

**PETER THOMAS**

- Q. Do you know what a derringer is?  
A. My understanding is that it is a very small handgun with an under and over barrel.  
*Peter Thomas, Trial of Roseanne Catt, 2 July 1991, p 1841.*
- Q. Did you find two pistols?  
A. No, I did not.  
Q. Did you find a derringer?  
A. I don't know what a derringer..  
Q. Haven't you watched those American TV shows where the gamblers always use derringers?  
A. I don't know what a derringer is, sorry.  
*Peter Thomas at the current hearing, 12 February 2003, page 382.*
1. Mr Thomas is a rogue. He is utterly unscrupulous. He is a liar and a perjurer. The behaviour which demonstrates this covers the period from before his involvement in the present matter of Roseanne Catt up to the current hearing.
  2. The clearest demonstration is the case involving Miss Van Der Merwe. On 31 March 1989 she had a conversation with Thomas in which he put considerable pressure on her to give evidence against her co-accused Bracamonte (Ex L). The conversation and the particular question of helping herself by giving evidence were instigated by Thomas. Among many choice things he said were the following:  

"Have you ever given any thought to this? Did I ever say this to you? You help me and I'll help you." ( p 1.5).

"You know who did it" (She – "I really don't").

"Ramon did it. Ramon did it". (1.8)

"When all that goes before the court, you're going to be, you're going to be the ringleader of it. I've got a statement from an accountant. You know, you're in heaps of big shit Christa, I'll tell you now". (She – "I haven't done anything"). (3.2).

"... the deal is this – you can walk out if you give me Ramon up. That's it." (3.6).

"The only way you can get out of it , is to give him up". (3.8).

"Mate he's a grub, I'll tell you right now. He's a deadeast bastard and the longer you hang around with him. Well, my old dad used to say to me, mate if you lie down with the dogs, you'll get fleas". (4.7).

"... in the long run, we will shake the life out of both of you because – I can never guarantee what the Court will do to you, but by the Christ there is a lot we can do to you and you come over Christa, as a painted lady – Christa the ringleader". (4.8).

"Today you've got to make up your mind". (6.1).

"I don't care if you were involved. Just tell me you weren't. Only Ramon did it and I don't care what ... even tell me – this is what we did, this is what we talked about". (She – "But I can't lie. I can't lie".) (6.3).

".. you've got to give me Ramon and anybody else who might be involved." (She – "If I don't know that part?").

He – "Just tell me the truth. Tell me where it might have been, how it might have happened." (8.7).

"My allegation will be that you and he engineered this thing". (8.9).

"This is the best I can give you that. You can wipe your slate clean." (9.8).

3. Thomas was cross-examined at the committal about this conversation on 12 March 1990:

"... have you ever spoken to Miss Van Der Merwe and suggested to her that you were aware that Bracamonte was responsible?

A. I've spoken to her but I didn't suggest that.

Q. Did you ask for her assistance to give evidence against Bracamonte? A. No, not exactly. That's not exactly what was said no.

Q. Perhaps can you tell us then? A. There was a conversation with Miss Van Der Merwe in which she made the inquiry as to what would happen to her if she did give certain evidence during which she said that they were together that night and that they were not at home at the time of the bombing but what would be the worst that could happen to her and she said she'd go away and think about it.

...

Q. Well what did she actually say? A. Well I took it that the inference was that "We've done it but if I give him up what will you do for me."

(Ex WW, p 12,13).

This was obviously a serious and fundamental misrepresentation of the occasion. It shows nevertheless a level of skill in acknowledging the topic of conversation, but wholly reversing its effect. Thomas' companion officer Connelly gave the same false evidence (Ex WW, p 33). This can have been only by collusion with Thomas.

Showing considerable confidence and arrogance, Thomas then polished up the brief with a statement dated 27 August 1990, in which he recorded his false version of the conversation, carefully reciting in Detective Connelly as a corroborating witness (Ex K). The Crown Prosecutor ultimately became aware of the facts (Exs N and HHHHH).

4. This episode demonstrates ruthlessness and corruption at a high level, the pursuit of conviction at any price, and collusion in perjury. It occurred over the period from before the arrest of Roseanne Catt to after her committal. It adds very much to the plausibility of Marie Whalen's original account (to Warne, Baggs, Baird and Jones) of Thomas' interview with her on 23 August 1989. It chimes, too, with the evidence of Peter Bridge about his

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questioning by Thomas on the evening of 24 August 1989 (Ex PPPP, pages 212, 213).

5. Some ten years later, his tactics had not changed. Approaching Mrs Nagy (then separated from her husband) about the fire which had destroyed their hotel in June 1999, he said "Why don't you convince me that your husband has done it and I will make you a wealthy woman?". I will make it worth your while. Just tell me the truth. I can even give you some money to pull you through." (H 1778). Gina Hart, a family friend of the Nagys was also approached:

"Thomas told me he believed that George would have had an accomplice at some stage, or that he had done it himself. He then, within probably a couple of minutes of stating that, said to me he had, he said, "Gina," he said, "Look," he said, "Have you ever had a sexual relationship with George?" I said, "No, I haven't," and he said, "Well, I've come prepared to offer you \$10,000 on the off chance that during a wild moment of passion," or something to the effect there would be pillow conversation after, if George would say to me that he would admit to me that he had lit the fire and I was a bit embarrassed by that and I laughed and I said, "Look, I could use the \$10,000 however," I said, "No." I said, "I've never slept with George. This has never been the case." And he then laughed and said "Are you sure you wouldn't want to sleep with George?" and I just thought that was a bit over the top myself." (H 1785).

6. Thomas had good reason to dislike Roseanne Catt. She had complained about his behaviour in her arrest and charging with arson in 1983. As a result he had been extensively investigated by internal affairs (T 1776). There were about 25 or 30 complaints going back to 1983 (T 1777). In other proceedings he said that the investigation had taken 7 or 8 years. (Ex H). He said at the trial of Barry Catt:

"Since I met Roseanne Catt in 1983, I have spent the last six years of my life ducking the Internal Security police and justifying my existence." (T 1782).

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Thomas denied that he had hatred or deep animosity towards Roseanne Catt as a result (T 1776). This is not consistent with his behaviour in 1987, while dealing with a fire in Lawrence, when he said "This is the same as that Roseanne Catt bitch." (H 1618). One thing he would inevitably have known from this experience is that she was likely to resist and protest vehemently. (See also Ex KK).

He claimed that none of the complaints against him had been substantiated (T 2061), but this was not true. A complaint by Roseanne Catt of improper search procedure was sustained (Ex 3), as was a complaint by Errol Taylor (Ex Z).

7. Thomas himself resisted and protested vehemently on being taken off the case. (Ex X). This seems to show more than the usual level of interest.
8. He took a strong and partisan attitude. He decided, for example, that the children's complaints about Barry Catt were false (Barry Catt at that point having been committed for trial), without having interviewed the children or any of those involved in their care or assessment (Ex M).
9. Many aspects of his behaviour were at least unorthodox, more likely "wild west". On the execution of the search warrant on 24 August 1989, much that was taken was outside the scope of the warrant, and obviously so (Application for warrant Ex F, Warrant Ex UU, see also Ex SS).

The arrangements made for the Catt children were quite unsuitable. Thomas was in conflict with both Adrian Newell and Constable Cottee as to whether he had arranged for Newell to pick up the children, as against merely attend the police station to care for them. (Ex PP, A39-40, 53-55, 84-88, 122, Cottee T 1721, H 507-508). This is suspicious given his later demonstrated insistence on interviewing the children. (Ex UUUUU paras 39, 59-62). His initial categorisation of them as Crown witnesses seems to show a confidence that he could get them to change their stories.

His behaviour towards staff of the Department of Family and Community Services was oppressive and high-handed (Ex UUUUU paras 34, 37, 39, 59, 62, Ex NNNNN paras 13, 17, 18, 20, 32, 33, 34, 36, 46).

10. Over the years, Thomas has devoted considerable energy to supporting the anti Roseanne Catt cause (Ex A, Ex W, Ex Y, Ex TT). Another example is the 60 Minutes programme (Ex 11). There he said that

“... I didn't know until recently that she suggested that I'd planted the gun.” (p.7).

This is clearly false. He acknowledged the contrary many times at the trial, and it was previously raised with him by Internal Affairs (T 1836, 1836A, 2011, 2060, 2095). He persisted at this hearing with the 60 Minutes version (H 161). During the current hearing he supplied information to a journalist, then denied having had any such contact. He gave four clearly false answers:

Q. Speak to the press last week?

A. No, I have not.

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Q. Do you know a person called Peter Lalor?

A. I know of a person called Peter Lalor. (False in its implied denial he knew him). (H 276).

Q. You see, Mr Lalor seems to know about details that are in your solicitor's letter. You don't know how that came about?

A. No, ask Mr Lalor.

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Q. Mr Lalor says that he's informed by sources close to the case. Were you the source close to the case?

A. No, I'm not. (H 277).

Bearing in mind that Thomas' meeting with Lalor over lunch the previous Thursday had occurred in the presence of Sergeant Boyd-Skinner, and that the latter was present in court during the start of these questions, this was bold and brash perjury. This is the behaviour of a practised and shameless rogue. (Overall see Ex GG).

11. During the current hearing, Thomas has communicated by phone with Adrian Newell almost every day, including all but one of the ten on which he himself gave evidence. As this case is the only

common interest they have, it must have been the subject of those communications. That was despite clear requests such as recorded at H152. Thomas also phoned Carl Paget, both before and after the latter's evidence. (Ex AD pages 38-40, Ex AE pages 71-81).

12. A very strange feature of Thomas' evidence at this hearing is his adamant denial that he gave evidence at the trial of Peter Bridge (H77-80), contrary to the clear fact that he did (Ex G).
13. Peter Caesar, who met Thomas in 1991, gave evidence that Thomas told him about a number of police matters in which he had been involved. Thomas went to the trial of Roseanne Catt, which he later discussed with Caesar. He referred demeaningly to Roseanne Catt, and said "Caes, it's common knowledge that I planted the gun". (H 1569). Thomas said this more than once.

Caesar also said that Thomas had threatened Leanne Cheers that "he would do her in" and in doing so referred to Roseanne Catt (H 1578). Cheers said that Thomas had said that if she proceeded with a sexual harassment claim against him, he would set her up "like he did that bitch". (H 2365).

14. In these various incidents, attested to by people who in many instances do not know each other, or Roseanne Catt, the same Thomas is seen. This Thomas was a very different one from that presented to the jury.

Peter thomas.1

Tom Mplsby