Cover Sheet
IN THE MATTER OF THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UNDERCOVER POLICING

1. This witness statement is made in response to a Rule 9 request dated 10 April 2019. It provides my full recollection of my deployment as an undercover police officer within the Special Demonstration Squad (SDS) of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

2. I am known in this Public Inquiry by the nominal HN336. There is a Restriction Order in force in respect of my real name dated 27 March 2018. When I was an undercover police officer, my rank was Detective Constable, and when I retired from the MPS it was Detective Constable.

Personal details

3. My name is HN336 and I was born in the 1940's.

Police career before and after serving with the Special Demonstration Squad

4. Details from before HN336 joined the MPS I attested as a constable in the late 1950's and was posted to location as a uniform PC. Details of posting

5. In 1964 I applied, successfully, to join Special Branch. I was still a police constable at the time.
8. I transferred to the Special Demonstration Squad ("SDS") in around early 1969. My rank at the time was Detective Constable, and I remained at that rank throughout my posting to the SDS.

9. I had not undertaken any undercover policing work or work using a cover identity prior to joining the SDS. There was, however, generic squad activity where random assignments would be posted on a notice board for the week ahead. Such assignments could include turning up to a meeting or a demonstration. I presume that the interest would come from MI5. The person to cover which assignment was determined by the Chief Superintendent in charge of A squad (Admin). The requirement was that at the end of that evening one would submit a report on Superintendent’s desk of respective squad next morning. Some wily officers would deliberately turn up to these meeting in a suit and tie. They would be rumbled and asked to leave. They would then submit a report that they were unable to report because asked to leave. This was a generic squad activity that had nothing to do with the SDS.
10. I was approached to join the SDS right at its inception. It was shortly after the riots in Grosvenor Square. Those riots had caused enormous damage to property and a huge number of police officers were injured, but the MPS had no intelligence on where and when such riots might happen again. I understood that the purpose of the SDS was to provide that intelligence so future riots could be prevented. Drastic action was needed. It was anarchic.

11. I was approached by Conrad Dixon who I knew from my time in B-Squad. My understanding is that he played an instrumental role in setting it up. I don’t know if anyone else was involved. Conrad was a clever man, but also an ambitious and devious man. He saw an opportunity for himself as well as an opportunity to create something useful.

12. The inception of the SDS has to be viewed in light of the situation in the UK in the late 1960s. The MPS were wholly unprepared for the scale of the demonstrations that took place, or the level violence they involved. I was a uniformed constable, and was deployed to the US embassy during the Cuban Missile Crisis. We were positioned in three man deep lines across the front steps of the embassy. The Americans had set up a machine gun inside the lobby of the building, ready to defend it if necessary. It was only myself and my colleagues who stood between that and the crowds outside. We were all terrified and a lot of officers were injured in the skirmishes that unfolded.

13. I believe that society has a duty to protect mainstream views, and if change is to happen as those views evolve it must happen through the ballot box rather than through violent revolution. I understood that the key purpose of the SDS at the time I was a part of it was to prevent violent action by those at the fringes of the political spectrum.

14. My memory is that Special Branch prior to the SDS was doing the same things it had been doing for years. It was unimaginative and it was working closely with MI5 and providing information. I believe Special Branch was set up initially as the Special Irish Squad and had national UK mainland responsibility for Irish
Selection for the Special Demonstration Squad

15. I had got to know Conrad Dixon during my time on B Squad when he was a Detective Inspector and I had retained him as a contact. I considered him a brash chancer. Perhaps he saw a keenness in me. He set me up with a couple of informants that I handled. I felt an entrusted member of this team.

16. I recall that he approached me. I have seen that in November 1968 I was marked as ‘first reserve’. I think at that point they had marked their personnel and I was marked to be next in line. I think I was approached around that time – the autumn of 1968 and asked if I wanted to join the unit. I did not apply and there was no pressure on me. I was aware of the MPS’s intelligence shortcomings, and to me it seemed like a good thing to be doing. I do not remember the conversation or recall much being discussed. I think that there was a deal of speculation as to what the role might be.

17. I knew that the police service, the Home Office and MI5 had been embarrassed about the Spring and October 1968 demonstrations. I think at that time the thinking was that all were lacking in quality of intelligence.

18. There were no discussions about any detail of the role or the impact it would have on me. It was simply not on the agenda. There were also not any discussions with me about the effect that joining the SDS would have on my career. I was married during my SDS deployment. It was not discussed with her, even by me. She only knew I was in an ‘odd outfit’. My appearance changed. I grew my hair and beard. I wore untidier casual clothes. She never really asked questions about it.

Training and guidance in the Special Demonstration Squad

20. I'm sure there was a short induction at the Yard where everything was introduced. I remember being taken by Conrad Dixon to the West London base. I suspected that I would be involved in a covert intelligence gathering team involved in surveillance in light of the problems at Grosvenor square the year before.

21. I do not recall any specific training for welfare. My memory was that if you had a problem then you should voice it, and conversations sometimes would be steered to welfare matters without being pointed or deliberated. I do not think that anybody realised the impact it might have psychologically on them. It was an unfolding experience for all of us because the SDS was so new. I am sure that as the experience widened and the expertise improved senior officers would become more aware of the impact.

22. I felt that those officers that were operating undercover were very much a family. We would look out for each other and I think we would have had discussions about matters of welfare collectively and individually, but not specifically members of the supervision team.

23. It was not as if we were thrown into a bear pit and told to get on with it. I think there would have been some care displayed. It certainly helped that I was reporting every day to the office and filling in my CID diary every day.

24. I did not receive any formal training before I was deployed. I simply do not remember what was given by way of informal instruction. I remember we had to create a legend. I think I would have been piecing that together. Part of my legend background was being employed at [redacted]. We were not entirely on our own though. I talked to my colleagues and supervising officers and received support from them if there was a problem. It was not a sophisticated operation,
everyone was feeling their way, but if there had been an issue I had people to talk to.

25. There were two supervising officers in the Unit. The DCI when I joined was Conrad Dixon. He was later replaced by Phil Saunders. The DI throughout my time in the unit was... The DCI was in charge but there was no strict chain of command. We would get guidance from both of the supervising officers, and generally they would fulfil the same role.

26. I have been shown the Home Officer Circular number 97/1969 “Informants who take part in crime”. I cannot remember whether I have ever been shown this document before.

27. I was not given any advice, guidance or instructions on:
   a. How far it was acceptable to become involved in the private lives of those I met whilst undercover, or how close my relationships with them could be;
   b. How far it was acceptable to enter sexual relationships whilst deployed on an undercover operation
   c. Participation in criminal activity whilst undercover
   d. Provoking or encouraging another to participate in criminal activity whilst undercover
   e. What to do if arrested;
   f. What to do if brought before a Court, whether as a defendant or witness;
   g. What to do if I obtained as a result of my deployment information subject to legal privilege; or
   h. Any other ethical or legal limitation on the way I could behave whilst undercover.

28. As I have already said, however, if I ever found myself in a difficult situation, I had the support of my colleagues and supervising officers. I do not think any training was repeated or refreshed during my deployment.
29. Always in the forefront of my mind was that I was a police officer, all of these things really that you knew instinctively were not acceptable and that you had to avoid any involvement with. It never even occurred to me to indulge in a sexual relationship. I was very conscious all the time when I was deployed that I was a police officer. My experience was that there was very much a divide between the personal and the cause.

30. I do feel that the fact that I considered myself a police officer inside held me back from being as effective as I might have been had I abandoned that approach. I became more aware of limitations and my potential to become more and more involved diminished.

31. I never received any training on race equality from anyone either prior to or during my time with the SDS.

Undercover identity

32. My cover name was Dick Epps. As far as I know the tactic of using a deceased child’s identity was not used in the SDS whilst I was in it. I do not think “Day of the Jackal” had even been published then. I personally strongly disapprove that such a tactic was ever used, I cannot imagine the anguish it would cause to the family of a deceased child to learn that the child’s identity had been used in such a way.

33. Dick Epps was the only cover name that I used whilst deployed. I was not known by any other names or nicknames.

34. I knew that in order to have a false identity you would need an educational, employment and accommodation background that would stand up to some scrutiny. As long as it stood up, that was enough.

35. I did not have any cover employer, though my legend was that I was a lorry driver. I decided that ‘Dick Epps’ was divorced with a child, and that being a
lorry driver gave me the opportunity to get away from his family. His parents were dead, and he felt like he was drifting through life without any ambition. He found his way onto the political scene, and got curious in what it was about. I wasn’t a radical. I think members of groups I infiltrated did not see me as an activist as such, a lot of people labelled ‘Dick Epps’ as a Trotskyist. I understand that that means a reformer rather than someone who wanted to bring about change through revolution.

36. I remember having a rent book and library ticket but I didn’t obtain driving license even though my false job was as a lorry driver. I always carried my warrant card, but it was hidden. I don’t remember discussing my legend with management.

37. I have been shown a document which says that I was a first reserve. I don’t know what this actually means. I presume that the term ‘reserve’ indicated a degree of succession planning rather than a reserve who was ready to go if someone was pulled out. We weren’t deployed specifically into a group and therefore there was no training for that aspect.

38. I was not provided with any identity documents in my cover identity, and I do not think anyone else was either. I had a library card, which I went and obtained from the library near my cover flat, but that was it.

Cover employment

39. As I have said above, although my legend was that I was a lorry driver, I did not have a cover employer. I thought it gave me an opportunity to not be at someone’s beck and call. I would have a reason to be away. I would be seen as loose member and not as a tight member because my employment would take me away.

Cover accommodation

40. Whilst I was deployed I had cover accommodation - a one bed flat in West Hampstead. I did not share it with anyone. I arranged it myself. I found a card in a newsagent near West Hampstead underground station.
41. It was pretty basic, but I had a bed and an electric fire. I would keep tea, coffee and some food there too. The owners thought I was a long distance lorry driver. They were a nice Irish family, and I would pay them the rent which I remember being £4 a week on the flat directly each week.

42. I would go there about 2-3 times per week and leave a newspaper and a half read book lying around, just in case they got curious and went inside. I hardly ever stayed the night there. No one from any of the groups I infiltrated ever visited me at my flat, and I never received any messages from my landlord that anyone had dropped by. Mostly I just used it to get mail.

43. My cover flat in West Hampstead was the only place I lived using my undercover identity.

Legend building

44. My appearance changed radically. I grew my hair long and grew a beard and a moustache. I went to a charity shop and bought myself a pair of corduroy trousers, a jacket with a hole in the elbow, and a roll neck sweater. That became my new uniform as it was in keeping with what your average left wing activist was wearing at the time.

45. I did not visit any places or people in order to prepare myself for being the person who I pretended to be.

46. I did not live for a period of time in my new identity before approaching my targets. I think I went straight in to my deployment fully.

47. I did not have an assigned cover vehicle. The unit had 3 or 4 cars to share between the field officers, depending on need. If I was going to miss the last train then I would normally try and make a claim for a car. There was a Maoist group who would always meet on a Sunday evening, so when I was attending those meetings I would always make a request for a car.
48. I would never take the car to the meeting itself. Instead I would park the car some distance away and then take a tube or a bus to wherever I was going. I never transported members of any groups I was infiltrating in the car.

Deployment

49. My brief when I was deployed was to gather intelligence that would assist the police with public disorder. Specifically, I was asked to obtain information about groups who might be involved in future public disorder, their motivations, likely members, who the influential figures were, and demonstrations they were planning on holding.

50. There were a number of groups who were causing regular disruption to public life: blocking roads, occupying public buses and buildings, to highlight the cause that they were championing. It seemed very clear to me that in order to effectively police things like that the MPS needed to have a good overview on what was going on in that scene.

51. I was not tasked with penetrating any particular group, and my tasking was never more specific than the general brief above.

52. When I joined the SDS was a naïve outfit. We learnt a lot of what we did on the job. It was a small group that was reactive in focus. We would just turn up to demonstrations, or meetings that would be advertised in newsletters and see what we could find out. No one ever said what we should do, you were just expected to find your way.

53. The groups I infiltrated were always looking for new recruits and to persuade people to come to meetings. If you sat in the right kinds of pubs with a left wing newspaper and a pint people would just come up and talk to you. In that way I gradually worked my way on to the scene.

54. Although I was involved with a few groups during by deployment, you could not be involved in too many as they all had different political alignments. It was a matter for your judgment if there was value in penetrating a group.
55. Field officers who did not have a detailed Special Branch background found that very difficult as they did not have the background knowledge to make that judgment on the street. I made use of my prior experience on C Squad to inform my decisions about which groups might be of interest, and what information about the activities of each group would be of use, for public order policing. It was always clear that that was the brief that I was to follow. Such training gave me a good grounding in the activity of undercover policing.

Infiltration of groups

56. The first group I infiltrated was a Maoist group called: The Britain Vietnam Solidarity Front ("BVSF"). I have seen a report dated March 1969 about that group. There were three UCOs placed at one stage with the BVSF. It was a good idea because the meetings were always attended by 20-25 people from all sorts of political persuasions. It was very intense and I had a difficult time blending in with the crowd at those meetings. I reported on that group for about 2 or 3 months. The leader was called Abimanyu Manchanda. He always seemed to view me with suspicion when he saw me at meetings and planning sessions. I did my best to fit in, and carried my little red book with me everywhere.

57. They would meet every Sunday above a pub called the Union Tavern in King's Cross Road. I cannot remember what drew me to that group in particular, but I started attending their meetings. There were about 15-20 people who would attend and you would listen to speeches. Manchanda was a key influence in the student movement at the time. He saw the student movement as fertile ground to increase membership of the group. I went to several meetings at the London School of Economics when he was on the platform leading the discussion and coordinating. The BVSF were linked to Banner Books in Camden Town. Through meetings I got an introduction to Banner Books which sold all sorts of Maoist material. I could pick up details of other meetings through the newspapers and magazines that they sold.
58. Manchanda was one of the principal drivers of the student unrest around LSE. There was a huge amount of student unrest. I recall seeing Tariq Ali at those meetings whipping up a fervour amongst the student population. My impression was that he was the driving force behind the London student unrest. The protests with students were extremely volatile, very unpredictable, and didn't follow particular political party lines. It was a melting pot of protest groups and again from my point of view, an ideal way of getting into the scene. It was the students' numbers at Grosvenor square that had put thousands of people on the streets. The BVSF used the US embassy as their target of venom.

59. The BVSF wouldn't have regarded me as a member. It had a driving group of probably half a dozen. I remember and his wife as well as Everyone else was just attendees at the meeting.

60. I remember being challenged by Manchanda. I was directly asked about some of my background. I felt that it was an indication to me that I was clearly suspect and therefore didn't deem it appropriate to stay around anymore.

61. I recall bumbling around Camden market and inhabiting North West London generally.

62. After a few months I drifted away from the Maoist group and into the Camden Branch of the VSC. They welcomed me with open arms. The leader of that branch was a gentleman named Meetings were fairly laid back affairs. About 3 or 4 couples would attend, along with 3 or 4 individuals. Sometimes people would bring their kids. They would meet each week in a room above a pub. Their line was much more communist party led.

63. I would go to Camden market every Saturday with some of the other members, hand out leaflets, and talk to people about the cause. Vietnam was the vehicle for the conversation. I remember discussing which protests were you going to; and what causes can we donate to. I was in and out of this branch for about a year. Interestingly, Conrad Dixon had been involved at the very start with them.
as an undercover. They used to talk about him from time to time long after he had moved on. He used to dress as a yachtsman and he became a figure of fun.

64. It was never that organised for membership, certainly not formal. I just used to go to meetings now and again. There was a small collection to cover the cost of the rent of the room at the pub.

65. They were very much on the mainstream end of the VSC. I then had a brief interlude in the Kentish Town branch.

66. Through the Kentish Town Branch of the VSC I met a few members of a group called the British Campaign for Peace in Vietnam. They were a communist front. They would meet in Belsize Park. There were not many members in that group, perhaps 10. I went to a few of their meetings before drifting away. They were a tight knit group and all good friends with each other. They were all intellectual communists. They were accepting of my company and presence. I think I was an accepted member of that group. It was held in a chap's house. There were small meetings. I remember having a couple of drinks with a member called Privacy outside of the meetings which then gave me credibility. I cannot remember how long I was involved with them but would have been for six months at least. They were in Kentish Town. Their conversations centred around protest, and building up pedigree. They would whip up anti-war fervour.

67. They were not a violent group but I would learn when demonstrations would occur and the objective of that protest, including whether there would be a hint of violence as opposed to peaceful protest. The elements that I would focus on was whether there was a likelihood of criminal damage and physical violence towards the police. Protests were big, but often it was the anarchist elements that caused the flare up.
68. I bumped into some members of the BCPV at a VSC demonstration later and they called me a ‘trot’ (i.e. a Trotskyist), because they did not think I was committed to revolution.

69. Being part of the BCPV introduced me to Stop the 70’s Tour, an anti-apartheid group dedicated to disrupting the South African sports tours. The first meeting I went to was in Mill Hill, which was full of teenagers. It did however give me the opportunity to go to other branch meetings. I went to one in Lewisham and one in Barnet. I drifted in and out of various meetings and various groups. I showed knowledge and interest and I found that other people’s interest was as good as yours. I was not hard core in any of these groups, the majority of people would be on the peripheries, and it was easy to mix in with them.

70. Stop the 70’s Tour were a passionate group, and the potential for violence and public disorder at demonstrations was huge. The driving force behind Stop the 70’s Tour was Peter Hain. They got up to all sorts of well publicised antics: digging up the pitch at Lords, pouring oil over the wicket.

71. Whilst my involvement was limited to a few meetings and demonstrations, I am aware that another filed officer, Mike Ferguson, effectively became Peter Hain’s right hand man. I have no idea how he managed to end up in that position.

72. Mike Ferguson was in a league of his own when it came to undercover work. He was single minded in pursuit of his work and seemed to be very successful at integrating himself into the groups he reported on. I am not sure how or why he ended up in the position in that he did. I did not see that as necessary for the job we were required to do, but equally, everyone was impressed by his ability to do it.

73. I was involved with them for some months but not an official member. I don’t think they would have regarded me as a member. It was not difficult to get involved. It seemed to be a magnet for a trendy group rather than a dedicated political group.
74. The final group I was involved with was the IMG. I started going to their meetings after being invited by a member of the Kentish Town VSC. I cannot remember exactly when that was. I was involved in several groups and was accused of being a Trotskyist by the BCPV. There was no serious political fingerprinting, but a perception arose that I was not full communist party material. At around that time IMG opportunity arose. I skated in and out of all of these groups and was not just a member of one.

75. I don’t remember how long I was in the IMG. Perhaps it was 3-5 months. I would have regarded ‘Dick Epps’ as a member as much as any of the other groups did. There was no structure but just a few dedicated individuals. Tariq Ali was in charge there. He was the political mentor and the driving force. It was a group that took part in every demonstration that was going on at that time, and so a good group to be a member of to gather information about demonstrations. They were a revolutionary group. Tariq Ali was perceived as a very important flagbearer of the far left. The violence that spun from demonstrations was spontaneous but centred from the anarchists rather than political groups themselves.

76. I think Mike Ferguson rumbled a plan by Stop the 70s Tour to disrupt a rugby match with flares but I was not really aware of what other undercover police officers were doing in the unit.

77. I have been shown a number of my reports. I am surprised that there are so few. I cannot imagine that is correct. Having said this everything that I reported might not go into reports of this format. It might be pulled into a larger document to report on an event or a demonstration. It might be that I would be able to give information regarding some people, whilst other people on the team would have given evidence of people that they knew. I cannot say that is all I did, even some of what I have been provided with I cannot remember and cannot say whether it is my reporting. I am sure that there would be more. I think I probably submitted written reports 2-3 times per week, and I have been presented with far fewer documents like that.
Tasking

78. As I have set out, I was never given specific tasking. I would submit reports as and when required. When something happened one would write it up and submit it the next day. I was the arbiter as to whether it was important or not. Everything you could make use of was submitted. I don't think we would discuss those reports, unless it posed an imminent threat to an individual or some activity involving police attending a demonstration. We did not ever discuss reporting generally. It was just accepted you were out there doing what you were and you would just keep on doing it. It was never suggested looking at anything specific.

79. I have said in my WS to Herne at page 4 “we were generally tasked by them…” which sounds like I was referring to MI5. This is a misunderstanding. I would like to make clear that my general tasking was made by my managers in SDS. If I have conveyed an alternative impression in my witness statement it is erroneous. I am, however, sure that every report made was copied to MI5.

80. I was never told how long I would be on the unit. I don’t know what other sources of information there might have been, but it wasn’t available to officers. I had an induction which was broad conversation with others involved in the team. They all knew how difficult it was to begin your task and to develop your legend. There was encouragement and advice from colleagues but not from the bosses.

Premises

81. There was an office at New Scotland Yard which I never went to once I was deployed and cover flat in West London. I cannot remember its exact location now.

82. During the week I would attend the SDS flat in West London at around 10am every day to sign in. If I was working at the weekend, I would not sign in at the flat as no one would be there. I would not go back to the flat to sign off. I would
normally work until about 6, but sometimes I would be very late and I had to catch a train in order to get home.

83. I would also attend a weekly meeting at the flat in West London. There was no set format, we would just gather for a couple of hours in the afternoon. At least one of the senior officers would be there and we would discuss with them what we had been doing that week, and submit our written reports.

84. There were no other premises that I am aware of.

Pattern of life whilst undercover

85. Being undercover involved long working hours. As I have said above, I would go to the SDS flat every weekday morning to sign in. I might spend a chunk of the day there. Sometimes in the morning I would write up my previous evenings work. I would draft my diary entry (called the CID diary) which would be collected every week (but made up every day). There would also be material/literature to read which you were gleaning in your work. I then might go out to particular pub where you knew that people gathered. Some days would be different. I knew that some bosses would come through at 3pm and so would be there if you were able to. I would also go out and attend meetings and demonstrations whenever they took place. They would sometimes be in the evenings or at the weekend. When I was not attending events I would go to my cover flat or write reports on the meetings I had attended. Generally, I would write reports from the SDS flat. I would never do anything at my cover flat that could be associated with my genuine background. Most of your work would be done in the late afternoons and early evenings. I might meet someone at lunchtime. When I was with the Maoists, would glean bits over lunch frequently. I could go into a couple of pubs in Kilburn and would know full well that would be several IRA people in there. Those were the moments that you might pick something up.
86. When there was an evening meeting I would often finish about 22.30 at night. I would do long shifts like that about 4 times per week.

87. I did not have much time to spend with my family during my deployment. I was always busy with work at the weekends. I did however make a point of fulfilling my annual leave quota of 25 days, because if I did not I would lose it at the end of the year.

Pay and overtime

88. When I was working late, I would receive overtime. If I worked 10.30 to 22.30, that would potentially mean 4 hours of overtime. As I have said above, I would do long shifts like that about 4 days per week. This naturally increased my income. All payments would be based on the diary that you submitted. The diary would also reflect movements. There was an audit trail. If I started at 10am, as most Special Branch officers did and booked off at 11, that would be five hours' overtime and that would be dealt with in the admin office. This was paid accordingly. It would be similar if you incurred expenses.

89. I was not given access to funds or a bank account for my use during my deployment. I would spend my own money for things like petrol and then make a claim through expenses against receipt. If I bought drinks in the pub when working, I would be entitled to that repayment, but there would be a special coding for that. You would intimate that you had met an informant and paid for a drink and it would be recorded in that way. I certainly do not think that it reduced my cost of living. I was recompensed for what I was doing.

Reporting

90. My deployment is such a long time ago now that it is difficult to pick out specific events during it. I attended hundreds of meetings and demonstrations held by the groups that I infiltrated. Most were small affairs, but I also remember one where the crowd filled the embankment leading up to Parliament. If there was something that required an immediate policing presence I would sometimes
report on those demonstrations in real time by calling the SB general office from
a telephone booth, but most of my reporting was done via written reports.

91. At the weekly meetings, I would also submit written reports on all the meetings
and demonstrations. Those would be factual in nature: what was discussed at
the meeting, who was in attendance, who the influential members seemed to
be, anything that might be coming up in future that the uniformed officers would
need to be aware of. Essentially, anything that might be of assistance when it
came to policing demonstrations. I cannot remember every receiving any
questions about what I had reported, or any requests for further information
about what I reported on. As a field officer I was not party to how what I reported
on was used or by whom. I believe the MPS, the Home Office, and MI5
generally cooperated with one another about public order matters.

92. I would also call the office if something came up that required an immediate
response by way of a police presence. There was a two-man team who always
manned the phone and would disseminate what you put into the system very
quickly both to the security services and the public order uniform branch of the
MPS.

93. I have been asked questions about various documents, which I will address
below.

94. Before I do so I would like to point out that some of these events took place
over fifty years ago and my memory is not surprisingly somewhat vague.

Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front

95. I have been asked about what “militant solidarity” was displayed at a meeting
dated 14 April 1969. I don’t know for sure but I guess it was something that they
congratulated one another on. I don’t know what Special Branch did with this
information.
96. I have been asked: why did I report that Manchanda was outlining what material people could read to inform themselves about the question of equal rights for women. I can’t answer that question fifty years later. I must have believed it was relevant or important at the time. I was not told that what I was reporting was not useful. I guess that this information was not just held within Special Branch but was passed on to MI5 and probably the Home Office. Mike Ferguson was at that meeting so some of that meeting might have been gleaned from him. If two officers had been at a meeting whoever put the report in might have discussed their report with the other person to ensure all the points were covered.

97. I have been asked: why was it DS Creamer rather than me and Mike Ferguson who provided the ‘essential ideological interpretation’ of the conference that we had attended. I think that was Roy Creamer’s role because he wasn’t an operational officer but worked in the backroom of the office. He was an intelligent guy. In Conrad Dixon’s report his role was stated as ‘clerical’, but he was earmarked for promotion, and that was due around July. In other words, he had the knowledge to interpret political events. He had a more in depth knowledge that our position did not demand. We just reported the facts.

98. I have been asked: why did I report private information about Privacy and not any of the other regular attendees at the BVSF meetings. I suspect that she was a new member of the group. I give an example of where there is a similar report dated 9 April 1969. It was perhaps the first time I was able to identify her. One would report on such information every time I was able to identify someone new.

99. I have been asked: why did I report private information about Privacy and not any of the other regular attendees at the BVSF meetings. Again, I would report back information about everyone new that able to identify. I infer that I must be missing some reports about certain people.
Broader Group Reporting

100. I have been asked about broader group reporting. By March 1970 I moved away from BVSF. I wasn’t specifically tasked to one group. My deployment was far more general in nature. I was picking up and following leads all over the place. We were a small team with a broad ambit and therefore anything that seemed to have an interest to me with my background and antennae was deemed interesting. I would follow it up as necessary. The consequence of that is that I would go to lots of meetings of lots of different groups. There would be some crossover with other officers. I was covering quite a spread albeit unknowingly. I probably did not continue to report on the BVSF after May 1969 because when I left, I left totally.

101. I have been asked why I thought Special Branch needed to know that someone in the group was ‘in the process of designing a poster’ or that others were undertaking a film review. I reported just what was being discussed at the time. I was a functionary with a task to report information. I was never told that Special Branch weren’t interested in that kind of thing. The collective wisdom was that we should get a grip of all of this and my reporting was seen as a part of that process. It was a throwback to the way I was mentored to report and how things were reported. It is the same way that I would report when I was going to a meeting in Special Branch. It needed to be done in a certain way. I can see how someone now might think this was intrusive, but it was how I was taught to do reports.

102. I have been asked about agent provocateurs. I have no concrete idea as to what that might refer to. I think I was referring to anarchists at demonstrations. They were aware of others who were following different paths. There were seemingly spontaneous, incidents of violence which were more often than not centred around groups of anarchists.

103. I have been asked about my reporting concerning a meeting that dealt with hearing legal advice concerning a Stop the 70s tour. I recall it be around
general matters such as - how to avoid breaking the law, how to avoid arrest, how to deal with matters if one were to be arrested, how to avoid conspiracy. I have no idea if meeting ever took place because I did not attend it.

104. I have been asked why I reported that someone was not politically aware and was a somewhat immature, naïve person. I suppose it was because he might have been being used as a dupe by someone who was politically motivated.

105. I appeared in the BBC documentary, True Spies, using the pseudonym “Dan”. I was approached by Peter Taylor, the BBC journalist. I spoke to senior MPS management, Roger Pearce and Ben Gunn, who said that they had approved him making the approach to me. I understand that a couple of my former colleagues had put my name forward.

106. I have been asked whether the account that I gave during the ‘True Spies’ documentary of infiltrating the IMG and obtaining copies of the IMG office keys is true. I can confirm that it was. The IMG was the last group that I infiltrated for 3-5 months. I am sure that I must have provided written reports. I don’t know if all my reporting would have had my name attached. I would not have used another name, but reports may have been submitted and signed off by people in the office. Whoever submitted the information may have been left off the report totally. In the office at my time was Roy Creamer, Joan Hillier and Bill Furner. I started regularly attending meetings, and eventually I was asked to look after the IMG office for a couple of days. I was asked to keep it open from 5.30 to 8.30, and when I was finished to put the keys through the letterbox next door. I have no idea how I became trusted enough to hold keys. At this point I had been around for a while and therefore suspect I was seen as part of the left and a regular and so I started to attend their meetings. I do have a recollection of being at an IMG meeting and being told that the person who was
meant to lock up was not there. They asked for volunteers and so I put my hand up and said I could do it.

107. I told Phil Saunders that I would have access to the keys for the IMG offices and asked him whether there would be any interest in having those. He went away and made inquiries and I was instructed to take pressings. I was provided with plastercine in order to do so. He said they may be 'visited' by MI5 though I do not know whether that ever happened.

108. I was never tasked to become a trusted member to gain access to members' personal details.

109. After the program was broadcast, a former colleague, Angus MacIntosh, came to see me. He had been a very good friend, and had become a supervisor in the SDS. He asked me why I had been involved in the programme. I told him that the things I had talked about had occurred 37 years previously, and that given how unsophisticated the unit was at that time that I was a part of it, I thought it was incredibly unlikely that what I had done would bear any resemblance to how undercover policing was conducted at the time of the program airing.

110. He was angry though and has not spoken to me since. I have lost a number of friends as a result of my participation in True Spies. Some have accused me of creating the demise of Special Branch in London. I do not accept that, and they should know better given I was approved to do it by MPS management.

111. I remember going to a police social event One particular chap, came over and started drunkenly shouting and swearing at me. A number of other people had to calm him down. Subsequently I have not any such events

112. I have been asked: what was the benefit of True Spies? I assumed perhaps naively that such time had elapsed from my involvement that things
would have changed dramatically in terms of how it was done or it was still
done. I had been out of the police service for years and had moved and was therefore out of the mainstream.

Trade Unions

113. I did not join any trade union whilst an undercover police officer. I did not get involved in trade union affairs.

114. I do not remember when the Industrial Section was disbanded. There was no connection between the industrial section and the SDS. I knew of the Economic League. Shortly after I joined the branch, the then Chief Superintendent of C Squad, I think his surname was Lawrenson, retired and he joined the staff of the Economic League and I was aware of that. I know that the building industry had an organisation as well. As an industry they were concerned about militants bringing work to a halt as a result of strike action. When I was on the industrial section I had a responsibility to cover the engineering industry. There was deep concern in industry about the penetration of trade unions by the Russians. The Russian trade delegation in Highgate was deemed to be nothing more than a home for spies. There were reports from just about every organised industry of militant trade unionists with communist party leanings taking over the principal roles in trade unions and leading disputes. Jack Dash at the docks, Red Robbo at Bristol Motors, print industry, building industry, teaching unions. This went on to such an extent that eventually in the time of the Macmillan Government, with Douglas Hume as Foreign Secretary, 135 Russian Diplomats were thrown out. That was the reason for the industrial section to monitor in a much more orthodox manner public order events that were going to impact on the streets of London and in the process of doing all of that work, came across outfits such as the economic league. So I knew about them, knew about their role, to monitor extremist activity, but wasn't involved with them at all. By 'potential use' I meant it was the sort of organisation that if we had felt it necessary to ask a question about an organisation and they were the sort of people we might turn to, in order to glean background. We never
ended up seeking information from them in that way. No relationship existed
between the SDS and the economic league.

Public Order and Violence

115. Whenever there was a large demonstration there was invariably an
element that was looking to cause trouble beyond the point of the
demonstration. So there would be flashpoints when a window would be broken
or a car would be surrounded or a roof hammered. Anything that would wind
people up. Whichever group they might be in. I think were anarchists, I don't
know of any other groups that might try to create difficulty. At these
demonstrations you would see these things happening. You see groups of
people going after police officers. As I saw at Twickenham and also a
demonstration in Lincoln's Inn. Property was often the target for example cars
were set alight. Once or twice I caught wind of matters like that and rang it in to
the Special Branch reserves to be disseminated. One of the reasons for the
existence of the Metropolitan police is to keep the peace. There were pockets
of disturbance at demonstrations. The attempts to widen the troubles were
rarely successful. There was never the fervour of Grosvenor Square. I did not
participate in any public disorder or violence to person or property — I was
always conscious I was a police officer. I did my best to avoid being involved in
trouble. Luckily, I was never the victim of any violence either.

116. I remember being at Twickenham for a rugby game that Stop the 70's
Tour were trying to disrupt. The instructions were to attack the police presence
and then run onto the pitch in order to disrupt the game.

117. I remember being part of a large crowd and being pushed forwards
towards the police officers. I was still a police officer at heart and was not
comfortable assaulting a fellow officer, even to maintain my cover. I pretended
to lose my footing and then just pushing my way out of the crowd to get away.
I do not think it was a very convincing exit, but my heart was not in it to that
extent. In any event, I could not see any benefit in getting arrested for assaulting a police officer.

Subversion

118. I think Special Branch had a role in countering subversive activity. I would say they did, to the extent that they would assist other agencies in preventing subversion. As a Special Branch officer you were there to keep the peace. Not something that was driven into us, it was an accepted tenet of the philosophy of the branch. Just about every report that went through C Squad was copied to MI5. I would be surprised if there were any that were not minuted to go there. My understanding was that all reports were copied in that way. It was the culture of C-Squad. In C-Squad before I joined the SDS, it was my core discipline. All reports that I saw were copied to MI5.

119. In a certain sense, I would say that fomenting unrest on the streets and disrupting the lives of everyday people was subversive. However, I would not say that it was subversive in the sense of undermining Parliamentary Democracy or attempting to overthrow the State. I see there being a distinction between genuine peaceful protest and that which was divisive or venomous. I was more concerned with the latter.

120. I do not know why my reporting was copied to the Security Service. I presume that it was the policy.

121. During my deployment there was only one instance where I had direct contact with the Security Service. I was introduced by Mike Davis, who was a Chief Superintendent of E-Squad, to a man called from MI5 in a pub. HN336 was asked his views on the impact of protests in his field of deployment.
It was not an official meeting.

Sexual Relationships

122. I did not engage in any sexual activity whilst in my undercover identity. I was not aware of any other SDS officer having a sexual relationship whilst I was deployed. I do not think it would have crossed anyone’s mind to do something like that. I was aghast at the revelations that there had been officers who had children with members of groups they had infiltrated.

Other Relationships

123. I did not form any close personal relationships whilst I was deployed undercover. It was never my goal to do so. My role was purely to gather and submit intelligence, not to influence what groups would do, how they would conduct their activities, or prevent them from breaking the law. I don’t think anyone would have viewed me as a friend. I think I was perceived as a slightly detached individual. In retrospect I can see that that was a failing in my attempt to be a wholly successful undercover officer.

Criminal Justice

124. I did not participate in any criminal activity whilst I was deployed as an undercover police officer.

125. I was never arrested, charged, tried or convicted of a criminal offence whilst serving as an undercover police officer, I did have an incident whilst driving home in an SDS car. I had an accident. The standing order when you had an accident in a police car was to stay where you were and call the local district garage sergeant. He initially refused to come out, and I had to call him three times. When he did finally come out he demanded my warrant
card as due to my appearance he did not believe I was a police officer. I fetched it from under the carpet in the boot of my car, which seemed to satisfy him. However, seemingly as a way of getting back at me for dragging him out he verbally me and reported me for driving without due care. I was subsequently summoned to the Magistrates Court where I plead guilty in my own name and was fined £10 with £1 costs. I have been shown a witness statement that I drafted saying it was £5 in costs but that is incorrect: it was £1.

126. I have never appeared in any criminal proceedings as a witness in my undercover identity, nor do I believe the fact that I was an undercover officer ever disclosed in connection with any such event.

127. At no point did I provoke, encourage or cause any other person to participate in any criminal activity whilst I was deployed as an undercover police officer serving with the Special Demonstration Squad.

128. To my knowledge the product of my reporting was never used in support of, or other disclosed in connection with, a criminal investigation. I never provided any evidence for use in any prosecution arising from my undercover deployment.

Other legal or disciplinary proceedings

129. I have not been involved in any way in my undercover identity in any other legal proceedings, nor have I been involved in any way in my undercover identity in any complaint against a police officer or any disciplinary proceedings involving a police officer.

Legal professional privilege

130. I did not receive nor become aware of any legally privileged information whilst I was deployed as an undercover officer.
Elected Politicians

131. I did not report on any elected politicians.

The Use to Which Your Reporting was Put

132. I believe the MPS, the Home Office, and MI5 generally cooperated with one another about public order matters. However, as a field officer I was not party to those discussions. As I have stated above, I would just report intelligence, I do not know exactly how or by whom it was used. I cannot remember every receiving any questions about what I had reported, or any requests for further information about what I reported on from either my senior officers or any external agency.

133. I hold firm views about the protection of our society and one of the roles of the police service is the protection of life and property. There are occasions when those prized possessions are in jeopardy. I think it is important that steps are taken to protect society. In that sense my contribution, although small, was an aid to that objective.

Exfiltration

134. The incident that lead to me leaving the SDS was when I was confronted by the IMG. I was told by Phil Saunders that a telephone intercept had overheard Tariq Ali telling someone that he thought I was a reformist not a revolutionary. Phil Saunders informed me that I would be challenged at the next meeting.

135. I was invited to the pub by a few members of the IMG and they endeavoured to get me drunk, I believe in the expectation that I would show my true colours. I think they wanted to establish whether I was a true comrade or someone less serious. I was bought about 6 to 8 pints and although I was used to drinking, it scrambled me. They just questioned my politics, there was never any mention that anyone thought I was an undercover police officer.
136. After the meeting I made my way to a pre-arranged meeting point with Phil Saunders and another officer. When I met them I was in difficulty to the extent that I had trouble staying upright.

137. Although I was not outed as an undercover officer, I did not enjoy being confronted in that manner. Although I kept my cool throughout the encounter, it was still a nervewracking experience.

138. After that incident I had an appraisal with Phil Saunders where I said I felt that my usefulness was coming to an end and that my deployment had run its course. I told him I was feeling increasingly uncomfortable about my ability. I suggested that I withdraw. He was in sympathetic agreement with my suggestion, and I gradually drifted away from the scene and stopped attending meetings. I was able to quickly resume normal Special Branch duties without the likely embarrassment of being 'spotted' by former contacts.

139. I don't recall there being a rule of only being in the SDS for 12 months. I left the SDS in the summer of 1970. I think that they would utilise your talent for as long as they were able to exploit it. There is a mistake in my statement to Herne. I was not in location in 1972. I think I was only in the SDS from late 1968 to mid 1970.

140. To my knowledge, no one ever tried to contact me after I stopped attending meetings, nor did I try to contact anyone from the groups I had infiltrated. I did not really make any friends during my deployment, other than the occasional trip to the pub, I only see them at meetings and events organised by the group.

141. I do not remember much about the end of my deployment beyond that. I do not remember exactly how long it took me to leave or when exactly I transferred to my next posting.
Managers and administrative staff

142. As I have said above, there were two supervising officers in the Unit. The DCI when I joined was Conrad Dixon. He was later replaced by Phil Saunders. The DI throughout my time in the unit was [HN294]. Although the DCI was in charge, there was no strict chain of command. We would get guidance from both of the supervising officers, and generally they would fulfil the same role. The management showed themselves almost every day, sometimes all of them.

I do not remember much about [HN332]. I have been shown a document which states that he left in early 1969, replaced by [HN294, HN294].

They were hands on. They were there or there about all the time and were very supportive. They certainly did not manage at a distance and were available for advice where appropriate or necessary. Phil Saunders was an extremely nice man, a true gentleman. Very supportive, helpful, and extremely kind. I felt supported throughout. He would discuss with me what their understanding of our objectives should be and how they might help in terms of us developing our skills. If there was something they could do to help, then they would.

143. At the time I had no notion that Conrad Dixon had any ambition. In retrospect I think he had an eye cocked for his own advancement. He saw the unit as a way to make a name for himself. It was a good and necessary idea, but I think he was also out to advance his own career.

144. I recall Conrad Dixon and [HN294] as being the principle chain of command. I don’t remember Wilson being in Chain of Command. I have been shown a document which says his role is press and informants, so I had no reason to meet with him. I knew [HN332] but don’t remember working with him on SDS. I remember that Creamer was office bound.

145. In terms of admin staff. Bill Furner was the office manager effectively back at NSY. Joan Hillier was the ‘mother hen’. She looked after the cover flat and worked in the office supporting bill and typing our reports. Roy Creamer moved on, but he was a clever man and was seen as being the politically
informed one. He did not last all that long. He was promoted in July 1969. I don’t think he was replaced. I don’t recall him making regular visits to the apartment. I would see Joan Hillier at the flat because she lived there. It was a flat detail of premises I would see Bill Furner more often than not in the afternoon. Whoever from command came across would often be accompanied by Bill Furner. The document behind tab 2 is a plan rather than a reflection of how the SDS actually was.

146. I cannot remember any other Management or administrative staff other than the ones I have mentioned.

Management and supervision: general arrangements

147. I had routine contact with Conrad Dixon and Phil Saunders, subsequently HN294 when Dixon left and Phil Saunders moved up to be in charge of the unit.

148. I kept in contact with them when I saw them at the flat, which I would go to most days during the week. Generally, at least one of them would visit.

149. Dixon would visit the cover flat in West London.

150. When we spoke we would discuss admin matters. Rarely would one speak individually. It was normally a collective meeting. It might be something administrative to deal with or an upcoming activity that needed attention (e.g. a demonstration). They would bring expenses over and CID diaries back to us.

151. The reports were handwritten. We wouldn’t generally discuss reports unless at the same meeting. Joan Hillier was the assistant who would type up reports. I have no idea whether fifty years on whether typed reports correspond to handwritten notes. I did not check the typed reports and they were never available for me to check. The references come from SB records to which I did
not have access. For example, the passage added at the bottom of report in relation to Privacy was added by SB and dealt with by the office. There likely would have been other reports but not sure what it was or how would have been dealt with.

152. If I met someone and had a conversation and I deemed it important I would have submitted it. I remember submitting stuff all the time. The content of which I cannot possibly now recall. I have no idea how often. We would meet socially for example in a pub. There was no regularity to any social meeting, all I can say is that social meetings would have been rare. I omitted anything that I deemed to be unimportant, otherwise everything was reported. It was not my role to be selective. Anything that I deemed to be of interest would be submitted. Anything that offered information on structure, personnel, etc would be deemed of interest. Matters that touched on purely social activities would not be relevant.

153. I am not sure if Ferguson and I both drafted handwritten notes for the BVSF on 9 March 1969 but I don’t think so because his name is added to mine.

154. I don’t recall any specific response to my reports. Having been through the mill in terms of learning how to present reports in a Special Branch style they would recognise that it is ticking the boxes of requirements, and therefore my work was not challenged.

Senior management and oversight bodies

155. I do not remember any senior managers visiting the SDS nor anyone with any outside body with any form of regulatory or oversight responsibility for policing.

156. I did not receive any commendation for my undercover work.

Deployment of contemporaries
157. I think Ray Wilson, Wilf Knight, Matthew Rodger, Barry Moss, Helen Crampton, Dave Fisher, HN340, HN298, HN301, HN342, HN343, HN344, HN345, HN347, HN348 and others were members of the SDS but I didn’t work with them.

158. Conrad Dixon, Phil Saunders, HN294, HN68, HN326, Joan Hillier, Mike Tyrell, Mike Ferguson, HN45, HN339, HN338, and Jill Mosdell were members of the SDS and their service overlapped with mine.

159. I have no idea what role played in the SDS. I have no idea whether used a cover name. I do not think was a member of the SDS team. was a member of SDS throughout my time. Whilst I served there was never any person with the real name Wilson. I have no idea whether Fisher, Crampton, Dixon used a cover name but am totally unaware as to what it might be.

160. I have no idea whether any of my contemporaries whilst deployed provoked, encouraged or caused a third party to commit a criminal offence. I have no idea whether they engaged in sexual activity. Barring I have no idea whether they were arrested, charged, tried or convicted in their undercover identity or involved in public disorder or other activity. I have no idea as to whether they reported on legally privileged information or reported on elected politicians.

161. I believe that the task we were engaged upon provided some assistance to the MPS and other agencies by giving important information which allowed them to properly police the streets of London.

162. My target groups were all involved in the same kinds of activities: meetings, demonstrations, leafleting, and public disorder. I believe that there
was one officer in the SDS at the same time as me, HN68, who became involved with the Irish scene, and I therefore suspect that the activities of the groups he penetrated were of a more serious and violent nature. I do not, however, know exactly which groups he penetrated, or how deeply involved he was with them. I do remember that Conrad Dixon was extremely protective of HN68.

163. I heard a rumour that HN68 was arrested whilst he was undercover. I cannot recall who told me or when. I have no idea what he was arrested for, or what happened when he was arrested. I do not believe any other SDS officer was arrested whilst I was in it.

Post deployment

164. I did not have a holiday or any kind of break after my deployment ended, I just went on to the next thing. I thought it was probably best just to get on with life and get on with my job. I think subsequent UCOs were rather pandered to in that regard.

165. I was not debriefed by anyone nor offered any specific advice or ongoing support by the SDS or MPS.

Post Special Demonstration Squad Police Career

166. After I left the SDS I resumed normal special branch duties. To start off with I was sent to [redacted] details of post SDS duties including the industrial intelligence section and working at the ports.

167. [redacted]
168. My view of the SDS posting was always that it was just something you did for a while before going on to other things within Special Branch.

169. I believe my SDS deployment contributed to the breakdown of my first marriage. I neglected my relationship with my wife in favour of committing time to the job. Perhaps that was just the way I responded to being deployed undercover, or perhaps the breakdown was inevitable in any event, I cannot say. My second marriage has been a huge success.

170. As far as I am aware it did not have any effect on my children, though I am sure that the domestic grief between my wife and I when our marriage broke down was difficult for them.

171. I believe it rounded my experience as a Special Branch officer. It gave me insight into how revolutionary groups operate and think.

172. It was however a stressful experience for me. I felt a huge sense of relief when my deployment ended. You were largely on your own when you were deployed, and had to act on your wits. Though I felt I could have talked to my colleagues and supervisors if I had an issue, it was still a lot of pressure to deal with on a day to day basis. I had the boss’ number if anything went seriously wrong, but I never used it. There was not any support in the field, you just got on with things and dealt with things as best as you could.

Leaving the Police

173. I was a Detective Constable when I left the police.
174. I retired after over 30 years of service. 

175. I am now retired.

**Undercover work in the private sector**

176. I was not given any instructions or guidance of any kind about working undercover in the private sector, or using any aspect of my assumed identity in the private sector, before I left the MPS.

177. I did not undertake any undercover work after leaving the MPS for any organisation in the private sector.

**Any other matters**

178. I have no other evidence to give.

**Request for documents**

179. I have no relevant documents nor has my memory been refreshed by any document that is not in my witness pack.

**Diversity**

180. I am a white British male.

I believe the content of this statement to be true.

Signed: HN336

Dated: 10.05.2019