

## AN ISOLATED EVENT ?

By DARIN BUFALINO

Everyone in the Massachusetts' Criminal Justice System has an opinion on the recent revelation that State Chemist Annie Dookhan admitted to wide spread malfeasance in the performance of her duties specifically related to the testing of drug samples sent to the State Crime Lab as evidence in criminal cases.

From a Suffolk University Law Professor who is himself a defense attorney " In a negative sense of the word, this is a watershed event of the Criminal Justice System in Massachusetts ". These from a sitting District Attorney " There will be a larger onslaught in the coming weeks of people who have committed very serious crimes who will be let out of jail or face significantly lesser charges " and " It makes me sick ". how about the front page of the Boston Herald on Thursday 9/27/2012 " Get used to this : Accused dealer back on the streets... Thanks to Drug Lab Follies ".

Do I have a biased opinion because I am incarcerated ? I will let you the reader decide. Lets start with Ms. Dookhan. Is she the first person to be found maleficent in her duties as a public servant ? Not hardly- no need to expound, in recent memory one can think of a bevy of incidents one after another that should have induced public outcry and major reforms but which did neither after the System put the " This is an isolated event " spin on it.

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Here is my opinion. There are innocent people in prison and people who are guilty of a crime but not the one they are in carcerated for all as a result of Ms. Dookhan and her colleague's malfeasance. Her colleagues need to be held accountable just as much as Ms. Dookhan. By their own words they are as guilty if not more of Obstruction of Justice charges. Her peers in the State Lab knew something was amiss as one chemist said he " long suspected Dookhan of wrong doing " and " disaster struck in the spring of 2011 ". How do you explain this admission of "long suspected wrong doing " within the State Crime Lab yet not speak up ? Perverted Justice in the pursuit of Justice. I suspect the general consensus of " Who cares we are breaking the law, We are putting bad guys behind bars giving them a taste of their own medicine, It is what the public wants".Further endorsement of my opinion, Multiple colleagues of Ms. Dookhan told authorities that she communicated directly with prosecutors. By passing the State Crime Lab evidence officer- which violated Lab protocol.

A State Lab Chemist violating Lab protocol with state prosecutors- actions which at the minimum are unethical if not illegal. Yet not one of her colleagues or supervisors acted to correct these lapses of protocol and what of the prosecutors who are charged with upholding the commonwealths laws ? What excuse can there be for violating their own State Crime Lab protocols ? And why ? Ms. Dookhan has been charged will they ? When her colleague says " disaster struck in the spring of 2011 " does he mean to say it was now coming to light that for years members in the State Crime Lab and prosecutors colluded to violate thousands of criminal defendant's constitutional rights in the pursuit of justice ? Amazing what the so called good people will do to get the so called bad guys off the streets, including becoming bad guys themselves.

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Something that should not be lost during the run-up of Ms. Dookhans admissions and arrest. Governor Duval Patrick ordered the entire State Lab closed down and work performed there transferred to another State Lab. This in itself gives the appearance that the Governor was aware of or suspected wide spread collusion in the State Crime Lab. Strong words for sure but what other conclusion can be made from what is known ? For example at the very onset years ago, No one ever fact checked Ms. Dookhan's resume. this for a position in the criminal justice system in and affecting the constitutional rights of an entire state. Colleagues aware of lapses in protocol and not taking corrective measures. Another chemist is quoted saying he was " staggered " to see Ms. Dookhan churning out as many as 500 samples in one month compared with 150 a month by her colleagues.

Again here is my opinion, I am going to quote the District Attorney " It makes me sick " as it should everyone else. Ms. Dookhans colleagues and supervisors allowed her to subvert justice on a daily basis and let it continue for years because ? I am going to opine that the same atmosphere that can be found in police stations and court rooms pervaded the State Crime Lab. That is " If they were not guilty they would not be here, so lets do what we can to convict them ".

Watershed event ? It sure is, this event shows the public what is only one instance of justice perverted in the pursuit of justice. A unconstitutionally unsound policy that is practised in law enforcement, court rooms and corrections on a grand scale each and everyday.

Perverted justice in the pursuit of justice is no justice but total lawlessness in favor of the so called " Good Guys " who break the laws they are sworn to uphold.

An Isolated Event ? A Watershed Event ? How about Disgraceful, Egregious, Illegal, Morally Bankrupt, No need to continue you can fill in your own adjective just leave Isolated for someone who does not know better.