

Core Participants Ruling 17

Friends of Freedom Press Ltd

1. In paragraph 12 of his first Core Participants Ruling of 21 October 2015, Sir Christopher Pitchford stated that he would keep under review the application of any person to be designated a core participant who was not then so designated by him. One such “person” was Friends of Freedom Press Ltd (‘Freedom Press’). He declined to designate them because, on the information which he then had, it was unlikely that they were relying on a direct and significant role in the subject matter of the Inquiry: see paragraphs 104-105 of his Ruling. On 29 March 2017 the Inquiry stated, in a press release, that anonymity was not sought on behalf of Roger Pearce, who used the cover name “Roger Thorley”. On 18 January 2018 the Inquiry published a table of cover names which repeated that cover name and identified the groups/areas of deployment as “Anarchist groups” and gave the dates of deployment. On 23 January 2018, Saunders Solicitors Limited wrote to the Inquiry to ask whether I would now entertain a fresh application for core participant status by Freedom Press.
2. There is no need for a fresh application. I have reviewed the application, as Sir Christopher foreshadowed in paragraph 12 of his Ruling.
3. I will designate Freedom Press as a core participant in Category K. I do so on the basis of material which Sir Christopher would not have taken into account when making his original ruling: Operation Herne interview notes, which suggest that HN85 became editor of Freedom Press in Whitechapel and in that capacity wrote virulent anti-police articles. Accordingly, Freedom Press did play a direct and significant role in the subject matter of the Inquiry and it is appropriate that they should be designated as a core participant.

MSW

4. An individual who wishes to be known as MSW has applied to be designated as a core participant under rule 5(2)(c) of the Inquiry Rules 2006. I have treated his identity as potentially restricted evidence under rule 12.
5. The ground on which MSW applies to be designated is that he was referred to in a briefing note of 24 August 1987, apparently on the basis of intelligence provided by an undercover officer, as playing a part in keeping the materials seized on 9

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September 1987 at an address in Tottenham, London N15, from which incendiary devices were being assembled. Accordingly, he submits that he may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the Inquiry proceedings or in the report.

6. On the information which I have, thus far, which is not complete, there is no basis for his concern and so no justification for designating him as a core participant. Should matters change, I will review and re-determine his application.
7. For the reasons given, this application is refused.

20 March 2018

Sir John Mitting
Chairman, Undercover Policing Inquiry