

The Herald

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Where did the fingerprints come from?

LIKE others I would welcome a judicial inquiry in the so-called McKie case. Jean McFadden (April 13) rightly highlights the point that fingerprint officers at the Scottish Criminal Record Office will have the opportunity to present their evidence and if appropriate vindicate their actions.

This is not a case of setting Shirley McKie against the fingerprint officers and scoring points with the view to declaring one or other as the eventual winner. At present there is no clear indication as to what has happened with the evidence in this case. I have yet to be convinced that the SCRO have made a mistake in identifying the fingerprint and I hope that the judicial inquiry will investigate from where these fingerprints actually came. If David Asbury is willing to co-operate and given immunity from prosecution, then his movements should be tracked and compared with cases which Shirley McKie was investigating. I suspect that if the prints have been

correctly identified then these prints will have come from some other crime scene. Failing that, the only explanation is that the prints were planted or that both Asbury and McKie were present at the home of Marion Ross.

Of equal concern is the report that Detective Constable Shirley McKie was visited at home after her fingerprints had been supposedly found at the scene of the crime and that suggestions were made to her that she might like to change her story. Is this really the way in which the Strathclyde Police deal with evidence which does not accord with their initial findings? The maxim appears to be one of making the evidence fit rather than professionally assessing all the evidence and making appropriate deductions. The manner in which evidence is handled and the way in which conclusions are drawn from such evidence must also be reviewed.

Sandy Gemmill,
10 Mertoun Place, Edinburgh.

Postbag poll



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: controversy continues over the Shirley McKie fingerprint case.

The balance of opinion among this week's Herald letter writers

Dr Kendall-Smith should not have been tried/jailed for refusing to serve in Iraq

100% said Yes

0% said No

Hot topics

What's on your mind: the five most common subjects of letters this week

1. Civil liberty
2. Shirley McKie
3. Kendall-Smith
4. NHS
5. Bird flu