

# Girl's rape claim is false, jury told

THERE was no medical evidence to support a 15-year-old girl's claim that social worker Errol Clarke raped her, a jury heard.

Jonathon Femi-Ola, defending Clarke, told Derby Crown Court that the social worker was falsely accused.

He added that it would be dangerous to convict, because there was no evidence to support the girl's story.

The prosecution claims Clarke (34), of Wilson Street, Derby, forced the girl to have sex at a flat while driving her home from babysitting.

Clarke denies rape on June 30 last year, and indecently assault between April and May 1991. A verdict was expected today.

The above article was published in the Derby newspaper *Evening Telegraph* (CITY FINAL), November 10, 1992, page 9. The article below was published in the same edition of the same newspaper the following day, page 3.

# CARER CLEARED OF RAPING GIRL

**S**OCIAL worker Errol Clarke was celebration today after being cleared of raping a 15-year-old girl.

He also won an industrial tribunal decision that he was the victim of racial discrimination by Derbyshire County Council.

## Not guilty

A Derby Crown Court jury found Mr Clarke not guilty of rape and indecent assault.

The 34-year-old, of Wilson Street, Derby, denied that he forced the girl to have sex, after stopping at a city flat on June 30 last year while driving her home from a baby-sitting session.

Mr Clarke, a social worker for eight years, told the court the girl was a disturbed adolescent.

She once made a sexual advance to him and he was worried about her behaviour.

by Liz Thompson

In the final stages of the five-day trial, Jonathan Femi-Ola, defending, accused the prosecution of "throwing mud" and added that there was no medical evidence to link Mr Clarke with the alleged rape.

Mr Clarke said afterwards: "I had been bailed throughout the trial, but before the verdict I was forced to spend a night in prison — sharing a cell with a man on a murder charge.

"All through this there has been nothing but tears. It has wrecked my family."

Mr Clarke also received the industrial tribunal's unanimous decision that the county council unlawfully discriminated against him over promotion in 1985.

But he is to appeal against the tribunal's decision to award only £2,000 "for hurt feelings", claiming his loss of earnings were far in excess of that figure.

But the tribunal panel added that other



● Cleared ...  
social  
worker  
Errol Clarke.

allegations of discrimination had been disproved.

Mr Clarke said: "I feel the tribunal has backed my claims that Derbyshire County Council is racist."

A county council spokesman said: "We welcome the general findings of the tribunal, because 99 per cent of the allegations were found in our favour."