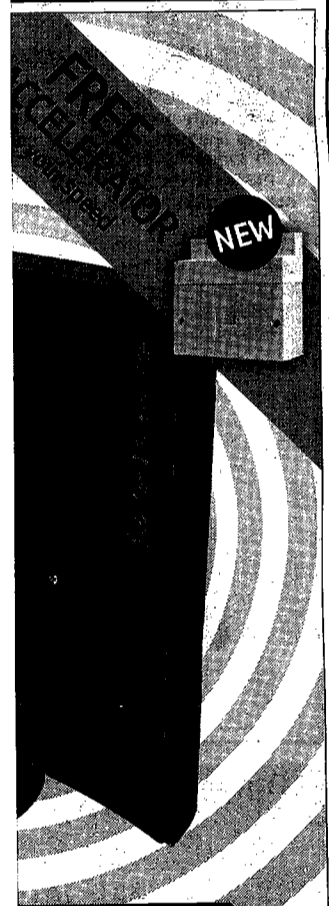
The Rev Trevor Diaper, 58, admitted having the obscene still and moving photos when he appeared at Chelmsford crown court, Essex.

Since his arrest the vicar has been suspended by his church in Bocking, Essex, where he had served for 11 years.

Diaper was freed on bail to await sentencing once reports on his offences are prepared.

GET MY DRIFT YET?

A MESSAGE in a bottle tossed in the sea off the Bahamas five years ago by Dan Knopp, 19, floated 4,000 miles to Cornwall.



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at her home in Cirencester, Glos—surrounded by 14 empty oxygen bottles. Local health chiefs say emergency oxygen should have been provided within four hours.

ROMEO'S JAIL DATE

COPS arrested a mugger when he returned an hour later to his woman victim's flat in Columbus, Ohio, to ask her for a DATE.

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