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“Mary”

1. “Mary” provided a short witness statement to the Inquiry dated 5 January 2018. In it, she recounted her relationship with HN297, whom she encountered whilst studying at Goldsmiths College in 1974 and 1975. She knew him as “Rick Gibson”. She has stated, and I have no reason to doubt, that he had a sexual relationship both with her and with her then flat mate. Her account is supported by a non-state core participant, Richard Chessum, from whom the Inquiry is seeking a witness statement.
2. She did not apply to be a core participant in 2018, but did indicate that she was willing to provide a witness statement to the Inquiry. More recently, she stated that she was reluctant to do so. The Inquiry would not have taken steps to compel her to do so. In a welcome development, by letter dated 24 February 2020 from Paul Heron of Public Interest Law Centre, she has applied to be designated as a core participant, in which capacity she would be better able to assist the Inquiry, and for Paul Heron to be designated as her Recognised Legal Representative. I understand from the letter that, with his assistance, she would be willing to provide a witness statement to the Inquiry in response to a request under rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006.
3. On that premise, I accede to both applications. She has played or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the Inquiry relates. Her application has been made very late – indeed, had it been delayed any longer, I could not have acceded to it, because of the impact upon the progress of the Inquiry in its investigation of Tranche One; but I can understand her reluctance to reopen for public scrutiny highly personal events which occurred 45 years ago and welcome her change of mind. She will need the assistance of a legal representative to provide a witness statement and to participate in the Inquiry. Paul Heron already represents Richard Chessum and is well placed to represent her too. She did play an active part in the Troops Out Movement, the group primarily infiltrated by HN297 and has a legitimate interest in understanding how and why it came to be infiltrated by an undercover police officer. Nevertheless, she is best designated in Category [H], because it is only if those with whom undercover officers engaged in intimate relationships are willing to provide evidence to the Inquiry, that I can hope to get to the truth about them. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not mean that she cannot be represented

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by Paul Heron. It is an efficient use of time and resources for him to represent her.

4. I make an award of costs in respect of her legal representation under section 40 (2) of the Inquiries Act 2005, on the same terms as those which apply in the case of his other Inquiry clients. I do so on the premise that he will provide a short statement of her means within seven days and, as I have no reason to doubt, that it demonstrates that it would not be reasonable to expect her to meet her legal costs out of her own resources. I have, exceptionally, made the award before receiving such a statement, because of the urgent need to obtain from her a witness statement in time for it to form the basis of her evidence in Tranche One.
5. This written ruling confirms that which has already been communicated orally to Paul Heron.

26 February 2020

Sir John Mitting
Chairman, Undercover Policing Inquiry