

In another unfortunate coincidence, residues which could only be explained by the use of a silencer were found in the suspect's car.

In a remarkable coincidence, when the murder weapon had been sold, the buyer had not wanted the telescopic sight, either because he already had one or had not needed one, because the gun was to be fired at close range.

The suspect had purchased a rifle and a sight some months earlier, but had not returned the sight when he took the malfunctioning rifle back for a refund.

In an unfortunate coincidence, a car similar to the suspect's had been seen parked in a nearby street, out of sight of the home of the man who sold the murder weapon, and on the day he had advertised the weapon. It was the suspect's dreadful misfortune that another person who had gone to the house had wrongly identified him as being there, too.

Shortly before the murder, a man who looked very much like the suspect, and who had been wearing an Akubra hat like his, had tried to sell the same type of weapon as used in the murder.

Coincidentally, a blue car had been seen leaving the area shortly afterwards. The suspect had a blue car. And this man had not wanted to leave a phone number to identify him, just as the suspect had done on earlier occasions.

To make matters look even worse, the suspect had been to see the victim to get a criminal charge dropped but had been refused any assistance. He had appealed to the victim's superior but had been told on the day of the murder that his representations had failed.

And finally, the suspect had been taped describing the murder and himself as a murderer.

Could this accumulation of facts merely be "an unhappy coincidence?" Mr Adams asked. There could only be one answer – and that was in the negative.

"This, of course, is the case against the accused," he said.

—The Canberra Times

## Eastman found guilty and sentenced to life

By Richard Crothers

*After deliberating for three days, on November 1, the 11 member jury found David Harold Eastman guilty of murdering Assistant Commissioner Colin Winchester.*

Assistant Commissioner Winchester was shot while getting out of his car outside his home on January 10, 1989.

Outside the ACT Supreme Court Assistant Commissioner Winchester's widow Gwen thanked her family and police.

"Colin's good name has survived an intense examination by the media and others," she said.

Commissioner Mick Palmer said the conclusion of the trial had ended one of the most complex criminal prosecutions ever launched in this country.

He praised the professionalism and dedication of investigators, surveillance personnel, forensic experts and all others involved in the case.

"In particular, the dedication and rigor of then Detective Commander Ninness should, and has been, widely acknowledged," he said.

Mr Palmer also praised the efforts of former Detective Sergeant Tom McQuillen and Detective Acting Sergeant Derek Gough.

"The Winchester investigation was clearly a test of the AFP's professionalism," Commissioner Palmer said.

"It is always a difficult task to build a case based largely on circumstantial evidence. To successfully prosecute a circumstantial case against the width of public allegations and innuendo which related to the Winchester killing was, I believe, quite exceptional."

Former federal Justice Minister



Canberra Times Photo

Convicted murderer David Eastman.

Michael Tate, now Ambassador to the Netherlands and The Holy See, called Commissioner Palmer from the Hague asking that his congratulations be passed on to all those involved "for a job well done under enormously difficult circumstances".

During the trial Justice Kenneth Carruthers described the scientific aspect of the investigation as "one of the most skilled, sophisticated and determined forensic investigations in the history of criminal investigation in Australia".

David Eastman has indicated he would appeal his conviction.

On Friday, November 11, Justice Carruthers sentenced Mr Eastman to life imprisonment saying a life sentence might be "more merciful" than a long fixed term. In the ACT Mr Eastman can only be released by approval of the Governor-General on advice from the federal government and the Chief Minister.

An application by Mr Eastman to be sent to jail at Long Bay instead of Goulburn so he could be closer to his counsel for consultation on his appeal was denied.