

The Metropolitan Police, Designated Lawyer

Witness: HN349
Statement No: 1
Exhibits: N/A
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IN THE MATTER OF: PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UNDERCOVER POLICING

Witness: HN349
Occupation: Retired
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I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Introduction

1. I have been asked to make a statement about the impact on me if my real or cover name were released in connection with the UCPI. I have made this statement without having seen any documents, save for the Risk Assessment (but not the majority of the Appendices). The dates and information set out below are from memory. I make this statement reluctantly and with serious reservations, never having expected to have to do such a thing, following my retirement from the MPS.
2. I understand that the Commissioner has applied to restrict my real name. Whilst I have not seen that application, I support it but I also apply to have my cover name restricted.

Without cover name protection I believe that I will be traced in my real identity and my family and I will suffer as a consequence.

Summary

3. I was deployed in ***the early 1970s for approximately a year*** [REDACTED] and I am now in my 70s. I have had a number of health scares, but consider myself reasonably fit despite these. There is not and never has been any known allegation of misconduct against me in respect of my deployment; I undertook the role of a UCO on the understanding my identity would be kept secret; I am genuinely concerned about possible media harassment should my real identity be revealed as a former UCO and particularly the impact on my partner (also in their 70s), my children and the adverse effect on them, their health, work, their families and my wider circle of family and friends.

4. My concerns are not irrational, having previous knowledge and experience of media intrusion, having seen press interest in high profile cases. It is not beyond the realms of possibility that a local activist could seek to cause me embarrassment or worse, if my real identity were to be revealed as a former UCO. I worry that disclosure of my real name would prompt intense and unwelcome media interest in me and so would interfere with me and my family's right to respect for our private lives. I fear that if my real identity is exposed as a former UCO, I will be subjected to direct enquiry by journalists, my family will be likewise intruded upon and friends and neighbours pressured into making statements about me. All of this is intrusive and a breach of my right to a private life. I have nothing to hide, I have conducted myself with honour and I retired with 'exemplary conduct'.

5. There is another important point, which I wish to add and that is the security issue raised by Risk Assessors in relation to officers. They make the point that in the current security climate, with the terrorist threat level as 'severe', serving and former SB and Counter-Terrorism Officers are at heightened risk, particularly from the lone-wolf, who may seek to track down and attack an identified officer or his/her family. There is also the threat from mentally unstable people who may react adversely towards such officers or their families. ***Sets out particular concern that may lead to identification in real name and consequences*** [REDACTED]

6. Any publicity in respect of me and my UC activities may well adversely affect [REDACTED] ***my family*** and their current lives and businesses. Bad publicity would immediately affect my grandchildren risking ostracisation by their friends and associates. [REDACTED] ***Sets out particular issue for one family member*** and the stress of media

intrusion would almost certainly have a very serious and adverse affect on their mental health and well-being.

7. I also wish to state that I understood, when joining the police thatthe Commissioner and the Metropolitan Police as my employer, had a duty of care towards me and my family. I ask that, even though I am now retired, that duty of care be honoured. I was employed on SDS, not at my own whim but on behalf of the Commissioner and in respect of that employment, I expect that 'office' to support and protect me. It was always my expectation that the identities of UCOs would be protected for life and beyond. If I had thought for one moment, that at some point in the future, we would be exposed in public and my family possibly identified or endangered, I would never have signed up to the duty.

The Risk Assessment

8. I have seen the Risk Assessment dated 5 February 2018 and an addendum dated 12 February 2018 and have a number of comments: ***Sets out corrections to and typographical errors to information provided in the risk assessment***

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

demonstrations taking place in Central London, which seemed to occur almost every weekend, getting to know the regular activists faces and reporting back. This would entail joining marches and demonstrations, being 'one of the crowd' and joining in. I was not tasked initially with trying to infiltrate any particular group or organisation, merely to get to know the regulars by sight and if I could become accepted, to pursue the issue. I also attended numerous meetings, predominantly left-wing oriented, again trying to become an accepted regular face. After some weeks I think I was tasked to try and get involved with the [REDACTED]

11. I adopted the pseudonym ***sets out cover name and basis on which it was created*** [REDACTED] I did not use the identity of any other human being, dead or alive. I don't recall being asked for or giving my full name or date of birth. If I had been asked for my date of birth I would have made one up or even used my real date of birth. I had a cover address (a rented room) ***sets out details of cover address and employment*** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I was never arrested during my deployment. I do not recall being directly involved in or the cause of any arrests as a result of my UC activities

12. My recollection is that ***approximately 9 months later*** [REDACTED] I came to the conclusion that my usefulness as a UCO was not a resounding success and I felt that I was not achieving what I had set out to do. I met with the DCI and DI and told them what I felt and they agreed. It was then arranged for me to 'clean myself up' and normalise my appearance to what it was prior to joining the SDS and then to spend a period of months in the Back Office at NSY helping with the day to day administration of the unit and away from the activism of the streets.

13. I did not need to indicate to any activists or groups that I was 'disappearing' because I had not assimilated into any such groups.

Post-SDS MPS police career

14. [Redacted]

15. [Redacted]

Later police career

Sets out subsequent police career and particular issue which may lead to identification of real name and particular concern regarding impact on family member

16. [Redacted]

17. [Redacted]

18. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

19. [Redacted]

Post-police career work and interests

20. After I retired from the Met in [Redacted] I was employed **sets out subsequent employment** [Redacted]

21. **Sets out role within the community outside the police** [Redacted]

22. **Sets out extent of social media profile** [Redacted]

[REDACTED]

23. The point of the above is that I have had and continue to have roles and presence in the community (and online). I do not want that undermined or interfered with by press intrusion or even any knowledge that I was a UCO.

Family

24. My wife has always been aware of my various roles within the police and that I was an SB officer and worked on SDS, although she was unaware of what exactly I was involved with. All she knew was that the work was secret, potentially dangerous and created a lot of inconvenience and upheaval in our early married life (and it seems now also). Our children were unaware of my covert role until recently. With the Inquiry increasingly drawing more and more officers in (myself included), I felt it necessary to forewarn my children that there was a possibility of adverse publicity and maybe other consequences which might affect them. I gave them a broad brush outline of the fact that SB was one arm of the police and carried out many different roles, mostly of a secret nature. One of those roles was SDS, in which I had served in the early 1970s. The task of that unit was to infiltrate subversive organisations intent on causing major disturbances to the peace and tranquillity of daily life and which organisations were in some instances attempting to foment revolution. The purpose of SDS was to gather intelligence on the intentions of such groups, for police public order purposes and the Security Service (and Government). I did not provide further details but **they** [REDACTED] are intelligent adults and are widely read, with an interest in politics and have taken an interest in my police career. They were aware **of details of my later police career** [REDACTED]

25. My children were well aware that I was an SB officer [REDACTED] [REDACTED] What I did precisely was never discussed with them. As for other family members, when I was on SDS they assumed (and I did not disabuse them of the idea), that I was on a Drug Squad. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Essentially, family and friends have always been given vague, non-confirmatory responses to questions about what I was up to, with

the 'jokey' 'need to know' throw-away line often utilised. Unfortunately, some assumed that my activities were on a par with the fictionalised film and television productions which portrayed police, especially non-uniformed roles, as corrupt and 'above the law' and this occasionally engendered disdain and mild hostility.

26. Apart from being aware I was in SB and the occasional duty which was semi-public (like protection duties [REDACTED]), my wife had little idea of what I was engaged in. We just did not discuss my work and she well understood the canon 'Need to Know'. I have always respected my wife for her complete discretion, especially on social occasions, where friends and relatives and even non-SB colleagues, have tried to probe into what I was actually doing. By remaining ignorant of my various specific activities, she could genuinely say 'I don't know what he does'. Likewise, those who suggested I must be on the Drug Squad were not disabused of the notion by my wife, who remained implacably non-committal throughout my service.

27. Following the recent publicity in respect of former UCOs, both SDS and NPOIU, which led to the setting up of the Inquiry, my wife, understandably, asked whether I had ever been involved in such practices as those that had been exposed, i.e. the use of deceased children's identities, conducting intimate relationships with target activists, siring babies or giving evidence in a false identity leading to conviction of others. I assured my wife that I had never been involved in any such behaviour. However, the seeds of doubt must have been sown and one can never be sure whether one is totally believed. Whilst I believe I have a good relationship with my wife, even after *a long marriage* [REDACTED] one can never be 100% sure of that relationship. It is a matter of trust: she says she trusts me, as I do her. Others may not be so fortunate and I can imagine many former colleagues' relationships being strained by such revelations, even if they like me are totally innocent. So, there has already been "impact" before any publication of names etc. I genuinely think that the further publication of names risks further unfair suspicion by friends, family and acquaintances as well as by the public at large. I am also concerned that things I have done in later my police career might *give rise to my real name becoming known* [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and is out of my control.

28. Initially the impact of the Inquiry is that it has had an effect on my relationship with my wife. Similarly, members of my immediate family (my children), who I have only recently forewarned that I am, at this stage, on the periphery of the Inquiry; that I may have my identity revealed as an SDS UCO, even though I was deployed 40 plus years ago and for them to be aware of the possibility of intrusive media attention.

29. Until I recently disclosed to my children that I was so involved, they were blissfully unaware other than the fact that 'Dad had long hair and worked funny hours'. It was not until I was returned to uniform duties in [REDACTED] that my children believed I really was a

police officer. They are obviously interested and concerned and are very supportive. Naturally they are wondering what effect all this may have on their lives and those of their own families. **Sets out circumstances of adult child and impact on him/her** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Any adverse publicity as a result of the Inquiry, casting aspersions against my character would have a damaging effect on **my child and their family** [REDACTED] which would be grossly unfair to them and unjustified.

30. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] **Sets out impact on another adult child and particular impact. None** of my children, or their families should be subjected to intrusive media harassment, nor should any other members of my family or our friends.

[REDACTED]
Sets out particular issue that could lead to officer being traced if publication of cover name led to real name becoming known

31. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

32. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Health

Sets out various physical health conditions and impact on officer of these conditions and risk of recurrence of another condition. Officer believes he is physically fit and works hard to be active

33. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

34. [REDACTED]

35. [REDACTED]

36. [REDACTED]

37. Psychologically I feel I am in good health, although the concerns in respect of this Inquiry sometimes keep me awake at night and how it is affecting my wife and family. My wife and I are worried about possible consequences that may result from my anonymity being refused. I had a period in *the late 1970s* [REDACTED] when I was placed sick due to [REDACTED] (stress due to work). I recovered and resumed normal duties, with some work-pattern changes within the Branch to relieve the work pressures.

38. We have had enough on our plates in recent times and wish not to increase anxiety and stress at this stage of life.

Conclusion

39. Given that my interest to the inquiry must only be peripheral or of historic value only, given that I did not successfully infiltrate any group, I think that it would be out of all proportion to take even the slightest risk with breaching the so-called "sterile corridor" [REDACTED] and have a dramatic impact on my life and family.

I believe that the facts set out in this statement are true.