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15 JUL 1994

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Media Division, Ministry of Information & The Arts, 36th Storey, PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 0511. Tel: 7799/9445.

Release No.: 14/JUN11-0/94/06/23

MHA/94

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS STATEMENT

Michael Fay was reported to have told newspapers, radios and wire agencies that he was "totally innocent of the caning (vandalism) charges of spray-painting and damaging cars" and that he was "tortured", "slapped" and "hit" by investigators and coerced into confessing to the vandalism charges. These allegations are not new and they are groundless.

In October 1993, the US Embassy complained that Fay had been physically abused. A Ministry of Home Affairs investigation found no evidence of police abuse. The US Embassy received a full account refuting this complaint. It did not pursue the matter further.

Mr George Fay, Michael Fay's father, had also made these allegations in April this year. The Ministry of Home Affairs had refuted them on several occasions.

If Michael Fay maintains that he was "tortured" by police investigators, he should make a proper report against the police so that his complaint can be pursued. He should also take out a civil suit for battery and assault, and sue the officers responsible for damages. Otherwise, his complaint cannot be taken seriously.

Michael Fay was tried in accordance with due process of law. He was represented by counsel of his choice. In open court, with his lawyer present, Fay pleaded guilty to the charges before him and admitted to the facts unreservedly. Neither Fay, his Singapore lawyer, nor the Queen's Counsel who represented him in his appeal contended in Court that Fay's confession was false

or that he had been coerced into making or signing it. Nor did Fay allege this in his petition to the President for clemency. If indeed Fay was innocent as he now claims, he would not have pleaded guilty.

While in prison, Fay openly told Prison Officer Thio Kok Sing on 16 May 1994 that he intended to sell his story to the film director who offered him the highest amount. When his mother asked him for a power of attorney to empower her to act on his behalf, he signed it with a limitation in his own handwriting to exclude the power "to make any contracts or true agreements of making a movie or book, or anything of this nature. Also not to talk my behalf (sic) to publishers or producers". (See photocopy attached.) In other words, he wanted to market his story himself. On 20 May 1994, Fay also told Prison Officer Thio that he would deal directly with publishers and film producers upon his release from prison as he felt that he was old enough to make his own decisions. Fay's allegations of police torture and protestations of innocence will generate publicity for his story and can help sell the story at a higher price.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

23 JUNE 1994

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