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## Senior Labour politician helped paedophile headmaster establish false identity:

By Eileen Fairweather

A paedophile who was sentenced to 21 years in prison last week has links with a Labour politician who is a senior figure in the judicial system, The Mail on Sunday can reveal.

Derek Slade, who abused boys at the boarding school where he was headmaster in the Eighties, was given help in establishing a false identity by Derek Sawyer, former leader of Islington Council and now chair of the London Region Courts Board.

Mr Sawyer facilitated Slade's escape from his past by setting up educational companies in which the disgraced teacher used a fake name and CV.



**Help: Slade, left, was able to maintain a false identity after his first abuse conviction thanks to assistance from Derek Sawyer, right**

Oxford-educated Slade, 61, was jailed last Monday after being found guilty at Ipswich Crown Court of abuse against 12 boys aged eight to 13 between 1978 and 1983.

They were pupils at St George's School, at Great Finborough, Suffolk. But he escaped justice for years using an alias with Mr Sawyer's knowledge. The politician has been chairman of numerous bodies involved in London's probation service and justice system.

Mr Sawyer, who denies any wrongdoing, helped Slade after the paedophile was first convicted of child abuse in the Eighties. Slade was found to have savagely beaten boys at Dalesdown School, in Sussex, and was jailed for three months, though the sentence was reduced on appeal to a conditional discharge.

The pair set up International British Educational Projects, which allowed Slade to work with children in India and Africa under the pseudonym Dr Edward Marsh – a name taken from a child who died aged eight in 1955.

He obtained a copy of the child's birth certificate and acquired a false passport.

Mr Sawyer, who was an Islington councillor until 2006, became leader of Islington Council in 1992, after the discovery that paedophiles had infiltrated all 12 of its children's homes. The council barred an inquiry from naming anyone suspected of involvement in the abuse.

Mr Sawyer said he was unaware Slade had given him false information or was using a fake passport. He said: 'I have been very shocked by Derek Slade's conviction for child abuse. I have been taken in and have been used by him.'

## **The paedophile and law chief: It took 32 years to bring pervert headmaster to justice ...but he was helped to hide from his past**

The soldiers' sons blinked back tears as the television news showed their fathers setting sail for the Falklands War. In 1982, the soldiers' battle for survival had just begun – but so had the children's.

The scared youngsters were packed off to a new military boarding school, St George's, in Suffolk where they were abused by the sadistic, paedophile headmaster.

At the start of this month, Derek Slade was found guilty at Ipswich Crown Court of numerous serious crimes against 12 boys aged eight to 13 between 1978 and 1983. He was jailed for 21 years last Monday.



Position of power: Derek Slade when he worked at St George's School in Suffolk. There is no suggestion that the children in this picture were victims of abuse

Now The Mail on Sunday can exclusively reveal how Slade, 61, escaped police for years using an alias with the knowledge of a Labour politician at the heart of Britain's justice system.

Derek Sawyer, former Labour leader of Islington Council and now head of the London Region Courts Board, helped Slade maintain a fake identity after Slade was first convicted of abuse in the Eighties.

The politician even set up a limited company – International British Educational Projects (IBEP) – with the paedophile that allowed him to work with vulnerable children under his false name with a fake CV and a reference.

The pair have a connection that spans four decades.

Slade's downfall last week resulted from simultaneous investigations on three continents. A sugar company in Swaziland, the London branch of the charity Help A Poor Child (HAPC) which briefly funded an orphanage school IBEP opened in India in 2003, and former victims of Slade's brutal military school, all helped police untangle a complex web of evidence – about Slade and his connections with Sawyer.

It is not known when Derek Slade and Derek Sawyer first met, but records show that in 1977, Sawyer set up Anglemoss, the company behind St George's School, with Slade. Sawyer was then 27, and had recently joined the Labour Party. He resigned as a director of Slade's British schools soon after helping set them up.

Four other directors then joined the company. When contacted by The Mail on Sunday last week, Sawyer denied that he was ever a founding director of the school.

Slade, then 28, an Oxford classics graduate, had no formal teaching qualifications but was the head teacher of the school which was based first at Wicklewood, Norfolk, then at Great Finborough, near Stowmarket, Suffolk.

The school, which had 350 pupils within six years, had low fees and was aimed at the lower ranks in the Armed Forces. At Slade's trial, several witnesses described his 'reign of terror'. One of them, Alistair – not his real name – told the jury that he was broken physically and mentally by the headmaster within 72 hours of arriving at the school.

**'I didn't even see it coming, a slap across the side of my face and I hit the deck screaming with pain... he went crazy because I couldn't stop crying'**

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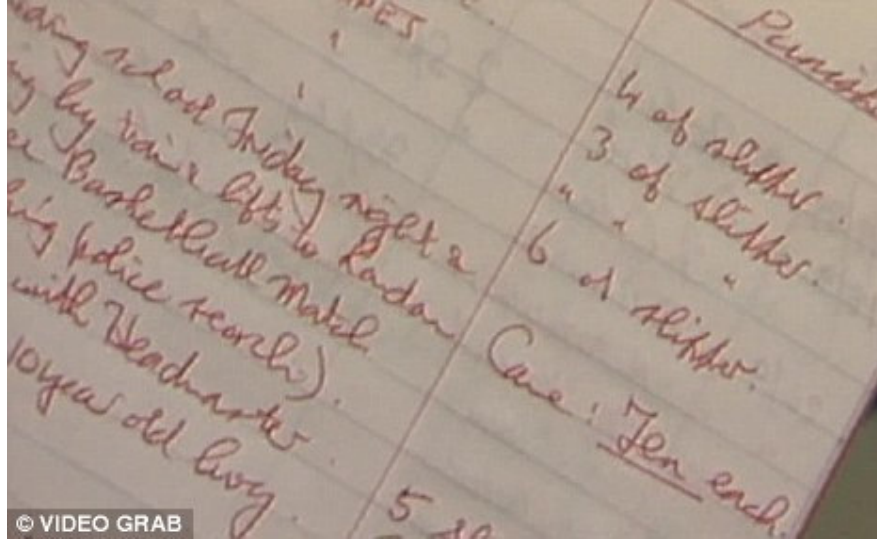
Alistair, whose father fought for Britain in the Falklands, wrote home that he was unhappy. He was unaware that Slade read the children's letters. He was summoned to Slade's office.

When he did not address him as 'sir', Slade knocked him to the floor.

'I didn't even see it coming, a slap across the side of my face and I hit the deck screaming with pain,' said Alistair. Slade flew into a rage and resumed his attack. 'I was lying in a heap. He went crazy because I couldn't stop crying.'

Slade dragged him to a chair where he was caned. During the hour-long assault, Slade pulled off Alistair's shorts and slashed both his face and body.

'I couldn't work out what I'd done wrong. Slade looked like a monster, a madman. In his eyes there was evil.'



**Journal: A handwritten document of the beatings dished out by Derek Slade. He was interviewed by ITN in 1982 when he spoke in favor of corporal punishment**

Alistair described how he was eventually made to take part in what Slade called his 'midnight feasts', dinner parties at his house in the school grounds for Slade's male friends, where the boys were sexually abused.

In 1983, after whistleblowers had brought the abuse to the attention of the BBC's Roger Cook, Slade was forced to leave the school. But a Government inquiry proved a whitewash and Slade remained a school governor.

However in November 1986, Slade was convicted of savagely beating boys at Dalesdown Preparatory School in Sussex.

The trial was the result of The Mail on Sunday publicising pupils' allegations in February of that year. The judge described photos of their injuries as 'sickening'.

Slade was jailed for three months at Chichester Crown Court. He appealed and his sentence was reduced to a conditional discharge.

By then he had left four British schools after brutality and indecency allegations. Following his criminal conviction, he could never again teach in Britain.

**Sawyer took over the leadership of Islington Council in 1992, when the media revealed paedophiles had infiltrated all 12 of its children's homes**

'Derek Slade' disappeared and 'Edward Marsh' was born – or, rather, reborn. Police believe that Slade picked the name after trawling cemeteries until he found the grave of a boy who would have been a similar age to his own, had he lived.

He then obtained a copy of the dead boy's birth certificate and used this to obtain a false passport in Edward Marsh's name in 1988. The passport was used by him to travel in the United States, India, Russia and Africa. Slade also used a genuine passport in his own name to travel to India.

Meanwhile, his friend Derek Sawyer became a Labour councillor in Islington in 1982. Oddly, the ward he represented was St George's – the same as the name of the school he and Slade founded.

Sawyer took over the leadership of Islington Council from Margaret Hodge in 1992, when the media revealed that paedophiles had infiltrated all 12 of its children's homes. Hodge took the flak for the scandal but the role of her successor also now demands closer scrutiny.

Although a damning independent inquiry confirmed Islington had employed 26 alleged child pornographers and pimps, the council – now headed by Sawyer – had set its terms of reference and barred it from naming anyone. No one was ever arrested in the UK. Two ringleaders were eventually apprehended by police in Morocco and Thailand for the abuse of local children.

Four days before the report was published in 1995, Sawyer and Slade registered the company that allowed the latter to access more children abroad. The pseudo-charity, International British Educational Projects (IBEP), aimed to bring education 'on the British model' to impoverished children in Africa, Russia and India.

The Mail on Sunday has obtained an early IBEP sales pitch, which gives both Sawyer's home address in North London – where he still lives – and a Mickleover, Derbyshire, address for the fictitious Edward Marsh.



**Aide: Derek Sawyer helped Slade maintain a fake identity after his first abuse conviction**

It is undated but Sawyer's phone number has an 0171 prefix, which dates it to prior to BT's 2000 move to 020 numbers for London. It suggests that interested clients ring either Sawyer – described as 'Director, London office' or Mr E. Marsh, 'Projects Co-ordinator, Derby'.

Following Slade's trial, police revealed he had been working on a charitable schools project in Swaziland.

The project was sponsored by Ubombo Sugar. Police have confirmed that in 1999 – by which time Slade had a criminal conviction – 'Dr Edward Marsh' visited Swaziland as IBEP's appointee. Sawyer went on to run the school board.

Staff and parents swiftly became suspicious of the bullying manner of 'Dr Marsh', who left soon after in 2000. Sawyer claimed Marsh had suffered a breakdown and he continued running the board.

IBEP's foreign ventures were not limited to Africa. Derrick Pereira, UK chairman of Help A Poor Child (HAPC) met Slade at Sawyer's home in North London in 2005. Mr Pereira was expecting to meet 'Dr Marsh', whom he understood was a wealthy philanthropist author.

Slade let slip his real name. Mr Pereira picked up on the gaffe but was told Slade preferred to use his pseudonym as an author, which was allegedly acquired after a rich, childless uncle made changing his name a condition of inheriting.

In 1990, Slade and Sawyer had cofounded a publishing company called Oriflamme, to publish educational textbooks by Slade under the name of Edward Marsh.

HAPC for a time funded IBEP's Anglo-Kutchi English Medium School in Gujarat, India, for young earthquake orphans. Labour MP Keith Vaz – Islington's senior solicitor in the early Eighties, and patron of HAPC – supported fundraising for the school in his Leicester constituency.

**Former victims organised a school reunion at St George's to get access to the building. In the attic, they found a box of old photos, which helped confirm dates and put names to faces**

A Labour councillor raised thousands for the school at a dinner-dance Vaz attended. Slade visited Leicester to be presented with donations by local children.

However, HAPC ended the association after Slade's British victims, who had sought each other out on the internet and joined forces to try to expose him, alerted the charity.

Last week, Sawyer said: 'I was not aware that Derek Slade had obtained a false passport and not aware of the false information he had given.'

Slade's former pupil Alistair had read HAPC's description of its support for IBEP's orphanage school, which mentioned Slade, but Sawyer's name was unfamiliar to him. When he found a picture of him on the internet, Alistair recognised Sawyer from visits to St George's and felt sick.

The former victims organised a school reunion disco at St George's in order to get access to the building. In the school attic, they found a box of old photos, which helped confirm dates and put names to faces. They say they also found an Eighties photo of Sawyer visiting the school.

In February 2007, HAPC announced on its website: 'Recent events, which we are unable to disclose at this time, made his [Slade] position untenable.'



### Exposed: How the Mail on Sunday revealed Slade's brutality

The charity says that it has since demanded that IBEP return its funds and provide assurances about the children's safety. Derrick Pereira says that Sawyer has still not supplied these.

Mr Pereira also says that concerned sources in Swaziland eventually spotted HAPC's website warning, and contacted him. The charity's delicate wording was understandable, given the involvement of powerful Labour politicians with the project.

The Africans asked, on a conference call, what the charity knew about 'Dr Edward Marsh', Slade and Sawyer. Mr Pereira says: 'They were so shocked to be told that Marsh and Slade were one and same man that they dropped the phone.'

The African investigation established Marsh's passport fraud from his visa details. Issued in London on September 25, 1998, it was for an Edward Marsh born on May 31, 1947, in Derby, two years before Slade was born in Southampton.

They scrutinised Slade's fake CV as Marsh, which claimed a first class BA degree from University College, Oxford, in the Trinity term of 1969, and a BA Education from the University of Birmingham via Saltley Teachers' Training College, on July 23, 1973.

Slade actually graduated later and had no teaching qualifications. Through Sawyer's company IBEP, a convicted child abuser was able to work with vulnerable African children having obtained money under false pretences.

**At his end-of-terrace home, police found huge amounts of child pornography and his fake passport**

Sawyer is a man who has acquired key positions on bodies running the capital's police, magistrates and probation services. He represented all London's councils on the Metropolitan Police's public safety board and was made a trustee of two crime prevention youth charities, including Catch 22 – patron the Princess Royal. He is currently chair of the London Region Courts Board, which works with Her Majesty's Courts Service to achieve effective and efficient administration of the courts.

On discovering his links to Slade, Ubombo Sugar removed Sawyer from its school board – even placing a notice in The Times of Swaziland in January 2009 making it clear that the parting was not amicable. Mr Pereira remains furious that through Sawyer, 'a man at the heart of the British capital's justice system' – as a source described him – a dangerous child abuser was protected and promoted.

A separate source in Swaziland told The Mail on Sunday last week: 'I hope Slade rots. There is no doubt as to the closeness and longevity of his and Sawyer's relationship. It is said that in support of the application for "Marsh" to come into Swaziland, Sawyer/IBEP presented a very glowing CV with documents attached.'

The British police, who had met the group of victim investigators, now knew Slade's fake identity and arrested him in England last February when he attended a medical appointment as Edward Marsh.

At his end-of-terrace home in Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, police found huge amounts of child pornography, and his fake passport.



**'Reign of terror': These images show Slade speaking in favour of corporal punishment during an interview for ITN in 1982**

There were more than 70,000 images of children, some apparently African and Indian. Almost 5,000 were eventually judged indecent.

Police also found audio tapes Slade had made of boys being beaten and boxes of explicit material. About 50 new witnesses came forward after Slade's arrest, including former pupils who now have senior defence forces roles.

Before his six-week trial, Slade offered to plead guilty to the indecency, assault and child pornography charges, if the three witnesses describing rape backed down. His trial would then have been a brief formality, gone unreported and protected his friends. But all witnesses refused.

At his trial, Slade admitted 15 offences of indecent assault and five of actual bodily harm, and denied but was found guilty of six additional offences of assault, four indecent assaults and three serious sexual assaults. They were sample offences, many more are suspected.

Slade also pleaded guilty to 16 charges of making indecent images of children, possession of almost 4,500 indecent images of children and being in possession of a false passport. When he was sentenced, a dozen of his victims were present. They applauded the judge and jury.

One said afterwards that they persisted with the prosecution in order to show that 'the bad guys don't always win'.

Shortly after Slade's arrest, Sawyer dissolved IBEP – the accounts of which are peppered with large financial transactions involving the fictitious 'Edward Marsh' – and wrote to Help A Poor Child to demand it stop linking his name with Slade's on their website, as this was 'damaging' to him. It has not yet done so.

Detective Inspector Adrian Randall, who headed Slade's 18-month investigation, says that police enquiries are continuing.

In response to The Mail on Sunday's allegations, Derek Sawyer said: 'I have been very shocked by Derek Slade's conviction for child abuse. The revelations which emerged during the court hearings have been very disturbing.

'I am glad that justice has been done and has seemed to be done by his many victims. Like many others I have been taken in by Mr Slade and have been used by him.'

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