CITY OFFICIALS MADE ME DO IT, CLAIMS KILLER

A PROMINENT Toulouse politician and the city’s chief prosecutor have been implicated in the murders of a prostitute and a transvestite in new allegations levelled by convicted serial killer Patrice Alègre.

The claims are the latest twist in a scandal that has gripped all of France. Alègre, 34 and France’s most notorious serial killer, claims that he murdered two of his victims on the orders of highly placed officials in Toulouse who were worried about blackmail threats after attending sadomasochistic orgies.

Letter
In a secret letter sent to well-known French TV journalist Karl Zero, Alègre’s confession appeared to confirm statements made recently by two former prostitutes, who claimed that Alègre supplied influential dignitaries in Toulouse with drugs and girls for sex parties in the early 1990s.

The letter also sensational claims that he later became their hit man. In the letter, smuggled out of jail, Alègre outlined the confession he made to investigators on Friday, when he admitted to killing prostitute Line Galbardi and transvestite Claude Martinez.

Both were murdered in 1992, and Alègre claims it was because they threatened to lift the lid on the operation.

Alègre provided girls for the parties held at venues including a courthouse and a chateau owned by the city’s chief prosecutor Jean Baudis. He alleges that Martinez turned up at the sex parties with a hidden camera and his murder was ordered by guests who feared exposure.

Galbardi was killed because she had witnessed the vicious murder of another prostitute and had already started talking to police.

Risk
“IT is unacceptable that a man’s honour can be tainted by the words of a murderer serving a life sentence,” Francis Sepinier, Baudis’ lawyer told French newspaper Liberation.

Cocaine
However Alègre, who is serving a life sentence for five murders, brushed aside the denials. “Do not believe these people. The truth cannot be suppressed just because the people involved are people in power,” he said.

The two prostitutes are telling the truth when they say they came with me to sadomasochistic parties, and that certain members of the Toulouse bourgeoisie were there and everyone was going for the cocaine,” Alègre, a policeman’s son, was jailed in 2002 for his string of sick crimes which included six rapes and five killings involving extreme cruelty.

Police in Toulouse are still investigating the disappearance of 115 women and girls in the region over 12 years.
Got a hot story? Call our newsdesk on 04 93 09 66 43!

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And Riviera Gazette readers get even deeper discounts! Bring this advert with you to claim a special 10% additional discount card at the reception desk when you arrive.

Getting to Serravalle Outlet couldn’t be easier – it’s just a couple of hours up the motorway, in northern Italy: Take the A8 to the Italian border, then follow the A50 to Genova. Follow the A4 from Genova towards Milano and leave at the Serravalle Scrivia exit (local road SS535 bis). You’re there!
**Homeowner kills burglar**

A THEOLEU-SUR-MER home owner shot and killed a burglar who broke into his villa at the weekend.

German Hans Ferdinand, 66, was arrested for manslaughter and illegal possession of a firearm, but was not detained in custody. The burglar was a 40-year-old man from the Var.

Rave crackdown

FOURTEEN Ravers were ‘tumbled’ out of Nice; the answer is 4:30pm.

Va r  a  f e w  w e e k s  a g o , a u t h o r i t i e s  h a v e  d e c i d e d  t o  g e t  t o u g h  w i t h  o r g a n i s e r s .  P o l i c e  w i l l  i n  f u t u r e  c o n f o n d e s  s i s t e m s  i f  t h e  e v e n t  h a s  n o t  b e e n  r e g i s t e r e d  a t  t h e  p r e f e c t u r e . R a v e  o r g a n i s e r s  a l s o  r i s k  b i g  f i n e s .

Organisers also risk big fines.

A PROMINENT local businessman is putting his feet up after completing a gruelling five day walk from the coast to the highest point in the Alpes-Maritimes.

Peter Johnson, 48, and friend Chris Griffiths left Menton last Friday to hike for 305km over 1.260 metre peak near the Italian border in the Mercantour national park.

“It was a hard slog, and a lot of walking up and down, up and down,” said Peter, a financial adviser and the chairman of the local British Chamber of Commerce. “Chris calculated that, with all the walking up and down we did, we climbed the same height as Mount Everest. That’s not bad in five days!”

Deep snow

“We started in the blazing sunshine on the beach. On the final day we were kicking our way through deep snow.”

“We didn’t have a support team, so we carried all our gear with us from the start, but we had some pretty funny on the beach while we were hiking.”

“We stayed in mountain huts overnight, and sat in icy cold streams at the end of each day to get clean.”

“Every time we saw a mountain hut we were ready to give it one last burst.”

FOOTNOTE . . . Peter Johnson recovering with some of his sponsorship cheques.

Lost

“On Saturday afternoon we lost the path for a couple of hours, in the middle of a torrential thunderstorm.”

Visibility was low and it was really quite scary - there was no hint of civilisation around, and of course our mobile phones didn’t work out there.”

“It’s amazing that you don’t have to go very far inland from the Côte d’Azur to be in the back of the world. In the heart of the Mercantour it feels as rugged, lonely and exposed as the Himalayas.”

Tired

“The pair did come close to giving up at one stage. At the end of the fourth day we were just utterly, mind bogglingly, tired. We had booked a guide to take us up the last bit of the mountain, and if we’d been able to get in touch with him then we’d have called it off. But when he turned up first thing in the morning we were ready to give it one last burst.”

Initial indications are that the marathon hike raised over €6,000 for the Great Ormond Street Children’s hospital and Unicef.

“The sponsorship gave us a great incentive to press on,” said Peter.

The pair first attempted the walk 15 years ago, but didn’t finish it. “We did it again! It’s very unlikely - and certainly not for at least another 15 years!”

Var ‘illegal’ crackdown

The Var is stepping up its campaign to crack down on illegal employment, in particular of foreign workers.

The plan is to make inspections more effective and improve communication between the agencies involved, including the police and the social security agency.

Sectors with high levels of illegal workers include the construction industry, the catering and hotel trade and tourism.

**IT pros get on board**

A NEW online forum aims to put English-speaking IT professionals in the region in touch with each other.

The bulletin board, started by Draguignan-based IT consultant Richard Morby, aims to help permanent staff and contractors ‘communicate, find work and help each other’.

Sign up at www.frogosnoblt.com

**Fat cat Cantona**

SOCCER legend Eric Cantona was in Nice on Tuesday to promote a film in which he plays an obese policeman.

In ‘The Overeater’ the athletic star sports a 40 kilo ‘fat suit’, designed to pad him out for the part.

The film had an exclusive preview in the city on Tuesday and will be on general release from July 16.

**Watch your tots**

DROWNING is the third biggest cause of death in children aged over one year in France.

Between June 1 and September last year 409 children died in drownings, costing 20 lives.

However, in the Alpes-Maritimes there was a drop in fatalities last year; just six deaths were registered as against 32 in 2000.

**Taxiing issues**

Since the RHT, Sovereign has helped thousands of individuals and companies to protect and maximise their assets and reduce their tax exposure. In a rapidly changing world you need the resources and support of a global organisation with the expertise you require to make the right choices.

There are many legitimate and highly effective ways for individuals and corporations to reduce their tax bills – and we know about most of them.

Contact Sovereign - if there’s a legal way to reduce your tax exposure we’ll find it. View our details on www.Sovereigngroup.com

Others...

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A NEW high-tech car made its Riviera debut this week. Although the Carver is a three-wheeled vehicle, it feels like a motorbike because it leans into corners.

The machine’s Dutch inventor showed The Gazette his pocket rocket and explained how it works:

“The Carver has taken 11 years to design and develop, my father came up with the concept and we’ve now made it and it’s great fun,” said Chris van den Brink.

“The fully automatic hydraulic-mechanical leaning system makes this exciting kind of driving possible, lending itself very well to an exciting sporty driving style.”

The tiny two-seater can reach 100km/h in 8.2 seconds and has a top speed of 180km/h although it feels much faster as it swoops through corners.

“We have dealers here who are interested and we think it will be very popular,” said Chris. “We’ve sold 11 or 12 at home in Holland and we’re now looking at the rest of Europe.”

But the pricetag means the nifty buggy is a rich-man’s toy – you’ll need to find €37,950 to put one on your driveway.

## Smuggler’s package spotted

AN ARGENTINEAN man was caught smuggling a kilo of cocaine through Nice airport last week – hidden in his underpants.

Customs officers nabbed Federico Stritzke, 60, as he stepped off a plane from Brazil. Appearing before magistrates in Nice last Friday, Stritzke admitted he had arranged a meeting with a contact in the city, where he would hand over the €40,000 haul.

Gazette undercover reporter Neil Williams conducted an investigation into how Stritzke might have smuggled the cocaine in his boxer pants.

If you can’t get on an airplane like that, you’ll need to find out how easy it is!

## Concorde farewell

THE final Air France Concorde flight left Paris last Saturday. Those wishing to sample supersonic flight, or jet off for a day’s shopping in Nice airport last week – hidden in his underpants.

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Monaco club relegated by debt mountain

AS MONACO FC, the principality’s football club, has been relegated to French Ligue 2 because of financial problems.

The move comes despite the club finishing second in French Ligue 1 this season, and winning the League Cup. The club has debts estimated at €67m.

“It’s sad and frustrating that we couldn’t find a solution before the deadline set by the league,” HSH Prince Albert said at a press conference on Friday.

He also criticized the club’s management for their obvious failure.

“But there’s still hope and we will fight to find investors willing to help us. You know how close I am to Monaco’s football club and I can’t let down players who have proved their loyalty to Monaco.”

“My father and I will have to see how we can help the club. We have ideas and I’m confident. We’ll do everything we can to save the club,” he added.

Restrictions imposed by the French football league mean that the royals are not allowed to dig in their own pockets to help the troubled side.

The move has now sparked fears that top players will seek to leave the club rather than face the ignominy of playing in Ligue 2.

The Riviera Gazette

HOW NOT TO BE TAKEN FOR A TART

The American author of a popular guide to etiquette for foreigners in France visited Sophia Antipolis this week.

Polly Platt is a former journalist who came to France in 1957. The third edition of her book, French or Foe?, has recently been published and is designed to help Americans come to terms with deeper strategies for achieving goals.

Advised of the impending visit, Prince Albert said at a press conference that: “My father and I will have to see how we can help the club. We have ideas and I’m confident. We’ll do everything we can to save the club.”

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No plans to reform their pensions:

Teachers and transport workers are planned for the next day. The pension reforms will be put before parliament on Wednesday 11 June.

Next Monday is also a public holiday and, perhaps unsurprisingly, further strikes by angry air-traffic controllers and buses and trains are still on a restricted service.

The predicted gloomy economic climate is blamed.

Time to buy?

PLANS are afoot to encourage more people to buy their own homes.

Housing minister Gilles de Robien is expected to announce measures soon to encourage potential home buyers. Currently only 56 per cent of homes in France are owner-occupied.

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The Riviera Gazette

Thursday 5 June 2003
I grew up in the south-west of France and then moved to Toulouse to study. My great passion was rugby and while I was there I made my way into the French National championships. After I settled down with my wife, had three children and became a businessman, I opened one business after another starting with an insurance agency, then a real estate agency and finally in 1992 I bought a troubled foie gras production business.

I called the business L’Empire after its previous owner and now I have 500 ducks and 30 geese.

They all run around freely. Most of the stories you hear about geese being force-fed to produce foie gras are untrue. Geese are so greedy they don’t need to be force-fed at all, and it is an antiquated form of production. It is an antiquated form of production. Most of the stories you hear about geese being force-fed to produce foie gras are untrue. Geese are so greedy they don’t need to be force-fed at all, and it is an antiquated form of production.

I persuaded four of my rugby friends to come and help me with the business and we learnt the business – I can introduce people to new things they haven’t tried.

When I first came to Antibes I wanted to sell my products with quality produce as well, and there’s a real sense of community and the way of life is similar to village life.

I love meeting people and thinking about geese being force-fed to produce foie gras are untrue. Geese are so greedy they don’t need to be force-fed at all, and it is an antiquated form of production.

The Riviera Gazette Thursday 5 June 2003

My Riviera

Jerôme Verrier talks to Jenny Paul about selling armagnac to Lionel Ritchie and why he won’t stock champagne...
Private users save €10 with this form

5 simple steps to a speedy sale! This is the perfect marketplace for your palace or your Porsche, gold-fish bowl or golf clubs. Just fill in this form and send us your ad with payment (if applicable) and we will publish it in the next issue.

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Cheque, in euros, drawn on a French bank, payable to ‘The Riviera Gazette’
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[Signature] [Date]

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Classified Advertisement Order Form

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Deposit: [Deposit Amount]
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Classified Adverts"
Thursday 5  
04 93 76 76 60

04 93 77 77 40.

Casino in the evening. Tel: 01 56 05 05 26.

Classic car fans should also visit Mandelieu-La-Napoule today for the finish of the 21st International Swimming Meeting at the Palace of Congress in Juan-les-Pins until June 19. Meet authors and illustrators of some of the famous French comic books. Tel: 02 99 54 63 43.

London’s top professional stand up comedians and Royal Monceau in Madrid. Tel: 01 56 05 05 26.

{quote}Sunny Sunny Sunny Sunny Sunny Sunny\{quote} 

{quote}There is a cocktail evening on Saturday 7 at 18:00 in Monte Carlo’s Centre Commercial Le Clos. Open from 13:00 to 20:00. There will be live music, barbeques and a party atmosphere in the port and old town. Tel: 09 34 42 47.

There will also be performances at Stars ‘n Bars in Monaco on Friday 13 and McMahan’s in Vevey Nice on Saturday 14. Tel: 02 93 50 19 52.

starting day at 9:00. There will be more than 20 dealers selling collectors items ranging from old postcards, stamps, money and manuscripts to teddy bears and antique dolls. Entrance is free. Tel: 04 93 01 26 60.

there will be a ball in the place du Marché and a flower parade on Sunday along Cdn Cemameo followed by an evening of fireworks. Tel: 04 94 48 69.

Starting today is St Jean Cap Ferrat’s 15th Antiques Show. Tel: 06 11 95 63 37.

The Art de l’Automobile show is being held at the Palais des Congrès in Juan les Pins until June 19. Meet authors and illustrators of some of the famous French comic books. Tel: 02 99 54 63 43.

Starting today is Cap Ferrat’s 15th Antiques Show. Tel: 04 92 90 52 35.

The Nice Opera & Thruxton, Village de la Jérusalem and the Comic Strip Festival.

Local Bar and Grill.

Choosing today is the comic strip show in the grounds of the Monte Carlo Casino until June 8. The exhibition will also unveil Bugatti’s new EB 16 4 Veyron with a 1,000 horsepower engine designed to carry on the traditions of Ettore Bugatti into the 21st century. Tel: 02 99 90 36 16.

Art de l’Automobile show, the Comic Strip Festival, Nice Opera’s Openings Symphony concert and Cap Ferrat’s 15th Antiques Show cocktails and late night opening.

Starting today are the Art de l’Automobile show, the Comic Strip Festival, Nice Opera’s Openings Symphony concert and Cap Ferrat’s 15th Antiques Show cocktails and late night opening.

The 6th Collectors Salon in Monte Carlo at 18:00. Tel: +377 93 30 08 75.

Comedians, singers, dancers and musicians are performing at La Nuit, a three-day event includes a ball in the place du Marché and a flower parade on Sunday along Cdn Cemameo followed by an evening of fireworks. Tel: 04 94 48 69.

Continuing today is the final for the 21st International Swimming Meeting.

Saturday 7, Friday 6, Thursday 5.

Monday 9  
{quote}Today is a public holiday\{quote}

The bol d’Or event will go to the welfare section of the Queen’s official birthday is at the Grand Pré Hotel (see box for entrance) in Monte Carlo at 18:00. Tel: 03 93 50 19 52.

The world’s fastest swimmers will be in Monaco today for the 21st International Swimming Meeting at the Prince ‘s Olympic Prince Albert. Around 30 countries will be represented in the two-day competition. Races start at 11:00 with the semi-finals at 16:00. Finals are tomorrow at 16:00. Tel: 02 93 50 45 59.

LOT Buses to Copenhagen, Gdansk, Krakow, Stockholm and Warsaw at 16:30

Continuing today is the final for the 21st International Swimming Meeting.

Tuesday 10  
{quote}The British Association of Monaco is celebrating the Queen’s birthday at the Grand Pré Hotel (see box for entrance) in Monte Carlo at 18:00. Tel: 03 93 50 19 52.\{quote}

Wednesday 11  
{quote}Classic yacht fans should head for Antibes’ Port Vauban for the start of the Prado Trophy.\{quote}

Tours at 09:30 and 12:30 to perform at La Gaffe in a two hour show of music and dance. Tel: 09 43 50 34 06.

There will also be performances at Stars ‘n Bars in Monaco on Friday 13 and McMahan’s in Vevey Nice on Saturday 14. Tel: 02 93 50 19 52.

This race launches the classic yachts regatta season as well as the Prado Challenge which ends in October at St Tropez. During the five day event there will be live music, barbeques and a party atmosphere in the port and old town. Tel: 09 34 42 47.

The British Association of Monaco is celebrating the Queen’s birthday at the Grand Pré Hotel (see box for entrance) in Monte Carlo at 18:00. Tel: 03 93 50 19 52.

The British Association of the Alpes Maritimes Games Championship and the Comic Strip Festival.

The Nice Opera’s Openings Symphony concert and Cap Ferrat’s 15th Antiques Show cocktails and late night opening.

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LOT Buses to Copenhagen, Gdansk, Krakow, Stockholm and Warsaw at 16:30

{quote}The Theatre in our Lives\{quote}