

“Neverland Five” Civil Suit Questioning
Date Assessed from Timestamp on video

Michael Jackson. speech transcript

"If people hear a lie long enough, people believe it. People have lied on me. I'm a black American and I'm proud of it, and I'm honoured of it," he says. "The bleached skin rumour ... which is a rumour, I don't bleach my skin. They once said I wanted a white kid to play me as a child, which was a rumour ... I'm not gay. Don't judge a person unless you have spoken to them one on one."

"Jesus said to love the children and be like children. Be youthful and be innocent and be pure and honorable," Jackson said. "He was talking to his apostles. And they were fighting over who was the greatest among themselves, and he said, 'Whoever humbles yourself like this child is the greatest among me.' And he always surrounded himself with children, and that's how I was raised, to be like that and to imitate that. I don't know what you're trying to make out of this."

News of the World. information about the leaked tape

The three-hour video was made in March, 1996... Our tape shows a legal hearing as part of the private suit against the star by what became known as The Neverland Five-a group of former workers at the estate who claimed wrongful dismissal.

One of the key arguments put forward by their chief lawyer Michael Ring was that Jackson, then 37, had threatened staff who claimed they witnessed him behaving inappropriately with children [This was later debunked - please see synopsis/analysis below].

The camera focuses on the star - wearing a black jacket, red shirt, and black hat-sitting at a table in the hearing room at the Four Seasons Hotel in New York.

[“MTV News” \(March 19, 1997\)](#)

Reuters reports that a jury ruled in favor of Michael Jackson in a wrongful dismissal suit filed by five former Neverland Ranch employees, and have ordered the plaintiffs to pay Jackson \$60,000 in damages.

The plaintiffs reportedly charged that Jackson planted listening devices around his ranch to learn what employees knew about child molestation charges raised against the singer in a 1993 civil suit.

The jury reportedly found no evidence to support plaintiffs' claims, and one juror told reporters that the plaintiffs lost all credibility when it was revealed that they had sold their story to a tabloid newspaper.

"We're happy to be finally and fully vindicated," Jackson's lawyer, Steve Cochran, told reporters after the ruling.

[“E!” \(March 18, 1997\)](#)

Score one for the King of Pop.

Today a jury in Santa Maria, California, sided with Michael Jackson and found that five former employees at his Neverland Ranch were not wrongfully terminated. In what was a complete win

for the singer, the jury even awarded Jackson \$60,000 in a countersuit that charged some of those employees stole items from the estate.

According to their lawsuit, an administrative assistant, a maid and three bodyguards who formerly worked for the pop star claimed Jackson and six other employees harassed, threatened and fired them.

The plaintiffs say they were forced out of Neverland because they testified against Jackson before a grand jury investigating whether the singer molested a 13-year-old boy. The suit alleged Jackson was so paranoid that he bugged his home to find out what employees were saying about the charges.

The singer's attorneys filed a countersuit, saying the five quit voluntarily and were not harassed. It also claimed two of the former workers--the maid and a bodyguard--stole sketches, personal notes, hats, toys and candy from the ranch, selling some items to tabloid newspapers.

The jury of 10 women and two men agreed with Jackson. They ruled Tuesday there was no evidence to support the allegations brought against Jackson or the six aides mentioned in the lawsuit by his former employees. Jurors also decided that items were stolen and awarded Jackson the 60 grand. "We're happy to be finally and fully vindicated," said Jackson attorney Steve Cochrane.

The trial commenced in September and was handed to the jury last Thursday.

Jackson was never charged with child molestation. In 1994, Jackson settled the original civil suit filed by the boy. While the terms were confidential, the amount has been estimated between \$15 and \$50 million.

Synopsis/Analysis of the Civil Suit. MichaelJacksonAllegations.com (all sources at bottom)

The so called "Neverland 5" was a group of five former employees of Jackson: *Kassim Abdool*, *Ralph Chacon*, *Adrian McManus*, *Sandy Domz* and *Melanie Bangall* who sued Jackson in the 90s alleging wrongful termination. Three of these five people – Abdool, Chacon and McManus – testified for the prosecution at the Jackson's 2005 trial in support of their "prior bad acts" case. They claimed that during their employment at Neverland (1990/1991 to 1994) they witnessed Jackson behave inappropriately with children. Former security guard, Chacon claimed he witnessed Jackson sexually molesting *Jordan Chandler* on one occasion [1]. Former security guard, Abdool, who worked directly with Chacon on the same shift, and described himself as Chacon's friend, did not make that same claim, but he supported Chacon's allegations by claiming he, too witnessed some of the improprieties Chacon claimed to have witnessed [2]. Former maid, McManus claimed that she witnessed Jackson behave inappropriately with Jordan Chandler, Brett Barnes and Macaulay Culkin [3]. None of these people ever reported or even mentioned what they had allegedly seen at the time that the alleged molestations and improprieties supposedly occurred. **These stories first surfaced in the spring of 1994, more than half a year after the Chandler scandal went public.**

In actuality, on December 7, 1993 Adrian McManus testified under oath in a deposition for the Chandler civil case that she never observed any inappropriate behavior or any form of sexual behavior by Jackson towards Jordan Chandler or any other child. She even said she trusted Jackson so much that she would have no problem with leaving her son alone with him. When

Jackson's attorney, Thomas Mesereau confronted her with her 1993 deposition in 2005, McManus simply claimed that she did not tell the truth in that 1993 deposition [3].

Chacon and Abdool first made allegations against Jackson when they were subpoenaed by the prosecution to appear in front of the two Grand Juries which were convened to examine the allegations against Jackson in the spring of 1994. Abdool appeared before the Los Angeles Grand Jury and Chacon appeared before the Santa Barbara Grand Jury. Conveniently, this was also the first time they claimed to have confided in each other about what they had allegedly observed, although they worked on the same shift and they were supposedly friends. Prior to this time they never mentioned to anyone that they witnessed any wrongdoing in regards to Jackson. In fact, on January 13, 1994 Abdool signed a statement for Jackson's representatives that stated he had never seen Jackson touch any child in a sexually inappropriate manner or in any way that could be construed as sexual [2].

When Chacon and Abdool changed their stories and first came up with claims of improprieties and child molestation, Chacon was deposed by District Attorney, Thomas Sneddon and Detective Russ Birchim for the Chandler case. At the time, Chacon asked Birchim for money to help him relocate his wife. Birchim delivered the money and the gun permit that Chacon had also requested [3]. Jackson's lawyer, Thomas Mesereau asked Chacon about it during Jackson's 2005 trial. First Chacon said he did not remember it but when Mesereau showed him a transcript of his deposition, he slowly acknowledged his prior testimony, stating it "*probably*" happened. When questioned by Sneddon on redirect examination Chacon suddenly remembered everything clearly. However, Sneddon quickly cut him off, stating "*it's not important*".

Q. You indicated that you may have asked Sergeant or now Commander Birchim for money for your wife –

A. Yes, sir.

Q. — do you recall? Do you remember why that was?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Why was that?

A. Well, my wife's sister-in-law had just died, and –

Q. That's all right, I'll withdraw the question. That's okay. It's not important. [1]

At the trial Chacon disclosed that towards the end of his employment by Jackson he had conflicts with the star's personal bodyguards, called the Office of Special Services (OSS) because, according to him, they interfered with his work. Chacon admitted that he and Abdool were upset and dissatisfied because they found out that a new security staff for Jackson was paid more than they were. [1]

During his testimony it was also revealed that in 1994 Chacon was in financial difficulties, owing money on a lost lawsuit. Although documents were shown to prove this, Chacon claimed he did not remember that ruling. [1] Jackson's lawyer, Thomas Mesereau also revealed that Chacon owed money on back child support and was missing payments on his rent, but had bragged to his landlady, *Linda Allen*, that with a lawsuit against Jackson he would win millions and would even be able to drive around in a 450 Mercedes. Chacon denied these claims. [1]

Shortly after that time, Abdool and Chacon (McManus joined later) went to a civil attorney, *Michael Ring*, who on their behalf, on December 2, 1994, filed a civil lawsuit against Jackson and other employees of the star demanding \$16 million in damages (eventually all five people of the “Neverland 5” group). They claimed that during their employment they were harassed and intimidated, which resulted in emotional distress and various medical problems that made them “*emotionally disabled*” and unable to work. They also claimed that they were wrongfully terminated by Jackson. Jackson counter-sued and eventually Chacon and McManus were found guilty of stealing from Jackson’s property [1] [2] [3].

At the civil trial the Neverland 5 and their attorney were sanctioned \$66,000 for lying during their depositions and on the stand and for discovery violations (ie. for hiding evidence from Jackson’s lawyers). Judge Zel Canter, who presided over the civil trial, left the bench after stating he was disgusted [4]. The jury rejected the wrongful termination lawsuit against Jackson and ordered the Neverland 5 to pay him damages. The court also imposed attorneys fees and costs of \$1.4 million against plaintiffs. As of the time of their testimony in 2005 none of them paid the damages to Jackson. According to his testimony, after the verdict in the civil trial Chacon filed for bankruptcy. [1] [2] [3]

During the 2005 trial, while on the stand, Chacon denied he knew anything about the amount of money his lawyer demanded from Jackson at the civil trial. However, documents from a deposition of Chacon at the time showed that not only did he know of the \$16 million demand from the entertainer, but at one point Chacon even said that \$16 million was not enough. Later, on re-cross examination Chacon admitted he knew how much money was demanded in the lawsuit. He also said in a deposition that Jackson should compensate him for the rest of his life [1].

Before their lawsuit in the 90s, under the direction of their attorney, Michael Ring the Neverland 5 contacted a tabloid broker, Gary Morgan from the *Splash News and Picture Agency* to sell slanderous stories about Jackson and children and also about Jackson and his then wife, Lisa Marie Presley. Morgan arranged interviews with magazines, such as *The Star* and TV programs, such as *Inside Edition* [1] [2] [3]. According to McManus’ 2005 testimony, \$32,000 or more was received for their stories and almost all of it went to Ring, to finance their civil lawsuit, from which they hoped to get millions of dollars [3]. Chacon admitted that before they went to *The Star* they also talked to a certain journalist, Victor Gutierrez [1]. Abdool also talked about this connection, stating that he met Gutierrez once and they had a two, three hours conversation [2]. McManus testified that Gutierrez “*was going to try to help us in our lawsuit*” [3]. For why this connection is significant, please [read our article about Gutierrez](#).

On the stand Abdool claimed that he, Chacon and McManus did not discuss and harmonize their stories in advance that they were selling to tabloids. However, this was contradicted by Chacon’s testimony in which he admitted they made drafts about their stories in Ring’s office about what they were going to tell tabloids [2] [3].

Besides making money, another purpose for these interviews and the Neverland 5’s claims of having witnessed Jackson in improper situations with children: putting pressure on him and trying to make him settle the case. Although at Jackson’s 2005 trial Chacon claimed not to have known anything about such tactics, he admitted it would not surprise him if that was the case.

Q. BY MR. MESEREAU: At the time you and Mr. Abdool and Ms. McManus and your lawyer went to a tabloid to give a story about Mr. Jackson, do you know whether or not your lawyer was trying to negotiate money from Mr. Jackson?

A. No, sir.

Q. Do you know whether or not your lawyer was trying to pressure Mr. Jackson by threatening bad publicity?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did you ever hear of anything like that going on?

A. No, sir.

Q. Okay. So if that went on, you'd be shocked, true?

A. Probably not, sir.

Q. Probably not?

A. I guess not, no. [1]

One of Chacon's complaints in the 1995 lawsuit against Jackson was that Jackson caused him emotional distress because he *"stared at him all the time"* [1]. Because of that he claimed he was entitled to damages. When his claim was found to be false Jackson's attorney, Tom Mesereau asked him why he said that if it was not true. Chacon's answer was: *"I guess just to say it"* [1].

During the civil trial in the 1990s, another former employee of Jackson's, Francine Orosco testified that McManus asked her to say she witnessed a male employee of Jackson sexually harass McManus. Orosco also testified that she visited McManus at home during their employment and McManus showed her a room filled with watches, posters, clocks, sunglasses, T-shirts and laundry baskets filled with Michael Jackson's clothes and other items she stole from Neverland. It was also found that McManus stole a drawing Jackson made of Elvis Presley and sold it for \$1000 to Gary Morgan from *Splash* [3].

It also emerged that earlier McManus and her husband were ordered to pay \$17,000 each in another lawsuit, in which it was ascertained that they stole money from an estate that was set-up for minor relatives of McManus. They willfully and maliciously defrauded Shane and Megan McManus, a nephew and a niece of Adrian McManus, out of their money. They were sued by Rosalie Hill, the children's guardian ad litem. Judge Richard A. St. John found that the the money was held in the trust for the benefit of those two children and McManus and her husband dissipated those funds [3] [4].

Sources:

[1] Ralph Chacon's testimony at Michael Jackson's 2005 trial (April 7, 2005)

[2] Kassim Abdool's testimony at Michael Jackson's 2005 trial (April 25, 2005)

[3] Adrian McManus' testimony at Michael Jackson's 2005 trial (April 7-8, 2005)

[4] Supplemental Brief In Support Of Opposition To District Attorney's Motion For Admission Of Alleged Prior Offenses (March 25, 2005)

<http://www.sbscpublicaccess.org/docs/ctdocs/032505supppopp1108.pdf>

Original Article Link:

<http://michaeljacksonallegations.com/ralph-chacon-kassim-abdool-and-adrian-mcmanus/>