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A Montreal man who spent eight years in a Bangkok jail says RCMP officers wrongly told Thai police and courts that he was a major drug trafficker with a criminal record.

Alain Olivier, found guilty in Thailand on drug charges, says in a lawsuit that he was the victim of an unfair entrapment operation by the RCMP.

Now back in Montreal on parole, he wants the RCMP and Ottawa to pay him \$47-million in damages.

The allegations are outlined in an amended statement of claim filed in Quebec Superior Court, the latest claims in a lengthy legal battle between Mr. Olivier, 44, and the RCMP.

David Lucas, a lawyer for the federal government, said Mr. Olivier's claim is not based on reliable documents.

Furthermore, Mr. Lucas said in an interview, Mr. Olivier's conviction, and the fact that RCMP undercover agents targeted him, did not stem solely from a mix-up over whether he had a criminal record.

The case revolves around Operation Deception, an RCMP undercover project that led to Mr. Olivier's incarceration in Thailand.

RCMP Corporal Derek Flanagan died in a scuffle during a botched drug purchase in Chiang Mai. Mr. Olivier, who had arranged the transaction, was arrested and handed over to Thai police in 1989.

According to Mr. Olivier's latest statement of claim, RCMP Staff Sergeant Barry Bennett told Thai police in a Feb. 22, 1989, sworn statement that Mr. Olivier was "a major drug dealer." The statement is part of the court filing.

In another sworn statement filed with the statement of claim, Staff Sgt. Jack Dop states that "Mr. Alain Olivier is a known narcotic dealer, in cocaine and heroin."

However, according to court documents, Mr. Olivier had no criminal record until his conviction on drug charges in Thailand in 1990.

By Sept. 6, 1989, Ken Kelly, the RCMP liaison officer at the embassy in Bangkok, had received a Telex from Ottawa headquarters, advising that a search for Mr. Olivier's criminal records "proved negative."

The statement of claim says that nevertheless, when Staff Sgt. Dop

testified a month and a half later at Mr. Olivier's trial, on Nov. 14, 1989, Thai court documents show that he still told the court the accused had a criminal record in Canada.

"The first accused has a criminal record in Canada. I have not taken the said report with me today," the document translated from Thai says, according to the latest court filings from Mr. Olivier's lawyers.

Mr. Lucas said the documents aren't reliable because they are not official transcripts; they are summaries that were translated twice, from English to Thai, then back to English.

Besides, Mr. Lucas added, "you're not convicted on the basis of a prior criminal record."

In his statement of claim, Mr. Olivier says he was a small-time junkie living in small-town British Columbia who agreed to go to Thailand to buy heroin because he was afraid of what he thought were underworld figures.

In fact, they were undercover RCMP officers looking for traffickers in the Lower Mainland.

Mr. Lucas said Mr. Olivier wasn't a mere drug addict and the RCMP was right to target him because of "his willingness to do business."

In the statement of claim, Mr. Olivier says that during the first three years of his incarceration in Bangkok, he was kept shackled in rusty chains 24 hours a day, "living like an animal."

He had to sleep on the cement floor of a cell shared with up to 100

inmates.

"Sanitary conditions were non-existent and [Mr. Olivier] was continuously ill from various ailments such as diarrhea, fever, ear infections, severe teeth-aches, exposure to sick prisoners with AIDS and tuberculosis, skin infections," the new statement of claim says.

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