

Thursday, 12 November 2020

(10.00 am)

MS PURSER: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the second day of evidential hearings in Tranche 1, Phase 1 at the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

For those of you in the virtual hearing room, please can I remind you to turn off both your camera and video unless you are invited to speak by the Chairman.

I will now hand over to our Chairman, Sir John Mitting, to formally start proceedings.

Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Good morning, everybody. As those of you who attended yesterday's hearings will know, hearings begin with a recording of just over three minutes made by me earlier this year. Could those of you listening to it for the first time, please listen carefully.

(Pause)

MS PURSER: Everybody, I am sorry about the lack of sound on the video. We will sort this out as soon as possible and play the video from the start. Thank you. Please bear with us.

(Pause)

(Video played)

"I am conducting this Inquiry under a statute,

1 the Inquiries Act 2005, which gives me the power to make  
2 orders regulating the conduct of the Inquiry, including  
3 its hearings. In the exercise of that power, I have  
4 made a number of orders which affect what you may and  
5 may not do in the hearing rooms and after you leave  
6 them. Breach of any of the orders is a serious matter  
7 and may have serious consequences for you.

8 "If I am satisfied that a person may have breached  
9 an order, I have the power to certify the matter to  
10 the High Court, which will investigate and deal with it  
11 as if it had been a contempt of that court. If  
12 satisfied that a breach has occurred and merits  
13 the imposition of a penalty, the High Court may impose  
14 a severe sanction on the person in breach, including  
15 a fine, imprisonment for up to two years and  
16 sequestration of their assets.

17 "Evidence is going to be given live over screens in  
18 the hearing rooms. It is strictly prohibited to  
19 photograph or record what is shown on the screens, or to  
20 record what is said by a witness, or anyone else in  
21 the hearing rooms. You may bring your mobile telephone  
22 into the hearing rooms, but you may not use it for any  
23 of those purposes. You may use it silently for any  
24 other purpose. In particular, you may transmit your  
25 account of what you have seen and heard in a hearing

1 room to any other person, but only once at least  
2 10 minutes have elapsed since the event which you are  
3 describing took place.

4 "This restriction has a purpose. In the course of  
5 the Inquiry, I have made orders prohibiting the public  
6 disclosure of information; for example, about  
7 the identity of a person for a variety of reasons.  
8 These orders must be upheld. It is inevitable that,  
9 whether by accident or design, information which I have  
10 ordered should not be publicly disclosed will sometimes  
11 be disclosed in a hearing.

12 "If and when that happens, I will immediately  
13 suspend the hearing and make an order prohibiting  
14 further disclosure of the information outside  
15 the hearings rooms. The consequence will be that no  
16 further disclosure of that information may be made by  
17 mobile telephone or other portal electronic device from  
18 within the hearing room, or by any means outside it.

19 "I am sorry if you find this message alarming. It  
20 is not intended to be. Its purpose is simply to ensure  
21 that everyone knows the rules which must apply if I am  
22 to hear the evidence which I need to enable me to get to  
23 the truth about undercover policing. You, as members of  
24 the public, are entitled to hear the same public  
25 evidence as I will hear and to reach your own

1 conclusions about it. The Inquiry team will do their  
2 best to ensure that you can.

3 "If you have any doubt about the terms of this  
4 message or what you may or may not do, you should not  
5 hesitate to ask one of them and, with my help, if  
6 necessary, they will provide you with the answer."

7 THE CHAIRMAN: We are now about to hear from the former  
8 undercover officer known as "HN329". Has the link been  
9 established with him, and if so, may he be sworn or  
10 affirmed?

11 HN329

12 MS PURSER: Good morning, HN329, can you see and hear me?

13 A. I can.

14 MS PURSER: I can see and hear you, too. I understand that  
15 you would like to swear on oath?

16 A. Yes.

17 (Witness sworn)

18 MS PURSER: Thank you very much.

19 Chairman.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

21 HN329, I understand that there is somebody present  
22 in the room with you there to assist you with  
23 the technology if you need it.

24 A. There is indeed.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Is it possible for the camera to be moved so



1           those witness statements?

2       A.   I am.

3       Q.   And are the contents of those witness statements true  
4           and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief?

5       A.   They are indeed.

6       Q.   Can I start, please, with how you came to join the --  
7           what I am going to call the "SDS".  Were you  
8           a volunteer, or were you volunteered?

9       A.   I don't recall volunteering.  I was -- I think I was  
10           requested to join, but I can't be a hundred per cent  
11           sure.

12       Q.   And when you did join the SDS, were you instructed to  
13           keep the fact of the SDS's existence secret?

14       A.   Not to my knowledge.

15       Q.   And you tell us in your witness statement that you had  
16           no formal training with the SDS but that you did visit  
17           Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ferguson Smith with some  
18           of your SDS colleagues.  Can you help us as to when in  
19           your service that happened?

20       A.   Well, I -- after two years in uniform, I became  
21           a Special Branch officer, and I was on naturalisation  
22           enquiries, which was the usual way in to Special Branch  
23           as a temporary, for just over a year, I think.  I can't  
24           remember the exact date when I joined the SDS, as it's  
25           now known.

1 Q. We've got a document which suggests that it was in  
2 August 1968, but my question really is, when you saw  
3 DAC Ferguson Smith, was that whilst you were a member of  
4 the SDS?

5 A. I presume so, yes.

6 Q. And can you remember whether it was early in your SDS  
7 service or later on?

8 A. Oh, it was at the very beginning, within the first week  
9 or so.

10 Q. And can you remember whether you went to see  
11 Ferguson Smith with some or all of your SDS colleagues?

12 A. That I can't remember. I would imagine it would have  
13 been some.

14 Q. You tell us in your witness statement that he made clear  
15 that you were not expected to carry out any illegal  
16 activity, albeit you knew that anyway. Can you recall  
17 what else he advised or instructed you to do?

18 A. Basically, that we were not expected to break the law,  
19 that we were to just carry on our enquiries in the same  
20 way as when we were Special Branch officers.

21 Q. You also say, on the topic of Ferguson Smith that at  
22 some point whilst you were serving with the SDS, he came  
23 to visit the unit; and you say in your statement you  
24 think it was for lunch. Can you recall what sort of  
25 things were discussed with DAC Smith, when he came to

1           visit?

2           A. Not really. Just general conversation, I believe.

3           Q. Did you get the impression that DAC Smith was familiar  
4           with the full extent of what the SDS was doing?

5           A. In those early days, certainly, yes.

6           Q. Can I ask you now just a little bit about your general  
7           training. First of all your training to become a police  
8           officer in the first place. Were you given any training  
9           about your duty to keep the peace?

10          A. I'm afraid it's too far back for me to remember now.  
11          I joined the police [in the late 1950s], and my training  
12          would have been whatever the training was in those days.

13          Q. I see. What was -- well, if you can't remember  
14          the training -- and I completely understand why that  
15          might be -- what was your -- in practice, what was your  
16          understanding of your obligation as a police officer in  
17          relation to the Queen's Peace?

18          A. Yes, to keep the Queen's Peace and to act impartially.

19          Q. And in terms of ethics and standards, could you either  
20          tell me what you were instructed to do, or, if not, if  
21          you can't remember, can you tell me what your  
22          understanding of the ethics and standards that you as  
23          a police officer were required to uphold?

24          A. Well, to uphold the law. To -- as I say, to keep  
25          the Queen's Peace and to just make sure that everybody

- 1           behaved themselves.
- 2       Q.   And can you recall whether you were given any training  
3           on the circumstances in which you might enter a private  
4           residence?
- 5       A.   Not to my knowledge.  I can't remember anything.  I know  
6           that one would require a search warrant if there was  
7           anything illegal to be found, but under normal  
8           circumstances, the only -- as a uniformed officer, it  
9           was only if you were invited in.
- 10      Q.   Now can I move to the process of training to be  
11         a Special Branch officer.  Was there a selection  
12         process?
- 13      A.   Yes.
- 14      Q.   And did you have to hold a vetting qualification to  
15         serve within Special Branch?
- 16      A.   Yes, we had positive vetting, but I'm not sure when in  
17         my service that occurred, because, as I say, the first  
18         year or so, I was only temporary in Special Branch,  
19         engaged solely on naturalisation enquiries.
- 20      Q.   And were you trained to conduct discreet observations?
- 21      A.   Not in that time, no.
- 22      Q.   Did you conduct discreet observations in your time with  
23         Special Branch before you joined the SDS?
- 24      A.   Only -- only in general terms, I would assume.  I can't  
25         remember any specific case.

1 Q. Did you attend meetings of political activists before  
2 you joined the SDS?

3 A. Yes, indeed.

4 Q. Did you receive any training about how to do so?

5 A. Not as far as I can remember.

6 Q. Does it follow from that answer that you learned on  
7 the job?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And by the time you joined the SDS, how experienced were  
10 you in that type of work?

11 A. Again, I can't recall the length of time I spent before  
12 I became an officer with the SDS.

13 Q. By the time that you joined the SDS, were you -- did you  
14 have an understanding of what sort of information was of  
15 interest to Special Branch?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And how had you come about that understanding?

18 A. Well, it was just general knowledge, really.

19 Q. And in terms of a movement such as the Vietnam  
20 Solidarity Campaign, what would your prior experience in  
21 Special Branch have taught you would have been of  
22 interest to Special Branch?

23 A. Well, basically, it would be purely, again, going back  
24 to keeping the Queen's Peace.

25 Q. Report writing. Had you had experience of writing

1 Special Branch reports before you joined the SDS?

2 A. Oh yes.

3 Q. I take it -- can I take it from that answer, plenty of  
4 experience?

5 A. I would imagine so, yes.

6 Q. Were you taught how to complete intelligence reports?

7 A. Well, not so much intelligence reports, but one -- on  
8 the naturalisation section, the reports were obviously  
9 submitted to Home Office for the approval of  
10 the applicant's application, and they were very  
11 stringent as to what you included and what you left out.

12 So that experience was transferred to Special Branch  
13 reports, which were then also edited by your senior  
14 officer, in case you'd missed anything out or something  
15 you'd included which was irrelevant.

16 Q. So, by the time you joined the SDS -- and my interest is  
17 particularly in intelligence reports -- did you know  
18 whether or not Special Branch would be interested in  
19 people's personal details?

20 A. I would imagine so, yes.

21 Q. And would -- to what extent was Special Branch  
22 interested in people's personal details?

23 A. Well, as to what they actually were interested in, when  
24 you did a report, you put in everything that  
25 the individual, that you thought was relevant.

- 1 Q. Would that include distinguishing features?
- 2 A. Indeed.
- 3 Q. Moving on from individuals, would Special Branch be  
4 interested in the dynamics within a political group?
- 5 A. In what regard?
- 6 Q. Who was the leader, who were the followers, whether  
7 there were any splits in the group, that sort of thing?
- 8 A. Oh yes, all that would go down.
- 9 Q. Future events that the group was planning --
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. -- or planning to support?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. Is there anything else that would have been of  
14 particular interest that you can recall that you would  
15 be required to record?
- 16 A. Well, if you went to a meeting, you'd just record  
17 everything that transpired that you felt was of  
18 interest.
- 19 Q. Now, you used the word "everything". That perhaps  
20 chimes with your witness statement, which says that  
21 there was no filtering of information. Is that fair?
- 22 A. What, on behalf of the person writing the report?
- 23 Q. Yes. When you wrote the report, were you expected to  
24 filter any information out, or were you expected to  
25 record everything?

1 A. Well, you put everything down that you thought was  
2 relevant and let someone else decide whether it was or  
3 not.

4 Q. And how would you decide what was irrelevant?

5 A. Well, I don't know really. It's hard to say. I mean,  
6 you just reported what happened at the meeting.

7 Q. Were you given any instructions not to report anything  
8 specific?

9 A. Not that I recall.

10 Q. Presumably your reports were looked at by more senior  
11 officers. Did you ever get any feedback about  
12 the content of your reports?

13 A. I -- that I can't recall, I'm afraid, at this distance.

14 Q. Were you given any advice, or did you pick up from  
15 experience, whether you were expected simply to record  
16 facts, or whether you were expected also to include  
17 analysis in your reports?

18 A. Well, I would -- I would have included analysis if there  
19 was anything there that I thought was relevant.

20 Q. Were you given any advice about style and tone of  
21 the reports that you were supposed to write?

22 A. Not that I recall. There was just a -- a sort of  
23 standard Special Branch reporting style.

24 Q. So did you just pick that up from experience?

25 A. Exactly.

1 Q. We see in some of the documents the term "extremism"  
2 used and "extremist groups". Were you given any  
3 definition of what an "extremist group" was?

4 A. Not that I recall.

5 Q. In a number of parts of your witness statement you  
6 describe Special Branch's role in relation to what might  
7 be termed "state security". I'd like to call up your  
8 witness statement so you can -- I can remind you of  
9 precisely what you've written. Could we have, please,  
10 <MPS-0738576>, first of all at page 5 <MPS-0738576/5>.  
11 Thank you.

12 If you could expand that -- thank you.

13 It's paragraph 13 that we want to look at, HN329.  
14 I'm -- for people who are following on the transcript,  
15 I'm going to read the bottom half of that paragraph into  
16 the transcript:

17 "It was common sense that demonstrators would not  
18 inform a smartly dressed police officer whether they  
19 intended to be violent, whether or not they revealed  
20 that they were police officers. Since Special Branch  
21 was responsible for providing information as to  
22 the security of the State, it was plain that better  
23 information was needed. How that was to be achieved was  
24 decided by people more senior than me."

25 The part of that, 329, that I would like to ask you

1 about is the sentence:

2 "Since Special Branch was responsible for providing  
3 information as to the security of the State, it was  
4 plain that better information was needed."

5 Securing the state, is that your understanding of  
6 Special Branch's role, or one of the roles?

7 A. Indeed.

8 Q. Could we now move to page <MPS-0738576/37>, and  
9 paragraph 200. I'll read this into the transcript  
10 first:

11 "Ultimately, any group that came to notice as  
12 a result of causing trouble, for example throwing bricks  
13 through shop windows and actions of that sort, would  
14 have been reported on if they were anti-establishment in  
15 a political sense. It may well be that a particular  
16 group is completely harmless but we would be asked to  
17 find out what their objectives were. A file would then  
18 be opened for the reports that were prepared to be  
19 collected."

20 Could I ask you in particular about the phrase  
21 "anti-establishment in a political sense". Could you  
22 expand on what you mean by that, please.

23 A. Well, it was people who were opposed to the current  
24 political situation, or the current government, whether  
25 it be Conservative, Labour or Liberal.

1 Q. In fact, if we move now to page 43, just for  
2 completeness, <MPS-0738576/43>, and look at  
3 paragraph 238, which I'll read into the transcript:

4 "I understood the role of Special Branch to be  
5 carrying out enquiries concerning the security of  
6 the State, in other words gathering intelligence on  
7 activities that sought to undermine the status quo,  
8 the government of the day and the political  
9 establishment."

10 Which I think is effectively what you've just said,  
11 isn't it?

12 A. Indeed.

13 Q. Could we take that document down now, please. Were you  
14 ever formally taught a definition of "subversion"?

15 A. Not that I recall.

16 Q. Could we call up, please, <UCPI0000004459>. And could  
17 we scroll down to the second page. The first page is  
18 just a covering letter. <UCPI0000004459/1>.

19 329, this is a document dating from April 1970, so  
20 a little bit after the time you served in the SDS. It's  
21 entitled, "Terms of Reference for Special Branch". At  
22 paragraph 2, which I shall read into the transcript, it  
23 says:

24 "Special Branch is responsible for acquiring  
25 security intelligence, both secret and overt (a) to

1           assist the Chief Officer in the preservation of public  
2           order, (b) as directed by the Chief Officer to assist  
3           the Security Service in its task of defending the realm  
4           from attempts at espionage and sabotage and from actions  
5           of persons and organisations which may be judged to be  
6           subversive of the security of the State."

7           Now, obviously you can't have seen this document  
8           when you were in the SDS because it is from 1970, but  
9           had you ever been given this or any similar definition  
10          whilst working for Special Branch?

11         A. Not that I can recall, but I wouldn't -- I couldn't have  
12          put it better myself.

13         Q. In terms of how it operated on the ground, were  
14          decisions as to what was subversive and what was not  
15          subversive taken in accordance with the way that you  
16          have defined it in your witness statement?

17         A. I'm not quite sure that I understand the question, I'm  
18          afraid.

19         Q. No problem.

20                 You have said that groups which were  
21          anti-establishment in a political sense had a file open  
22          on them. Is that because they were considered to be  
23          subversive or potentially subversive?

24         A. Well, that would be a decision outside of my brief. It  
25          would be decided higher up.

1 Q. I see. But from your point of view, the information  
2 that you were gathering, you were gathering on the basis  
3 that -- the understanding Special Branch would be  
4 interested if the people concerned were trying to  
5 undermine the status quo, the government of the day and  
6 the political establishment?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Can we move now to your deployment itself. And you have  
9 told us that you recall being deployed straight away.  
10 The information that we've got on the documents is that  
11 you joined the unit in the middle of August. The first  
12 report that we have been able to recover which clearly  
13 has your name on it dates from the 5th -- about  
14 5 September.

15 From your recollection, would you say that's because  
16 we may be missing something, or, on reflection,  
17 was there a gap of a few weeks between you joining  
18 the unit and starting to produce intelligence reports?

19 A. No. I seem to recall that the group that I was with was  
20 also attended by Conrad Dixon; and so he did the reports  
21 and I would have been providing additional information  
22 which was fed into his report.

23 Q. And we're talking now in the period between you joining  
24 in the middle of August and starting to produce  
25 the reports we see your name on?

- 1       A.  Indeed.
- 2       Q.  You've described the work you did as being in some  
3       respects exactly the same as Special Branch work and  
4       effectively the same role.  Could you explain what you  
5       mean by that?
- 6       A.  Well, on general enquiries, you often went along to  
7       a meeting dressed in similar style to yourself or  
8       myself, and so you could possibly be identified as  
9       a police officer.  Undercover, you were just dressed  
10      nondescriptly and just turned up at the meetings, but  
11      the reports that you were putting in were exactly  
12      the same.
- 13      Q.  So would it be fair to say that the reporting was  
14      the same but the method by which you were obtaining  
15      the information was different because you were  
16      pretending to be somebody you were not?
- 17      A.  I suppose -- well, not -- no, because if you went to any  
18      meeting, whether you were dressed smartly or  
19      indiscriminately, it would be exactly the same.  You  
20      just went along to the meeting.  In the first instance,  
21      you might be recognised and asked to leave.  But if you  
22      were sort of scruffy, like the majority of the people  
23      you were attending with, nobody bothered to ask you who  
24      you were.
- 25      Q.  You've told us that you had no formal training with

1 the SDS. Before dressing up in the clothing you've  
2 described, did you speak to any of the other  
3 undercover officers about how it was done and what you  
4 should do?

5 A. No.

6 Q. You just got on with it?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. You adopted a cover name, which we know to be  
9 "John Graham". Did you do that from the outset?

10 A. I presume so, but I don't recall ever being asked for my  
11 name.

12 Q. Now, we know from the reporting that you reported on  
13 the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. Can you help us --  
14 I know that you say in your witness statement you were  
15 having some difficulty recollecting, but can you help us  
16 how it came to be that you reported on the Vietnam  
17 Solidarity Campaign, as opposed to any other group?

18 A. Well, I think they were the group of principal interest  
19 as the organisers of the event that we were covering.

20 Q. You say in your witness statement that you simply  
21 started attending public meetings. Can you help us at  
22 all as to why it was that the public meetings that you  
23 attended were in the north west of London?

24 A. Well, it was just the way it was divided up. The --  
25 Camden, I believe, were a fairly prominent group, as

1           they contained Geoff Richman, who was something to do  
2           with the committee, I believe, of the organisers.

3       Q.   You said that it was as a result of how things were  
4           divided up.  That suggests that somebody in authority  
5           steered you in the direction of north west London.  Is  
6           that fair?  Is that right?

7       A.   It may well have been.  I -- I honestly don't recall.  
8           It may have just resulted in the fact that I had  
9           a leaflet which referred to that particular group, or  
10          that they were more prominent in those days than anybody  
11          else.

12      Q.   Now, as far as we can tell from the documents and from  
13          your witness statement, you served for just over a year  
14          in the SDS; is that right?

15      A.   I presume so.

16      Q.   Now, you do say that the general assumption was the unit  
17          would be disbanded at the end of the October  
18          demonstration, and you went on, in fact, to serve in  
19          the SDS after the October demonstration.  Can you help  
20          us as to why it was the general assumption that the unit  
21          would be disbanded after the October 1968 VSC  
22          demonstration?

23      A.   Well, only because we were informed that that -- that we  
24          were formed to gain information on the next big  
25          demonstration following the disorder of the first one.

- 1 Q. Now, were you surprised when you continued -- when  
2 the unit continued to exist after that demonstration?
- 3 A. Not really, because it then transpired that  
4 the demonstrations were liable to continue.
- 5 Q. And can you recall any discussion about extending  
6 the life of the unit?
- 7 A. No.
- 8 Q. Can we move now, please, to the method you used once you  
9 had established yourself as someone who attended VSC  
10 meetings. You use, in your witness statement,  
11 the phrase "great latitude", and that you were able to  
12 use your initiative. Could you expand upon that,  
13 please. How did that work in practice?
- 14 A. Well, if you had meetings to go to, you just went to  
15 the meetings and then reported on them.
- 16 Q. In terms of what you did other than meetings, you tell  
17 us in your witness statement -- and we've got a document  
18 which shows that there was a street performance by  
19 the VSC, and you recall going to and participating in at  
20 least one street performance?
- 21 A. Yes. I believe, as far as I recall, they performed at  
22 a market in north-west London somewhere, and it was just  
23 a -- some kind of performance about people being killed  
24 in -- by the Americans in Vietnam.
- 25 Q. If you went to a street performance, I'm quite curious

1 as to what other activities that your group might have  
2 staged that you attended. Can you recall any other  
3 activities?

4 A. I don't. I don't -- don't know that they -- they were  
5 only a small group, actually, which fluctuated in  
6 numbers. And apart from attending the various  
7 demonstrations, big or small, I don't know that they did  
8 very much else.

9 Q. There's some mention in your witness statement about  
10 socialising in the pub. To what extent did you  
11 socialise in the pub with the group you had infiltrated?

12 A. Not very much at all.

13 Q. When you say "not very much at all", that gives  
14 the impression that you might have done occasionally; is  
15 that fair?

16 A. Yes, after a meeting. But I don't actually recall any  
17 individual time, but I'm sure we did, because  
18 the meetings were sometimes held over a pub, so you  
19 bought a drink when you went downstairs.

20 Q. And how well did you get to know the members of this  
21 small group?

22 A. Quite well. Well, one or two of them anyway.  
23 Geoff Richman. Although, at the beginning of this  
24 Inquiry, when I was making my statements, I'd  
25 forgotten -- forgotten his name.

- 1 Q. Yes, well, it was a long time ago.
- 2 When you say "quite well", can you give us some idea  
3 at what level you were familiar -- you and he were  
4 familiar?
- 5 A. I never met him socially outside. He and his wife I met  
6 every time they were at the meetings. And he was --  
7 I mean, he was a doctor, a very pleasant individual, and  
8 so was his wife. And they both died in tragic  
9 circumstances.
- 10 Q. And so, were you at the level where you might have  
11 a chat with them either during or after the meetings?
- 12 A. Yes, we just -- just talked in general terms really.  
13 I can't -- can't recall any specific item of discussion.
- 14 Q. Now, you've said that the meetings you attended were not  
15 closed but some of them were not advertised. Can you  
16 help us as to whether there was any attempt by  
17 the groups you infiltrated to do anything secretly, or  
18 to hide from public view their views or what they were  
19 doing?
- 20 A. Not at all.
- 21 Q. Now, the reports that we've found which bear your name  
22 we've sorted chronologically, and a pattern emerges when  
23 one does that. The first is that the earliest reports  
24 bearing your name all concern the North-West London VSC  
25 Ad Hoc Committee in the period between August and --

1           September and October 1968. And then the next branch  
2           that's mentioned is Hampstead, on 30 October.

3           Is there a reason why your early reports are all  
4           from the Ad Hoc Committee before we see any reports from  
5           a specific branch?

6           A. Again, I -- I -- I can't remember.

7           Q. And the reports from the Ad Hoc Committee from early  
8           September record that at that stage, there were  
9           differing opinions as to an appropriate choice of target  
10          for the October demonstration. Can you recall there  
11          being debate about what the target of the October  
12          demonstration should be?

13          A. Well, that was common throughout the various groups that  
14          were involved. I know other groups were more militant,  
15          and -- I think the idea of our group was that we were  
16          going to, again, march -- try to march to the American  
17          Embassy.

18          Q. There came a point in time when the National Committee  
19          decided that that wasn't going to be the official route;  
20          and there's a report from the Ad Hoc Committee that you  
21          were attending that says there was a vote to follow  
22          the official route. Can you recall that?

23          A. Not really, no.

24          Q. Can you recall whether or not, once the National  
25          Committee had decided that the VSC's route was going to

1           be to Hyde Park and not Grosvenor Square, whether or not  
2           that was settled from the point of view of your local  
3           group?

4       A.   Oh, definitely, yes.  They were very respondent to  
5           the views.  As I say, Geoff Richman was involved in --  
6           in setting the route.  So of course, the committee --  
7           the local group that he belonged to in Camden which  
8           I was at naturally agreed with what he said.

9       Q.   Now, the documents show that you attended a number of  
10          the North-West London Ad Hoc Committees with  
11          Conrad Dixon.  Can you help us as to why, as the chief  
12          inspector of the SDS, he attended VSC meetings?

13      A.   Well, I suppose to keep himself informed as to what was  
14          going on, as that was the primary object of -- of the --  
15          the SDS at the time.

16      Q.   It seems to suggest a hands-on person who led from  
17          the front.  Is that a fair assessment?

18      A.   Yes, indeed.

19      Q.   We've got a report from the end of October, just after  
20          the October demonstration, from the Hampstead VSC.  It's  
21          the only report we've found with your name that refers  
22          to the Hampstead VSC.  Can you recall whether or not you  
23          went to any more than that single meeting?

24      A.   No.

25      Q.   And at that meeting, one of the things that's been

1 recorded is that the Kilburn and Willesden VSC was to be  
2 reformed. And after that, we do see a number of reports  
3 from the Kilburn and Willesden VSC branch. Can you  
4 recall anything about the reformation of that branch and  
5 how you came to attend its meetings?

6 A. Not really. They were very fluid. And to -- to gain  
7 support for the particular meeting, they obviously tried  
8 to recruit from other groups, just by letting them know  
9 that there was going to be a meeting of a different  
10 group.

11 Q. The reports that we've got from the Kilburn and  
12 Willesden VSC bearing your name appear to be reports  
13 where you are the only SDS officer in attendance, which  
14 contrasts with your reports on the Camden VSC, where you  
15 are usually, but not always, alone, and your reports  
16 from the Ad Hoc Committee, where sometimes you're with  
17 Conrad Dixon. Is there any reason why you attended  
18 the Kilburn and Willesden meetings such that you were  
19 the only SDS officer there?

20 A. Maybe other people were busy elsewhere. I -- I don't  
21 know, quite honestly.

22 Q. When you were at a meeting with another SDS officer, did  
23 you go literally together, or were you both at the same  
24 meeting but not acknowledging one another?

25 A. Oh, both.

1 Q. When you say "both", did it just depend on  
2 the circumstances?

3 A. And the officer. I mean, I obviously knew Conrad, but  
4 if anybody else turned up for whatever reason, you  
5 didn't acknowledge them unless they were -- happened to  
6 be in the group that you were talking to at the time.

7 Q. Now, in -- you moved on, then, to the Camden VSC; and,  
8 by volume, most of your reports are from the Camden VSC.  
9 There comes a time when you write an article for  
10 the publication "Red Camden". I'm just going to ask for  
11 that to be called up, please. Could we have  
12 <UCPI0000007701>. Could we go to page 9, please,  
13 <UCPI0000007701/9>. Yes, if we could blow that up.  
14 The article I want is the one on the bottom of the page,  
15 please. Thank you.

16 Now, can you help us, first of all, before I start  
17 reading into the transcript, 329, what was  
18 the publication "Red Camden"?

19 A. I have absolutely no idea and I had no recollection of  
20 the article until it was brought to my attention.

21 Q. Have you had an opportunity to look at the article now?

22 A. Only what's on the screen now.

23 Q. Right.

24 It bears your cover name in the top right-hand  
25 corner. I'll give you a moment, if you want to look at

1           it again, to absorb the contents, but the question I'm  
2           going to ask you is, did you write this article?

3                     (Pause)

4       A.   I don't recall it, and the wording is not the sort of --  
5           it looks quite eloquent, actually.  It doesn't look  
6           anything like if I was writing an article, I must admit.

7       Q.   It does bear your cover name, doesn't it?

8       A.   Apparently, yes.

9       Q.   I appreciate I'm asking you to recall something actually  
10          slightly more than half a century ago, but it does look  
11          like this article was attributed to you, doesn't it?

12      A.   Yes.  The thing that I find -- this might be sort of  
13          diverting, but it quotes money, and I have never been  
14          used to, when I attend personal meetings of clubs  
15          I belong to, when the treasurer is reading out sums of  
16          money, I never bother taking them down.  And I just --  
17          it sounds silly, but I don't -- I just don't recall why  
18          it was put down to me, but I honestly don't think that  
19          I had anything to do with this article.

20      Q.   I see.

21                 Were you given any -- any steer, one way or  
22          the other, as to whether or not you should get involved  
23          in something like writing an article for a group's  
24          publication?

25      A.   We weren't -- as far as I recall, we weren't given any

- 1           instructions either way.
- 2       Q.    Would there have been anything to prevent you writing an  
3            article for "Red Camden" in order to show that you were  
4            a member -- an active member of that organisation and  
5            maintain your cover?
- 6       A.    If I'd been asked to do something, I probably would have  
7            done, if I'd been asked by the chairman of the group  
8            that I belonged to; in this case Geoff Richman,  
9            I suppose.  But I don't know that I ever was.
- 10      Q.    And were you given any instructions as to whether or not  
11            you should try and influence the thinking or the actions  
12            of the group that you were reporting on?
- 13      A.    I don't know that I was ever given an instruction to  
14            that effect, but I certainly wouldn't have tried to  
15            influence them either way.
- 16      Q.    I think in those circumstances, 329, I won't in fact go  
17            any further with this article.
- 18      A.    If -- if I can just say that I -- I would feel that with  
19            me being away from the office, that this may well have  
20            been written by Conrad Dixon, and just put my name on it  
21            because I may have been at the meeting where this was  
22            all spoken about.  But I can honestly say that from  
23            the wording, the way it's written, it's not my style, is  
24            all I can say.
- 25      Q.    Do you know whether or not Conrad Dixon would have had

1 a view as to whether writing an article for "Red Camden"  
2 was for the purposes of maintaining your cover, or in  
3 order to influence the trajectory of the group, or both?

4 A. I have absolutely no idea. I don't even know  
5 the publication that it was printed in. I -- I've no  
6 knowledge of it at all.

7 Q. I see.

8 It's quite a long article, so I won't read it all  
9 into the transcript, but people following the Inquiry  
10 will be able to read it for themselves, because it will  
11 be published very shortly.

12 A. I would say, I think it's very well written, whoever  
13 did it.

14 Q. Thank you.

15 You describe Conrad Dixon as having been remembered  
16 by the Camden branch, and that he'd attended in  
17 the cover of wearing a yachtsman's outfit. Can you help  
18 us any further with what might have been said about  
19 Conrad Dixon by the Camden branch?

20 A. I know that he was very well liked, is all I can say,  
21 really. I don't know that anyone ever thought that he  
22 was anything other than a -- a good member.

23 Q. You describe the Camden VSC in terms which suggest they  
24 were revolutionary but they were not going to use  
25 violence to try and achieve their ends. Could you

1 describe in what sense you understood them to be  
2 revolutionary?

3 A. Well, they -- they wanted to change the government.

4 Q. And if they were not going to use violence, how  
5 were they going to seek a change of government?

6 A. To try and persuade people to their point of view.

7 Q. In addition to the branch meetings that you attended and  
8 reported on, there are some reports about -- which  
9 suggest you attended large VSC meetings, one of which is  
10 the meeting on 17 September 1968. Can you recall going  
11 to a large VSC meeting on 17 September 1968?

12 A. Well, I can't recall individual meetings at this  
13 distance, but I know we went to meetings at Conway Hall.

14 Q. Could we have up, please, <MPS-0738583>.

15 This is -- the report itself is dated 18 September.  
16 It's a VSC campaign October 27 Ad Hoc Committee meeting  
17 of the day before, 17 September. It doesn't actually  
18 say at the top of the page where it was held, but it was  
19 on the subject of "Why do we demonstrate?" Geoff Richman  
20 was there, amongst others.

21 Could you scroll down to the second half of  
22 the page, please.

23 You'll see there, 329, that 250 people are recorded  
24 as having attended.

25 And could we go over the page, please,

1 <MPS-0738583/2>. Thank you.

2 First of all, could we look at the bottom,  
3 counter-intuitively.

4 According to the report there were a number of  
5 police officers present. There was Chief  
6 Inspector Dixon, HN33, Detective Inspector Saunders,  
7 Detective Sergeant Wilson, Detective Sergeant Creamer,  
8 Detective Sergeant Fisher, Detective Constable Moss and  
9 yourself.

10 That is a lot of police officers to be attending  
11 a single meeting, and as I understand it, mainly SDS --  
12 members of the SDS. Can you help us as to why so many  
13 members of SDS attended this meeting?

14 A. I can only imagine -- I mean, there were quite a lot of  
15 people there. It may have been a question of -- that  
16 there was nothing else on, so people felt that they  
17 ought to be doing something.

18 And secondly, of course, that if major decisions  
19 were being made as to future action, the more people  
20 that had memories of it -- because you couldn't be  
21 making notes at the time, the more people there,  
22 the more people you had remembering things and  
23 identifying people present.

24 Q. Could we go to the top of the page, please. Under  
25 the heading "Remarks", it reads:

1           "Set speeches were made by persons listed overleaf  
2           in the order given. Most of them promoted the official  
3           line on the demonstrations as given at Sheffield, but  
4           Chris Harman suggested that Downing Street and  
5           the Foreign Office should be the objectives, while  
6           Barney Davies said that the YCL would not object to  
7           the march passing through Grosvenor Square.

8           "There then followed numerous contributions from  
9           the floor, accompanied by much heckling and  
10          interruption. The Maoists eventually forced a vote on  
11          the issue of having a demonstration on the 26th October  
12          directed at Downing Street, followed by one on the 27th  
13          October directed at Grosvenor Square. By 108 votes to  
14          70, this resolution was defeated and the meeting ended  
15          with no firm decision being taken."

16          Can you recall the Maoists being outvoted?

17        A. I can't remember details of the meetings. But any large  
18          meeting -- that that you've just read out, the last  
19          paragraph, would -- you could have put in any of  
20          the meetings of a large group, because there were so  
21          many different opinions from different groups.

22        Q. You say at paragraph 180 of your witness statement

23          <MPS-0738576/33>:

24          "I do not remember whether or not I voted in  
25          the ballot. I would imagine that I did if I attended

1 the meeting with my group as it would have risked  
2 compromising my cover and would have appeared odd if  
3 I sat there and did not vote with them."

4 Is that right?

5 A. I would imagine so, yes.

6 Q. Do you know whether or not that was also a practice that  
7 your colleagues would have followed?

8 A. I have no idea.

9 Q. Can you recall whether there was ever any risk that you  
10 might be involved in a vote where your vote could  
11 influence the outcome of events?

12 A. I doubt it.

13 Q. I think it's fair to say on the arithmetic of the vote  
14 we have just looked at, there is no prospect that your  
15 vote or that -- or any that your colleagues might have  
16 cast could have made a difference.

17 Would it have been a matter on your mind if voting  
18 in a group's ballot that you might be influencing  
19 the course of events?

20 A. No, I wouldn't have thought so, because it would only be  
21 at large meetings like that that votes were taken; and  
22 it's just a question of sticking your hand up with  
23 the majority once you knew which way the vote was going  
24 to go anyway.

25 Q. Can we take that document down, please, and can we go

1 back to the meeting of the report, the September report,  
2 which is <MPS-0738583/2>. Thank you very much. Could  
3 we go to the bottom of the page, please.

4 I just want to correct something I said. Apparently  
5 there is a mistake in one of the redactions. The second  
6 name in the list of officers present should be HN332,  
7 who was a detective inspector in the SDS. I'm just  
8 correcting that for the record, 329.

9 Can we now take that document down, please, and go  
10 to <MPS-0730768>. Thank you.

11 This is a report on a VSC meeting at Conway Hall on  
12 11 November 1968, reporting back on the October  
13 demonstration. You'll see from the top of the page  
14 there that Tariq Ali and Ernest Tate are both recorded  
15 as present.

16 Could you scroll down to the bottom of the page,  
17 please.

18 You'll see this was a large meeting, 100 people are  
19 recorded as being present.

20 And if we could go to page 2, please,  
21 <MPS-0730768/2> and first of all the bottom the page.

22 Again, this is a meeting at which there were  
23 a number of police officers present,  
24 Chief Inspector Dixon, TN34, yourself, HN326 and HN321.

25 Could you go to the top of page 2, please.

1 I'm going to read some sections from the "Remarks"  
2 box. It says:

3 "Tariq Ali introduced [privacy], who took the line  
4 that the State had 'backed down' from a confrontation  
5 with militant revolutionaries, and that  
6 the demonstration had been an enormous success. He was  
7 followed by [privacy] who gave a historical account of  
8 the Vietnam War and attempted to link Vietnam with  
9 racism. Tariq Ali then said that complacency was to be  
10 deplored, and that if the engineering strike had taken  
11 place a more militant demonstration could have occurred  
12 and revolution was a real possibility."

13 Can you recall Tariq Ali speaking at that meeting?

14 A. Not really.

15 Q. At this remove in time, are you able to help us as to  
16 whether or not this is likely to be an accurate account  
17 of what Tariq Ali said?

18 A. I would imagine so. Tariq Ali was always talking in  
19 those terms. And I think even today.

20 Q. When you write reports -- and I appreciate you may not  
21 have personally written this one --

22 A. I didn't, no.

23 Q. -- when you write reports, presumably you are having to  
24 paraphrase because you are writing them up some time  
25 after the event?

1 A. Indeed.

2 Q. We heard yesterday from Mr Ali, who denies speaking in  
3 the terms recorded in this report. Might he be right  
4 about that?

5 A. I shouldn't think so.

6 Q. Can we go now to a single report on the Anti Imperialist  
7 Solidarity Movement. It's at <MPS-0730765>.

8 Thank you.

9 This is the only report that we've found with your  
10 name on it that refers to this organisation. It's  
11 a report dated 4 November 1968 on the action committee  
12 of the Anti Imperialist Solidarity Movement, said to  
13 have taken place on 3 November 1968 at the Friars Hall,  
14 Blackfriars Road. And the subject of the meeting was  
15 the "Foundation of an Action Council for  
16 Anti-Imperialist Solidarity".

17 Could we scroll down, please.

18 You'll see there were 40 people recorded as  
19 initially attending, reducing to 20 by the close of  
20 the meeting, and the groups recorded are the Indian  
21 Workers Association.

22 Could we go over to the next page, please,  
23 <MPS-0730765/2>, and down to -- I'd like to see  
24 the penultimate paragraph, please.

25 The penultimate paragraph at the end of the report

1 of what happened at the meeting says:

2 "Baker had circulated all Leftist organisations with  
3 details of the meeting. Only the Indian Workers  
4 Association and Black Power sent representatives.  
5 (One-third of the people present were coloured. All  
6 left before the end)."

7 Why did you record the ethnic origin of the people  
8 attending the meeting?

9 A. Because that was the fact. I can't recall any other  
10 particular reason.

11 Q. And you've used the word "coloured". Why did you use  
12 that word?

13 A. We're talking about 50-odd years ago. It was probably  
14 a common phrase at the time.

15 Q. 329, that takes us to 11.15.

16 Sir, would now be a convenient time for a break?

17 A. I'm at your disposal.

18 MR BARR: 329, I'm afraid in this case when I use  
19 the word "sir" I'm actually referring to the Chairman of  
20 the Inquiry.

21 A. Oh, I see! Sorry.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Forgive me. We have to have a break of about  
23 15 minutes after about an hour and a quarter, so that  
24 the shorthand writers, who are taking down everything  
25 that is said, can recover their strength.

1 I have every expectation, Mr Barr, that HN329 will  
2 be finished before we break at 1 o'clock. Am I right?

3 MR BARR: Yes, you're absolutely right about that.

4 MS PURSER: Thank you very much, everyone. We will now take  
5 a break until 11.30.

6 HN329, you may now move into your break-out room.

7 Thank you.

8 (11.16 am)

9 (A short break)

10 (11.30 am)

11 MS PURSER: Welcome back, everyone. I will now hand over to  
12 the Chairman to continue proceedings.

13 Chairman.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

15 Mr Barr, may I first ensure that there is no one  
16 else in the room with HN329?

17 LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE: Sir, I'm leaving again.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

19 A. He's gone, sir.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, then please continue.

21 MR BARR: 329, I'd like to move now to the reports on  
22 the VSC's working committee that come right at the end  
23 of your deployment. One of those meetings took place in  
24 a private residence. It was a small meeting of  
25 the working committee. Was there any formality that you

- 1           needed to go through before attending a meeting at  
2           a private residence?
- 3       A.   Not to my knowledge.
- 4       Q.   Was that something that management spoke to you about at  
5           all?
- 6       A.   Not as I can recall.
- 7       Q.   The working committee itself was making decisions about  
8           forthcoming activities of the VSC.  How did you obtain  
9           access to the working committee?
- 10      A.   I can only presume I was invited.
- 11      Q.   Can you recall whether or not the fact that you had, by  
12           that stage, been attending VSC activities for  
13           approximately one year helped you to gain access to  
14           the working committee?
- 15      A.   I presume so.
- 16      Q.   And can you recall to what extent you participated in  
17           the activities and decisions of the working committee?
- 18      A.   I can't recall ever having said anything that would be  
19           construed as influencing the meeting.
- 20      Q.   But presumably, in a small meeting of a working  
21           committee, you would have had to say something?
- 22      A.   Oh yes.  I would imagine I probably agreed with  
23           the majority, which is the sensible, safest tactic.
- 24      Q.   And what happens when you get to an issue where  
25           the division of opinion is finely defined?

1 A. I've absolutely no idea. I can't recall of an occasion  
2 where that happened, but I would find one -- some way  
3 out by saying, "You make up your own minds".

4 Q. There's a single meeting from a VSC gathering in the --  
5 in Sheffield in May 1969 which, according to your  
6 witness statement, you recall attending?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Was there any particular formality that had to be gone  
9 through in order to work outside the Metropolitan Police  
10 district?

11 A. Not that I can recall.

12 Q. And was it common for SDS officers to work outside  
13 London?

14 A. I have absolutely no idea in those days. Everybody was  
15 working separately in their groups.

16 Q. Could I now ask for <MPS-0722099> to be brought up,  
17 please. And could we go to page 216, <MPS-0722099/216>.

18 This is a telegram from -- taken from the VSC file  
19 which, as you will see from the top left, was from you.  
20 It's dated 20 December 1968. It's addressed to  
21 the chief superintendent of Special Branch, and it says:

22 "During conversation following the meeting held at  
23 Conway Hall to celebrate the anniversary of the NLF,  
24 the following points came to light.

25 "1. On a Christmas Eve torchlight demonstration,

1           organised by the Action Council for Anti Imperialist  
2           Solidarity, will assemble on the Victoria Embankment  
3           outside Charing Cross underground station at 1830.  
4           The demonstrators will follow the following route:  
5           Northumberland Avenue; Trafalgar Square; Charing Cross  
6           Road; Oxford Street; North Audley Street; US Embassy;  
7           Hilton Hotel, where a poster parade will take place."

8           Did you attend this event?

9           A. What, the actual torchlight procession?

10          Q. Yes?

11          A. No, I don't think so.

12          Q. Can you help --

13          A. I don't remember anyway.

14          Q. Can you help us with what a "poster parade" means?

15          A. Well, it just means that some of the individuals will be  
16          carrying a poster stating their aims; like, you know,  
17          "US Out of Vietnam", or something of that sort.

18          Q. Paragraph 2 reads:

19                 "A public meeting will be held in Australia House on  
20                 Saturday, 11.1.69 at 11 (not known whether am or pm,  
21                 will clarify later), organised by the 'Australian and  
22                 New Zealanders Against the Vietnam War'. Following  
23                 which there will be a march down the Strand to the Savoy  
24                 Hotel where the Australian Prime Minister will be  
25                 staying."

1           Can you recall whether or not you attended this  
2           event?

3           A. I can remember very well, because I was ejected by one  
4           of their security, who took the opportunity to give me  
5           a punch in the ribs.

6           Q. Now, the account you give of this event in your witness  
7           statement is to the effect that you had joined others in  
8           pleading for someone else who was about to be ejected to  
9           be able to remain in the building. Can you expand upon  
10          what you did to prompt the security people to want to  
11          try to eject you?

12          A. Yes. The individual concerned -- I don't remember who  
13          it was -- got up and started shouting, and he was  
14          ejected, and I remember when others -- I wasn't  
15          the first of the group -- when others stood up and were  
16          shouting things, I also thought I'd better get to my  
17          feet. And I can remember saying, "Let him speak, let  
18          him speak."

19          Q. And what happened next?

20          A. Well, then I was grabbed by one of the security officers  
21          and dragged out. I sort of pretended to put up a bit of  
22          resistance, but not too much. And as I say, he -- he  
23          got a -- the opportunity of giving me a punch in  
24          the ribs.

25          Q. Why did you join in the protests and say, "Let him

1 speak"?

2 A. Well, I was part of the group, and if I had not stood up  
3 with the rest of them, I can imagine they'd want to know  
4 why. As to whether they found any sinister reason as to  
5 why I hadn't stood up would be up to them. I -- I can't  
6 say. But I didn't want to blow my cover, I suppose.

7 Q. And how disorderly was it?

8 A. Not very. Just a bit of shouting.

9 Q. Do you think the security were being heavy-handed?

10 A. With me they were.

11 I mean, some of the others, I seem to recall, left  
12 voluntarily. They weren't man-handled out but they left  
13 when the first one was carried out.

14 Q. I'm going to move on now to various observations in  
15 reports that we've got bearing your name. You've  
16 recorded on occasion anti-racist activity. Why did you  
17 record that sort of material in your reports?

18 A. I've no idea. Whether it was -- I mean, was it on an  
19 anti-racist demonstration, or ...?

20 Q. If you want to see it, I can pull one up.

21 If we can have <MPS-0730768>, please. And then if  
22 we can go to page 2, please -- I think this is  
23 a document we looked at earlier. <MPS-0730768/2>. And  
24 if you just enlarge that, please.

25 You'll see, in the passage that I read earlier about

1           what Tariq Ali was saying, the speaker that followed him  
2           is recorded as saying:

3                     "He was followed by [privacy] who gave a historical  
4           account of the Vietnam War and attempted to link Vietnam  
5           with racism."

6                     That's an example. Why would you have reported  
7           something like that?

8           A. Well, because it's what he -- what he said.

9           Q. And we showed you the report a little earlier where  
10          you'd reported on the ethnicity of those who'd attended.  
11          Is this part and parcel of the no-filtering approach, or  
12          was there a different reason for recording this sort of  
13          information?

14          A. No, you just gave an account of -- of the breakdown of  
15          the people that were attending.

16          Q. In another report you've described someone as having  
17          a "withered right-hand". What would have been your  
18          reason for recording something like that?

19          A. Well, because he did. It was a means of identification.  
20          If he turned up at a subsequent meeting of another  
21          organisation, whoever was reporting on that meeting  
22          would have something to go on if ...

23          Q. You've recorded somebody's apparent sexual orientation  
24          in a report, and you've expanded in your supplementary  
25          witness statement on why you did that. And you

1 suggested that the fact that homosexuality had recently  
2 been decriminalised at the time might have had some  
3 influence on reporting people's sexual orientation,  
4 actual or apparent. Is there else you want to add to  
5 that?

6 A. Not really.

7 Q. You have reported information about a child in your  
8 reports. Were there any restrictions or guidance about  
9 reporting on children?

10 A. I don't really understand the question.

11 Q. I can show you an example.

12 Could we have up, please <UCPI0000007697>. Thank  
13 you.

14 This is a report. It's got your name at the bottom.  
15 It's 16 May 1969. I'm going to read from the third  
16 paragraph. This appears to be about the Camden VSC:

17 "The position of Secretary will be taken by  
18 [privacy] [privacy]. The post of Treasurer, at present  
19 held by [privacy], will be taken by [privacy],  
20 the twelve year old son of [privacy]."

21 So, that's the context in which you've referred to  
22 a child in this report. Really, what I'm driving at,  
23 329, is was any caution taken in reporting on children?

24 A. Not to my knowledge.

25 Q. Did anyone ever give you any feedback about the content

1 of your SDS reports?

2 A. Not to -- not as far as I remember.

3 Q. You've referred in a report to the Labour Party --

4 was there any guidance about, or any feedback about

5 reporting on political parties that most people would

6 regard as utterly mainstream?

7 A. Not as far as I recall.

8 Q. Now, you give evidence in your first witness statement

9 and then in your supplementary statement about taking

10 a female out to dinner. Did you invite the female in

11 question out to dinner?

12 A. As far as I recall, I would imagine so.

13 Q. And I'd like to ask you a little more about why you did

14 that. Was this a person who attended the same group as

15 you?

16 A. As far as I recall.

17 Q. And how long had you known her?

18 A. I've no idea. As long as I was attending the group, at

19 a guess.

20 Q. What was the purpose of inviting her to dinner?

21 A. I can't recall, except possibly to keep in touch with

22 the group.

23 Q. Were you hoping to form a relationship -- a sufficiently

24 good relationship with her to be able to obtain more

25 information about the group?

- 1 A. I would imagine so.
- 2 Q. Was there any sexual temptation involved here?
- 3 A. Not at all.
- 4 Q. Did you tell your wife about this?
- 5 A. My wife has never been interested in what I did for  
6 a living, apart from the fact she knew I was a member of  
7 Special Branch. I may well have done. She certainly  
8 knows about, as far as this Inquiry is concerned.
- 9 Q. Was there any discussion about whether doing something  
10 like taking somebody for dinner was a good way to build  
11 a relationship with somebody in order to get more  
12 information from them?
- 13 A. Not as I recall.
- 14 Q. Do you know whether any of your colleagues did anything  
15 similar?
- 16 A. I have no idea.
- 17 Q. Can I ask you now about some of the administrative  
18 processes, and in particular how these reports that  
19 we've been looking at came to be written up.
- 20 You've said in your witness statement that you  
21 recall there being a typewriter in the SDS flat. Did  
22 you use that to type up reports?
- 23 A. I can't recall a specific occasion, but I imagine  
24 I would have done.
- 25 Q. Can you recall whether your colleagues did that?

- 1       A.  Again, I would imagine they did, but I have no  
2       recollection.
- 3       Q.  The Special Branch -- the intelligence reports typically  
4       have lists at the end of them with people's identities  
5       and references to files -- Special Branch files.  Who  
6       added the file references to the reports?
- 7       A.  I've no idea, unless the person originating the report  
8       did so at the time.
- 9       Q.  Did you ever do that?
- 10      A.  I can't recall a specific instance, but I -- I would  
11      imagine that if there was a report with my signature on,  
12      then I did.
- 13      Q.  But did you get any assistance from the people in  
14      the back office with research tasks, calling out files  
15      and things like that?
- 16      A.  Again, I can't recall, but I would imagine I did.
- 17      Q.  What sort of volume of reporting can you recall  
18      producing?
- 19      A.  Again, I have no recollection.  I would have reported on  
20      every meeting that I attended, unless there was a senior  
21      officer present who did the report, and I would then  
22      feed any information that I'd gleaned to include in  
23      the report.
- 24      Q.  You have said in a number of places in your witness  
25      statements that you only signed documents that you

1           produced?

2       A.   That's correct.

3       Q.   Do you know whether your colleagues also followed

4           the same practice or not?

5       A.   I have absolutely no idea.

6       Q.   Can you recall whether you ever telephoned intelligence

7           into the SDS office or other parts of the police?

8       A.   I'm sure I did.  You -- there was one just produced that

9           you put up on the screen a few minutes ago.

10      Q.   How common was that practice?

11      A.   I've -- in my case, or in -- generally?

12      Q.   In your case, please.

13      A.   In my case, if I was unable to get back to the office to

14           submit a written report before something became

15           actionable, I -- I would imagine that, you know --

16           I can't recall a particular occurrence, but it would

17           happen where something was imminent.  Before I could get

18           back to put it in writing, it would be necessary to

19           phone the information in.

20      Q.   Are you able to say how common this was generally?

21      A.   No.  No.

22      Q.   Now, my next question, it's very important that you

23           don't give any details if the answer is yes.  We'll take

24           this a step at a time.

25           Were there any occasions where you signed a report

1 with intelligence purporting to come from the SDS which  
2 was not yours?

3 A. I can't recall, but it's quite possible.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 Was there any occasion when you signed a report that  
6 was purporting to be your intelligence but was in fact  
7 the intelligence of another SDS officer?

8 A. Only if I was privy to knowing that the intelligence was  
9 in fact correct.

10 Q. And was that done -- would you be signing on their  
11 behalf, or would the report look as if it was your  
12 intelligence when it was in fact somebody else's  
13 intelligence?

14 A. I -- I can't recall. Quite -- quite possibly both  
15 circumstances would apply.

16 All I can say is that I wouldn't have signed  
17 anything that I didn't know to be true.

18 Q. Thank you.

19 Can we now go to the squad structure within  
20 Special Branch.

21 At the time that you were a member of the SDS, can  
22 you remember which of the Special Branch squads, if any,  
23 the SDS fell within?

24 A. Not really, no. I assumed it was completely separate.

25 Q. Again, without giving any particular details to start

- 1 with, can you remember what interaction there was  
2 between the SDS and C Squad?
- 3 A. I've absolutely no idea, unless our reports, once they'd  
4 gone through Conrad Dixon, were then fed through  
5 C Squad.
- 6 Q. You served, I understand, on C Squad at some point in  
7 time. Can you recall whether C Squad, when you were  
8 working on C Squad, received SDS intelligence?
- 9 A. I've absolutely no idea.
- 10 Q. Can I ask you now generally about your experience  
11 reporting on the VSC. You've described one instance  
12 where you were the victim of violence yourself. Other  
13 than that, did you see any violence whilst infiltrating  
14 the VSC?
- 15 A. Not that I can recall.
- 16 Q. Did you witness any public disorder?
- 17 A. Again, on fringes of demonstrations there were always  
18 individuals who wanted to provoke a bit of violence.  
19 But not specifically.
- 20 Q. Can you give us an indication of what level of severity  
21 we're talking about?
- 22 A. No, just persons resisting arrest, probably.
- 23 Q. Was the VSC as an organisation inciting disorder when  
24 you were infiltrating it?
- 25 A. No.

1 Q. Were members of the VSC committing criminal offences to  
2 further their political aims while you were infiltrating  
3 them?

4 A. Not -- not to my knowledge.

5 Q. Did you attend the October demonstration?

6 A. Which was --

7 Q. October 1968.

8 A. Was I on -- I was on the SDS at the time?

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. Yes, then I must have done.

11 Yes, the big march, that's right. We started at  
12 Charing Cross, I'm sorry.

13 Q. Don't worry.

14 What was your recollection of how that passed off?

15 A. As far as I remember, it went very smoothly and we all  
16 ended up tired in Hyde Park.

17 Q. I'm going to ask you a question about one of your  
18 colleagues now, a specific question. It's about HN135,  
19 whose real name was Mike Ferguson. My question is  
20 specific -- my first question is specifically about  
21 the Stop the Seventy Tour campaign, sometimes known,  
22 I understand, by the acronym "STST".

23 Do you know whether HN135 assumed any position of  
24 responsibility within the STST?

25 A. I've absolutely no idea.

1 Q. Do you know whether HN135 assumed any position of  
2 responsibility within the Anti-Apartheid Movement?

3 A. Again, is this Mike Ferguson you're talking about?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. I have absolutely no idea.

6 Q. Moving now to a completely different topic, I want to  
7 ask you about the way in which the SDS flat was used.  
8 You've described in your witness statement attending it  
9 daily or near daily. For what purposes were you using  
10 it?

11 A. Well, it was just, you know, as police officers, if we  
12 were supposed to be working, we had to be -- had to turn  
13 up from home. And if we were in between meetings or  
14 whatever that we were allocated to, it was just a --  
15 a place where we could be contacted all together. This  
16 was in the days before mobile phones, so ...

17 Q. Was it common for you then to be at the SDS flat in  
18 company of other members of the SDS?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And were there times when the SDS managers were present  
21 as well?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. How frequently was that?

24 A. I don't recall, but fairly frequently.

25 Q. And presumably, if you were all sharing the flat

1           together and working from it, you would talk to one  
2           another?

3       A.   Indeed.

4       Q.   And you'd talk to one another about what you were doing  
5           and your work?

6       A.   In broad terms.

7       Q.   Was there a sharing of ideas about how to go about your  
8           work?

9       A.   Not that I recall.

10      Q.   That if people were having a problem, that they might  
11         raise it and ask for thoughts or advice?

12      A.   Oh, I would assume so, but I don't recall any specific  
13         instance.

14      Q.   And did you socialise with your fellow members of  
15         the SDS?

16      A.   At the flat, or elsewhere?

17      Q.   Either.

18      A.   Well, at the flat, because we were all together in  
19         the -- you know, someone was making a coffee, they would  
20         obviously ask if anybody else wanted a coffee, and we  
21         would talk together and maybe play cards.

22      Q.   And what was the ethos within the unit? Were you open  
23         with one another, or secretive with one another?

24      A.   In the main, I suppose we were open.

25      Q.   Moving to the topic of welfare, you've said that there

1           were no arrangements for monitoring welfare in your  
2           witness statements.  You've also said that your  
3           deployment had no long-term effects on you.

4                     Were you at all concerned that there were no formal  
5           welfare arrangements?

6           A.  No.

7           Q.  Did you feel that if you had needed help, it would have  
8           been available?

9           A.  I would imagine so.

10          Q.  Did you find pretending to be somebody else stressful?

11          A.  No.

12          Q.  You've told us in your witness statement that the way  
13          you conducted your deployment was such that you lived at  
14          home except for when you went on the one trip to  
15          Sheffield.  Do you think that helped you stay grounded  
16          and helped with your welfare?

17          A.  I don't know that it would have had any effect.  I --  
18          I spent some time on -- on another job within the branch  
19          that took me away from home for some period of time.  It  
20          didn't affect me and didn't affect my wife particularly.  
21          To my knowledge anyway.

22          Q.  Can I ask you now about the evidence you've given in  
23          your statements about HN68 and HN331 being convicted for  
24          flyposting, is your recollection.  The question I have  
25          for you is, do you know whether the court was aware of

1 the real identities of those defendants?

2 A. That is beyond my knowledge.

3 Q. Could we now have up, please, <MPS-0724119>. Can we go  
4 to page 8, please, <MPS-0724119/8>.

5 This is a discussion paper prepared by Conrad Dixon  
6 in November 1968, entitled "The Penetration of Extremist  
7 Groups". There are two appendices. The first one is up  
8 on the screen now and has got a diagram showing  
9 the proposed organisation of a unit to conduct the sort  
10 of work that the SDS was conducting. It has, on  
11 the right-hand side, at detective inspector level,  
12 a post entitled "Press and Liaison".

13 Was there a detective inspector assigned to press  
14 and liaison when you were a member of the SDS?

15 A. I have no idea.

16 Q. Can we move now to page 9, please, <MPS-0724119/9>.

17 At the top of the page you see the more senior  
18 officers. The third row down is Detective Inspector  
19 Wilson, who we understand to be Detective Inspector  
20 Riby Wilson, under the duty "press and informants".

21 Can I ask you first of all that -- this is supposed  
22 to be an appendix showing the membership of the SDS.  
23 Your recollection in your witness statement is that  
24 Riby Wilson wasn't a member of the SDS. Now that you  
25 see this document, does that change your mind or your

1           recollection?

2       A.  Not really.  I mean, he -- he was -- he was at

3           Scotland Yard, not with us.  I don't recall him being

4           actively involved, put it that way.

5       Q.  Might he have been a member of the SDS but in a capacity

6           which meant he did not work from the SDS flat?

7       A.  Oh yes.  Quite possibly.

8       Q.  His duty is described, as I've said, as "press and

9           informants".  Are you able to assist us as to what his

10          duties were?

11      A.  Not at all.

12      Q.  Can I ask you one further final question.  What is your

13          view, looking back, of the unit that you served with and

14          its members?

15      A.  Can I just go back to -- to that bit about Riby Wilson?

16      Q.  Yes, of course.

17      A.  On the right-hand side, it does actually say "Not

18          involved operationally ..." And this would -- of course

19          would have contributed to me assuming that he wasn't

20          part of the SDS.

21      Q.  Indeed.

22      A.  Yes.  Sorry.

23      Q.  My final question was just asking you what your view,

24          looking back now, was of your membership of the SDS and

25          the people with whom you served?

1           A. The -- the original group, from Conrad Dixon down, were  
2           the finest representatives of Special Branch. And they  
3           were excellent officers who did exactly the proper job,  
4           is what I wanted to say. They -- we were there, in this  
5           particular case, to prevent the uniformed police being  
6           damaged in the way they were at that original  
7           demonstration when they were totally unprepared; and we  
8           were to provide evidence to prevent that happening  
9           again. And that, I know for a fact, is what we did in  
10          that first instance.

11                 Beyond my time on the SDS, I have no knowledge as to  
12          what happened, I wasn't involved with them at all, and  
13          I was working on another extraneous job.

14          MR BARR: 329, if you could just wait there, there may be  
15          some more questions for you.

16          A. Thank you.

17          THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Skelton?

18          MR BARR: Sir, before Mr Skelton, I understand that Mr Menon  
19          wishes to make an application.

20          THE CHAIRMAN: Very well.

21                 Bear with us while Mr Menon makes an application.

22                 Thank you.

23                 Mr Menon.

24                         Application by MR MENON

25          MR MENON: Good afternoon, sir.

1           I apply pursuant to rule 10, subsection 3,  
2           alternatively subsection 4, of the permission to ask  
3           questions of this witness. I will be brief, if I'm  
4           given permission.

5           My questions fall into three categories: firstly,  
6           topics that haven't been covered at all by  
7           Counsel to the Inquiry; secondly, topics that have been  
8           covered but where there are follow-up questions that  
9           I would, with your permission, be allowed to ask; and,  
10          thirdly, questions that arise not from matters that are  
11          in the witness's statement, but from matters that he has  
12          given in evidence today fresh for the first time.

13          I hope that you'll give me the permission that  
14          I seek to do this. I -- I repeat, I will be brief. It  
15          will be quicker and more efficient, in my submission,  
16          for me to do it this way, as opposed to for us to now  
17          have a break for me to have a discussion with Mr Barr  
18          and to try to persuade him to ask the questions that  
19          I wish to ask.

20          And in the wider context of concerns, if I can put  
21          it as neutrally as I can, that have been expressed by  
22          many about the effective participation of the non-state  
23          core participants, I hope that you will allow me to ask  
24          just a few questions of this witness.

25          THE CHAIRMAN: You have already submitted your suggested

1           topics to Mr Barr, I think, have you not?

2           MR MENON: Yes, I complied with the protocol that you put in  
3           force and submitted a list of issues and topics that  
4           I wish to ask this witness about. And I received, this  
5           morning, a reply from the Inquiry as to its attitude to  
6           the pro forma that I submitted.

7           But a number of matters that I had hoped would be  
8           asked haven't been asked, and hence my oral application.

9           THE CHAIRMAN: What topics do you want to ask about?

10          MR MENON: I want to ask about the following topics:

11                 Firstly, the motivations, and in particular  
12                 the political motivations, of the SDS in those early  
13                 months.

14                 Secondly, further questions about the selection and  
15                 targeting of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, and  
16                 questions specifically about what HN329 was told, beyond  
17                 what he's already said, in relation to why the VSC was  
18                 being targeted, and who and what he was supposed to do  
19                 when he started attending these meetings.

20                 Thirdly, further questions about the general  
21                 methodology of the SDS and what exactly happened at  
22                 those daily, or nearly daily, meetings that were taking  
23                 place at the SDS safe house before officers went into  
24                 the field, so to speak, to attend meetings of different  
25                 groups that almost certainly would have taken place in

1 the evening. So they were effectively spending most of  
2 the day in this house. And HN329 has been asked  
3 a little bit about it, but I'd like to ask further  
4 questions in relation to that.

5 I'd like to ask further questions, if I may, about  
6 what information this particular witness gathered during  
7 the many -- from the many meetings that he attended,  
8 that he believes resulted in the October 1968  
9 demonstration not being a violent public disorder as  
10 the March 1968 demonstration had been.

11 I'd like to ask questions about Box 500, which, as  
12 you know, features regularly on intelligence reports  
13 produced by officers during this period.

14 And one final matter in relation to one of  
15 the documents that Mr Barr showed the witness in  
16 relation to a meeting attended by this witness.

17 So you can see my questions cover a range of topics.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry, what was the latter topic? The last  
19 topic?

20 MR MENON: The last topic was, there is one further matter  
21 I wanted to ask HN329 about in relation to the meeting  
22 that he attended along with eight other  
23 undercover police officers, where a vote was taken in  
24 relation to the details of the October 1968 march.

25 And I notice that we have plenty of time before we

1           are to hear the statement of Ernie Tate read at  
2           2 o'clock by Nick Stanage, and I'll be finished well  
3           before that time, with plenty of time for Mr Skelton to  
4           ask further questions arising from anything that I ask.

5       THE CHAIRMAN: That may be so, but I have to keep order in  
6       the proceedings and to ensure not merely that this  
7       witness is not troubled by questions that have already  
8       adequately been covered by Mr Barr and by his statement  
9       and by the documents, but also that this does not set  
10      a precedent for future such requests.

11           Of the seven topics that you have given to me, one  
12          and one only may give rise to a question that can  
13          rightly be posed to this witness, and that is the last  
14          one: the meeting where the vote was taken about  
15          the route that was to be adopted on 27 October. You may  
16          ask about that, but not about other topics.

17       MR MENON: But, sir, I've highlighted --

18       THE CHAIRMAN: You may ask about that but not other topics.

19           That is my ruling.

20       MR MENON: Very well, sir. Can I make it clear that

21           I cannot understand --

22       THE CHAIRMAN: No, you may not. I'm sorry. You may ask  
23          your questions, or you will be silenced.

24                           Questions by MR MENON

25       MR MENON: Very well.

1           Well, can I refer to you as "329"? I'm afraid  
2           I don't know your real name, so are you happy with that,  
3           officer?

4           Hello?

5           A. Yes.

6           Q. Are you happy with me to refer to you as "329"?

7           A. Of course.

8           Q. Can we have on the screen, please, <MPS-0738583>.

9           You'll recall you were taken to this document  
10          before.

11          Can we go down, please, to the bottom. Sorry, can  
12          we go up a bit, please. The page above, please.

13          Just a moment, please. Yes, thank you. That's  
14          the page I was looking for. <MPS-0738583/2>.

15          329, you can see that you were one of nine police  
16          officers who attended this meeting. Do you see that?

17          A. Yes.

18          Q. And you remember you were asked about this in relation  
19          to a vote being taken at this meeting?

20          A. Yes.

21          Q. And you indicated that you must have voted because if  
22          you hadn't voted, then you would have stood out like  
23          a sore thumb?

24          A. Yes, I cannot recall whether I actually voted or not,  
25          but I would have assumed that I would have put my hand

1 up with the majority.

2 Q. And I'm assuming that that -- when you returned to your  
3 safe house that day or the day after, that you would  
4 have discussed with the other officers who attended that  
5 meeting how you had all voted on this resolution?

6 A. No.

7 Q. What, you never had a discussion about that?

8 A. I don't remember whether we ever did.

9 Q. Did you vote in favour of the Maoists at that meeting?

10 A. I've no idea. I shouldn't have thought so.

11 Q. Why do you say you shouldn't have thought so?

12 A. Well, our group was a bit anti-Maoist.

13 Q. Yes, I appreciate that, but you weren't exactly in  
14 favour of the other side of the vote either, were you?

15 A. Well, I mean, as far as -- are you talking about  
16 Americans in Vietnam, for instance?

17 Q. Well, I'm talking about -- well, this was a meeting of  
18 the VSC where a discussion was taking place as to  
19 whether the demonstration should go past  
20 Grosvenor Square (inaudible) --

21 A. Sorry, you're breaking up there.

22 Q. Sorry, did you hear me?

23 A. Sorry, you're breaking up.

24 Q. Okay, can we go up one page, please, so we can just see  
25 the content of the minutes. <MPS-0738583/2>. The two

1 paragraphs, the substantive paragraphs the note.

2 Just read that to yourself, 329, please.

3 Have you read it?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. The vote was as to whether the march should go to  
6 Grosvenor Square or not, wasn't it?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And so my question is, do you know how the nine officers  
9 who attended that meeting voted on this resolution?

10 A. I've no idea. They were all -- (overspeaking) --

11 Q. Are you saying you never discussed it subsequently --  
12 (overspeaking) --

13 A. No -- (overspeaking) --

14 Q. -- after you went to your safe house, as to how you'd  
15 voted?

16 A. No, because after -- after this meeting, I should  
17 imagine we all went home, went our separate ways without  
18 contact with each other. And then the following day,  
19 some -- you know, some of the officers may have been  
20 present at the flat. I mean, one of them there --  
21 what's his name? -- Saunders, would not have come to  
22 the flat anyway.

23 Q. But -- (overspeaking) --

24 A. Or Roy Creamer, or even Dave Fisher.

25 Q. But when you prepared your reports after you attended

1 events like this, wouldn't you have had debriefings of  
2 any kind, with your fellow officers or with your  
3 superior officers?

4 A. I honestly don't remember. We would have submitted  
5 individually -- the report, as you can see, was signed  
6 by Conrad Dixon. And we would have assisted at some  
7 stage with identifying people. But if he was present at  
8 the meeting, the gist of the meeting would have been his  
9 report. You know, what happened is factual to all of  
10 us; so there's nothing to add, except identifying people  
11 concerned.

12 MR MENON: Thank you.

13 Given that's all I'm allowed to ask, that's all  
14 I ask.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

16 Mr Skelton?

17 MR SKELTON: No questions. Thank you, sir.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

19 Then proceedings for this morning's session will now  
20 end and we will resume at 2 o'clock.

21 MS PURSER: Thank you very much, everyone. That concludes  
22 this morning's session. We will be back at 2 pm. You  
23 may now go into your break-out rooms.

24 (12.20 pm)

25 (The short adjournment)

1 (2.00 pm)

2 MS PURSER: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to  
3 the afternoon session of today's evidential hearings.  
4 For those of you in the virtual hearing room, please can  
5 I remind you to turn off both your camera and video  
6 unless you are invited to speak by the Chairman.

7 I will now hand over to our Chairman,  
8 Sir John Mitting, to continue proceedings.  
9 Chairman.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, those of you who are expecting  
11 the fourth replaying of the recording made earlier this  
12 year will be either pleased or disappointed to hear that  
13 it is not going to be played this afternoon. The reason  
14 for that is that this afternoon's proceedings, which  
15 will consist of the reading of evidence and  
16 the summarising of evidence, will be live-streamed.

17 Mr Stanage.

18 MR STANAGE: Chair, thank you. Can I check that you can  
19 hear me?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: I can indeed. And you are, I hope, on  
21 screen. You are in my case on full screen.

22 Witness statement of ERNEST ARMSTRONG TATE by MR STANAGE

23 MR STANAGE: Very well.

24 I'm asked to read the statement of Ernest Armstrong  
25 Tate. It's a statement made on 31 January 2020. I, led

1 by Rajiv Menon QC and instructed by Richard Parry of  
2 Saunders, solicitors, represent Ernest Tate in this  
3 Inquiry.

4 The statement says as follows, sir:

5 "I'm now 85 years old, being born in Belfast,  
6 Northern Ireland, in 1934. I have both British and  
7 Irish nationality by birth. I emigrated to Canada at  
8 the age of 21 in 1955, and also have Canadian  
9 nationality. In my professional career I worked for  
10 many years in energy management for a major Toronto  
11 public utility.

12 "In 1976, I graduated in mechanical engineering from  
13 what is now Ryerson University in Toronto. I've been  
14 politically active all my life and I've written an  
15 account of my political activism in the 1950s and 1960s  
16 in my two-volume memoirs.

17 "This relates to my work as a member of  
18 The International Group, a section of  
19 the Fourth International, as founded by Leon Trotsky in  
20 1938 before his assassination, which became, in Britain,  
21 the International Marxist Group, IMG.

22 "I was in Britain for almost five years between 1965  
23 and 1969, and was heavily involved in the Vietnam  
24 Solidarity Campaign, VSC, which was set up in 1966.  
25 Since returning to Canada in 1969, I've been heavily

1 involved in the trade unions; and for many years I was  
2 chief steward and vice president of a major local of  
3 the Canadian Union of Public Employees. I'm now retired  
4 and living in Toronto.

5 "I make this statement pursuant to a request made  
6 under Rule 9 of the Inquiries Act, dated  
7 6 December 2019. I received the request and  
8 the accompanying witness pack on 2 January 2020. I've  
9 been asked to file my witness statement by  
10 31 January 2020.

11 "I note that the contents of the witness pack  
12 consist of 23 Special Branch SB intelligence reports  
13 dated between 8 February 1968 and 3 February 1969, in  
14 which my name is mentioned. There are reports based on  
15 activity of officers of the Metropolitan Police  
16 Special Branch Unit, called the  
17 'Special Operations Squad', SOS, only later renamed  
18 the 'Special Demonstration Squad', SDS, in 1972 to 1973,  
19 set up in 1968 and funded directly by the Home Office  
20 under James Callaghan, Secretary of State in the Labour  
21 government, headed by Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

22 "I note that my SB registry file, or RF, reference  
23 is given as 402/66/4051, which I presume to mean a file  
24 was opened on me in 1966. I understand that  
25 Special Branch intelligence reports would routinely be

1 passed to MI5, now known as the Security Service, and  
2 that my full file remains 'Top Secret', despite the fact  
3 that I left the UK in 1970, some 50 years ago. It is  
4 therefore the case that the few reports disclosed to me  
5 in this public inquiry are only a fraction of the secret  
6 surveillance files held on me, held on the International  
7 Marxist Group, RF400/68/182, of which I was a full time  
8 organiser, and the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign,  
9 RF346/65/15, in which I was also heavily involved.

10 "To compound the lack of disclosure, the public  
11 inquiry has decided not to disclose to me any of  
12 the witness statements made by any of the SOS officers  
13 who spied on me, or any statements from managers or an  
14 appropriate officer who could provide evidence on behalf  
15 of a deceased officer. There are no photographs  
16 provided of any officer except for chief inspector  
17 Conrad Dixon, who I understand was head of the small SOS  
18 unit at the time, 1968 to 1969.

19 "The undercover officers who have been identified  
20 who spied on me appear to be as follows: TN0039, Chief  
21 Inspector Conrad Dixon; HN299/342 named David Hughes,  
22 albeit he is stated on the UCPI website as being  
23 deployed only from 1971; HN321, named  
24 William Paul Lewis; HN329, named John Graham; HN326  
25 named Doug Edwards; and also HN332, whose details do not

1 yet appear on the UCPI website.

2 "Further, the Metropolitan Police have not been  
3 asked by the Inquiry to provide position statements,  
4 which would set out exactly why SOS was set up, what its  
5 operational parameters were, why it was necessary to  
6 begin more intrusive surveillance, including forming  
7 intimate relationships with targets when it had done  
8 previously, and also why it was allowed to continue to  
9 operate after the 27 October 1968 Vietnam Solidarity  
10 Campaign demonstration had passed off largely  
11 peacefully.

12 "As at the time of submitting this witness  
13 statement, I can only assume that the Home Office and  
14 the Metropolitan Police, both of whom are represented at  
15 the inquiry, funded by taxpayers' money, will argue that  
16 this intrusive surveillance, a clear breach of the basic  
17 human right to privacy, was justified due to a threat of  
18 serious violence from those groups or individuals spied  
19 on. However, given the huge extent of pre-existing  
20 spying by MI5 and Special Branch on political and peace  
21 activists, including, for example, Bertrand Russell, the  
22 well known British philosopher, it seems to me that  
23 the creation of SOS in 1968 is merely a reflection of  
24 existing policy, without any care at all for people's  
25 basic human rights.

1           "One of the key overarching issues identified by  
2 the Inquiry in their 'List of Issues for SDS' is  
3 'Targeting and initial authorisation' -- what was  
4 the principal purpose of each deployment? What  
5 criminality, if any, was it intended to detect, disrupt  
6 or prevent? And to what extent were these  
7 authorisations justified at the time they were made --  
8 and, one might add, whether there was any continued  
9 justification further down the line. In addition, there  
10 is of course the whole question of the conduct of  
11 individual officers once deployed.

12           "Insofar as any state agencies will represent that  
13 there was a threat of violence from the individuals  
14 and/or groups put under surveillance by  
15 undercover officers, I profoundly disagree with (a)  
16 the notion that I, the VSC or the IMG threatened  
17 violence, especially serious violence; I profoundly  
18 disagree with (b) the notion that I, or the VSC or  
19 the IMG should have been targeted because, although  
20 opposed to violence, infiltration would allow the police  
21 to monitor others, ie the argument that collateral  
22 intrusion is justified; I profoundly disagree with (c)  
23 the notion that even the threat of relatively mild  
24 disorder would justify the gross invasion of privacy  
25 that undercover infiltration entailed, ie it was

1 a tactic that was grossly disproportionate to its aims.

2 "It is also apparent that after the October 1968 VSC  
3 demonstration had passed off relatively peacefully,  
4 the SOS should have been disbanded, having served its  
5 purpose, which was explicitly, as I understand it, to go  
6 undercover in order to gather intelligence in advance of  
7 that demonstration. It should never have morphed into  
8 a unit that infiltrated hundreds of groups and spied on  
9 individuals in such an intrusive way.

10 "It is my position that there is no justification  
11 for the gross intrusion by the police into people's  
12 private lives on the basis that a person's or group's  
13 politics is frowned upon by the state, unless there's  
14 a real, not fanciful, threat of serious violence.  
15 I believe that Article 8 of the European Convention of  
16 Human Rights concerning respect for privacy, private and  
17 family life should be read back into the situation  
18 existing in 1968 to 1969.

19 "I understand that Special Branch records from 1887  
20 onwards are subject to almost complete secrecy  
21 regardless of age, and such an approach has been upheld  
22 by the Information Commissioner. Some documents were  
23 obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request by  
24 journalist Solomon Hughes ten years ago, in an attempt  
25 to establish what happened in 1968, and these were put

1 onto a website (the Special Branch Files Project); for  
2 the purposes of this public inquiry, some documents have  
3 been declassified from 'Top Secret' status and have been  
4 disclosed to core participants. Nevertheless,  
5 the disclosure remains very partial. In my view, it  
6 would be difficult for me, and other core participants,  
7 to counter any narrative given by the Home Office and  
8 the Metropolitan Police concerning what happened from  
9 1968 to 2008 given the limited disclosure.

10 "I'm now asked to cooperate on this basis and answer  
11 some very targeted questions in the Rule 9 request on  
12 the basis of the selective disclosure supplied. It is  
13 clear in my mind that these questions focus very  
14 narrowly on the issue of violence, hence it appears to  
15 me that this will be the justification used by those in  
16 charge of SDS throughout the period, although we may not  
17 get to fully explore this until Module 6.

18 "The other major interested parties,  
19 the Metropolitan Police and the Home Office, who oversaw  
20 the wrongdoing of SDS officers, have full access to  
21 every file they want.

22 "In contrast to the clandestine and secretive nature  
23 of the British state, I have written two published  
24 volumes about my activities as a political activist in  
25 the years in question: the titles 'Revolutionary

1 Activism in the 1950s and 60s', Ernest Tate, A Memoir  
2 (volume 1 Canada 1955 to 1965, Volume 2, Britain 1965 to  
3 1970) published by Resistance Books, London, 2014.

4 "The Inquiry, the police and members of the public  
5 can read what I've written about my activities. I have  
6 nothing to hide.

7 "And then, Chair, there are a series of Rule 9  
8 questions that are answered by Mr Tate, and I shall read  
9 the question and the answer.

10 "Personal details:

11 "Please give your full name and date of birth.

12 "Answer: Ernest Armstrong Tate, 24 May 1934.

13 "Political activism.

14 "Question 2: Please outline your political  
15 activities as a member of the Vietnam Solidarity  
16 Committee, including dates and positions of  
17 responsibility held. In particular.

18 "Question 2.1: Is the Inquiry correct to understand  
19 that you were a member of the National Council of  
20 the VSC? If so, between what dates did you have a seat  
21 on the National Council? And what did this role entail?

22 "Answer: it was never called the  
23 'Vietnam Solidarity Committee'; it was called the  
24 'Vietnam Solidarity Campaign': see page 71, Volume 2, of  
25 my memoir, 'Revolutionary Activism in the 1950s and

1 1960s', published in 2014 by Resistance Books, London.

2 I also co-wrote with Phil Hearse an 11-page paper  
3 entitled 'The Building of the Vietnam Solidarity  
4 Campaign and its Consequences for the British Left',  
5 dated 17 February 2016, and posted on Marxsite.  
6 The paper was delivered at a conference at  
7 the University of East Anglia in 2016.

8 "I was one of the VSC's founders. It was founded on  
9 June 4-5, 1966. I was a member of its National Council  
10 and its executive committee from that date on until  
11 April 1969. The executive committee, a subcommittee of  
12 the National Council, provided leadership to the VSC  
13 between National Council meetings, and was responsible  
14 for its national functioning on a day-to-day basis.  
15 I wrote for it and spoke often on its behalf on various  
16 public platforms and helped to formulate policy.

17 "Question 2.2: Did you work in the VSC's London  
18 office?

19 "Answer: No.

20 "Question 2.3: What were the aims of the VSC?

21 "Answer: To build a solidarity campaign with  
22 the Vietnamese against the American aggression, calling  
23 for its immediate end and the withdrawal of all of  
24 American forces and the end of British collusion with  
25 the Americans. It also called for support for

1 the Vietnamese National Liberation Front.

2 "Question 2.4: What methods did the VSC use to  
3 advance its aims?

4 "Answer: Mainly through building broad united-front  
5 coalitions of like-minded organisations and individuals  
6 to build mass mobilisations on the streets against  
7 the war.

8 "Question 2.5: Did the VSC vet its members?

9 "Answer: No. All that was required was for members  
10 to agree with the position stated above in the answer  
11 I gave to question 2.3. Note that the political debates  
12 were quite open, and as a result, at the founding  
13 conference in 1966 a large number of Maoist delegates  
14 withdrew to a separate location and formed the rival  
15 Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front, or BVSF.  
16 The anarchists, too, held separate conferences, as they  
17 had a slogan 'Neither Washington nor Hanoi'.

18 "Question 2.6: Did the VSC take other security  
19 precautions to keep its plans, tactics or other matters  
20 confidential? If so, please explain.

21 "Answer: No. All business and policy meetings were  
22 open to all members but closed to the public.

23 "Question 2.7: Was the VSC concerned about  
24 infiltration by the police or others? If so, please  
25 explain why.

1           "Answer: It was never an issue. We knew the police  
2 were interested in what we were doing, but because we  
3 were not doing anything illegal, we explicitly warned  
4 our members against pointing fingers of suspicion at  
5 anyone based solely upon rumours and innuendo. We were  
6 too well aware of the long history of the working class  
7 where the police and the employers and malicious  
8 factions have used this vicious tactic for their own  
9 ends to help split and destroy the movement.

10           "Question 2.8: Did you attend the March 1968 VSC  
11 demonstration? If so, was violence planned and by whom?  
12 What violence did you witness?

13           "Answer: Yes. No violence was planned by the main  
14 organisers, the VSC. My memory is, and I write about  
15 this in my memoir, volume 2, page 243, that when  
16 the tens of thousands that day attempted to enter  
17 Grosvenor Square, they were met by hundreds, if not  
18 thousands, of uniformed police, many on horseback, who,  
19 in a very aggressive manner, tried to prevent them  
20 getting near the American Embassy. As a result, and  
21 regrettably, violence erupted, with many police and  
22 demonstrators injured and/or arrested. I hold  
23 the police responsible for that.

24           "Question 3: Were you also a member, or a supporter  
25 of, the International Marxist Group in the period 1968

1 to 1969?

2 "Answer: Yes.

3 "Question 3.1: If so, what role and/or positions of  
4 responsibility did you hold in 1968 to 1969?

5 "Answer: I helped to organise the International  
6 Marxist Group, IMG. Again, see volume 2, page 79 [sic],  
7 of my memoir, where I describe this in some detail.  
8 I was a member of its national and political committees.

9 "Question 3.2: Please describe the relationship and  
10 interaction between your IMG activism and your role with  
11 the VSC.

12 "Answer: My primary loyalty was to the IMG. It was  
13 the main organisation which brought the VSC into  
14 existence. In the VSC, IMG members functioned as an  
15 open caucus to prepare for its various conference and  
16 activities.

17 "Question 3.3: What were the aims of the IMG and  
18 what methods and tactics was it using in 1968 to 1969 to  
19 advance its aims? In particular:

20 "Question 3.3.1: Was the IMG a revolutionary group?

21 "Answer: Yes. Please see chapter 11 of volume 2 of  
22 my memoirs, especially page 203 to 205, where I explain  
23 the meaning of the name of the group and its political  
24 perspectives.

25 "Question 3.3.2: Did the IMG believe that revolution

1 would, or might, require the use of force?

2 "Answer: Yes.

3 "Question 3.3.3: Did the IMG believe that force  
4 should be used to bring about revolution in 1968 to  
5 1969?

6 "Answer: No.

7 "Question 3.3.4: Did the IMG believe that public  
8 disorder would advance its cause?

9 "Answer: No.

10 "Question 3.3.5: Did the IMG believe that breaking  
11 any laws was justified or necessary to advance its  
12 cause? If so, which laws and for what purpose or  
13 purposes?

14 "Answer: The IMG did not believe in breaking  
15 the law, but if a particular law was oppressive or  
16 dangerous to our democratic rights, and there was mass  
17 opposition in society to it, then the IMG might have  
18 explored ways to challenge that law.

19 "Question 3.3.6: Did the IMG vet its members?

20 "Answer: No one could be a member of the IMG without  
21 first demonstrating, over a period of time as  
22 a probationary member, their commitment to  
23 the organisation through providing financial support  
24 commensurate with their means, and through activity in  
25 support of its programme, and by consistently attending

1 its membership meetings.

2 "Question 3.3.7: Did the IMG take other security  
3 precautions to keep its plans, tactics or other matters  
4 confidential? If so, please explain.

5 "Answer: Leadership bodies of the organisation  
6 practised what is termed 'cabinet solidarity'. Disputes  
7 in these committees could be taken to the general  
8 membership for discussion, only if there was a majority  
9 in the committee in favour of doing so. Only formal  
10 members had the right to attend its membership meetings.

11 "Question 3.3.8: Was the IMG concerned about  
12 infiltration by the police or others? If so, explain  
13 why.

14 "[Answer:] It was never an issue while I was in  
15 the leadership. See my answer at 2.7 in this respect,  
16 dealing with the VSC.

17 "Question 4: Are you surprised that the police  
18 deployed undercover officers to report on the activities  
19 of the IMG and/or VSC?

20 "Answer: Yes. It's a scandal and it reveals how far  
21 democratic rights in Britain have been abused over  
22 the past 50 years. It has become the norm, it seems to  
23 me, for the state to put the boots to anyone it doesn't  
24 like. If you're a socialist or a Marxist or someone who  
25 has different ideas about how the economy and society

1 should be organised, should we expect dirty tricks from  
2 those who are supposed to protect us?

3 "Question 5: Did you use an alias or aliases in  
4 relation to any of your political activity? If so, what  
5 was it/what were they and why did you use an alias?

6 "Answer: Yes. Sometimes I used the pseudonym  
7 'Ernest Strong' when I was writing journalistic articles  
8 and mainly in minutes of the IMG's national and  
9 political committees. I did this mainly to avoid  
10 discrimination at the hands of the state in case that  
11 I might in the future be searching for regular  
12 employment. In Canada, I had lived through the period  
13 of McCarthyism in the 1950s, and knew what political  
14 repression and its consequences looked like;  
15 blacklisting was a prime example of how easily the state  
16 could destroy a person's livelihood.

17 "Then, Chair, there's a subheading, 'Intelligence  
18 Reports and Other Documents'.

19 "Question 6: Please consider the documents which  
20 the Inquiry has obtained and included in your witness  
21 bundle. You are named in each one of the enclosed  
22 reports. Are the details that have been recorded  
23 accurate? If not, please identify any inaccurate  
24 reports and set out the respects in which the report is  
25 inaccurate.

1           "Answer: Tab 1, MPS-0739885: It's too long ago for  
2 me to remember this meeting on 8 February 1968, but it  
3 is reasonable to assume I was present. According to  
4 the report by the Special Branch officer 'David Hughes'  
5 (HN299/342) it was an open public meeting attended by  
6 about 70 people at Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel to show  
7 the film 'American War Crimes in Vietnam'. This was  
8 just one week after the beginning of the Tet (Vietnamese  
9 New Year) Offensive in which 80,000 Vietnamese regular  
10 and irregular soldiers took on over 1 million US and  
11 South Vietnamese troops. The terrible battles of  
12 Khe Sanh and Hue followed. The US and south Vietnamese  
13 (ARVN) committed numerous atrocities. The one that made  
14 the front page was the one of the South Vietnamese  
15 general blowing out the brains of a prisoner in  
16 the streets of Saigon. The US Embassy was attacked and  
17 although ultimately Tet was a tactical defeat for  
18 the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong, it was  
19 a strategic and political victory that had a worldwide  
20 impact on how the war was perceived.

21           "I note how one of the future protests mentioned was  
22 against Dow Chemical in Wigmore Street, London,  
23 the manufacturers of the notorious substance napalm  
24 which burnt people alive. Again, there was that  
25 terrible image of naked children fleeing from the US

1 napalm strike that we all remember.

2 "There was also to be a protest at the USAF base at  
3 Lakenheath, the US Air Force being responsible for  
4 the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians, women and  
5 children, as well as enemy soldiers. 1 million people  
6 perished in the war as well as 50,000 US soldiers, most  
7 of whom were teenagers.

8 "I note there was to be a protest against  
9 the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, who supported  
10 the US government. It's not entirely clear to me why  
11 this document has been redacted including the names of,  
12 I presume, Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon and  
13 Chief Superintendent Cunningham. What is interesting is  
14 that this routine report of Special Branch form M1 is  
15 prior to the formation of the covert SOS/SDS unit. This  
16 shows that Special Branch were easily able to access our  
17 meetings and report on everyone, without the need for  
18 planting operatives in our organisations.

19 "I see that VSC has a Special Branch registry  
20 file 400/67/73, so it must be a nice thick stack of  
21 files on VSC still being kept secret. I would like to  
22 see the archives opened, as this is now 50 years ago.  
23 One wonders what the Metropolitan Police still have to  
24 hide after all this time.

25 "It is a shame there's no witness statement from

1 HN299/342 'David Hughes', as it could explain perhaps  
2 the difference between his routine Special Branch duties  
3 in monitoring our meetings and his later doing the same  
4 thing within SOS/SDS. At this time, I presume, he was  
5 just an ordinary member of C Squad. I note that there  
6 was an application by the Metropolitan Police for his  
7 name to be kept anonymous. The 'minded to' note by  
8 the Chairman states as follows:

9 "HN299/342 is a septuagenarian and lives alone in  
10 a small community. He was deployed against three groups  
11 of his own selection between 1971 and 1975. There's  
12 nothing to indicate that his deployment was anything  
13 other than unremarkable. His cover name will be  
14 published, as will the names of the groups. In  
15 the unlikely event that any member of any of the groups  
16 can remember him, publication of his cover name, not of  
17 his real name, is what is required to prompt information  
18 or evidence from them. Publication of his real name  
19 would risk unwelcome media attention and the attention  
20 of those who may be ill-disposed towards him within  
21 a small community. It would not assist fulfillment of  
22 the terms of reference of the Inquiry. The interference  
23 with his right to respect for his private life which it  
24 would risk would not be justified under Article 2 [sic]  
25 of the European Convention on Human Rights."

1           From the Inquiry ruling.

2           The statement of Mr Tate continues:

3           "I'm pleased to see that the Inquiry is underlining  
4           the importance of the right to respect for private and  
5           family life, and I trust this same important right will  
6           be afforded to the people who were spied on when and if  
7           any judgments are reached concerning the gross  
8           interference with this right as practiced by  
9           the Metropolitan Police Special Branch and others.

10          "No photograph of this officer, who was then  
11          presumably in his 20s, has been supplied to assist in  
12          trying to recall him and his activities. I cannot  
13          recall him by name.

14          "Tab 2, MPS-0739886: Again, it is too long ago for  
15          me to actually remember this meeting on  
16          15 February 1968, but I assume I was indeed present.  
17          This is said to be a private meeting, but 'David Hughes'  
18          HN299/342 was again present among 35 people. I'm sure  
19          it would have been an open meeting for anyone who wanted  
20          to be involved in VSC activities. There's a report that  
21          towards the end of the meeting, some people present said  
22          they intended breaking windows of the US Embassy and  
23          were prepared for a 'punch-up' with the police. Others  
24          said they wanted a sit-down protest. To be clear, VSC  
25          policy was always non-violent. We were only too aware

1           that the violence was a particularly strong attribute of  
2           the state. The officer's assessment that 'a fair amount  
3           of violence' could be expected at the forthcoming  
4           solidarity demonstration in March 1968 was not an  
5           assessment I would have shared at the time.

6           "Tab 3, MPS-0730911: I was on the March 17th  
7           demonstration along with about 25,000 others. This  
8           report of 28 March 1968 is submitted by a Special Branch  
9           commander to the Director of Public Prosecutions. It  
10          therefore appears to be explicitly prepared for the sake  
11          of supporting prosecutions by the state, presumably of  
12          the VSC leadership.

13          "It would help to have a witness statement  
14          explaining the reason for this report. It is surely  
15          unusual that Special Branch officers, including  
16          the later head of SDS, Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon,  
17          were tasked to take ordinary witness statements from  
18          members of the public. It does contain the VSC leaflet  
19          that summarises the press conference of 19 March 1968  
20          given by Pat Jordan, chairman of the VSC, Mike Martin,  
21          secretary of the VSC, and Tariq Ali, member of  
22          the Ad Hoc Committee for organising the demonstration.

23          "The VSC leadership refuted the charge that the VSC  
24          had deliberately set out to provoke violence. It  
25          details two particular incidents that resulted in

1 the confrontation with police in Grosvenor Square;  
2 firstly, the initial refusal to allow the letters of  
3 protest to be delivered to the embassy, as had been  
4 agreed with the Met Police beforehand; and, secondly,  
5 the fact that the march was blocked by police at  
6 the corner of North Audley Street, such that  
7 the demonstrators were very compressed.

8 "Nothing, of course, is said about the fact that  
9 the police were armed with truncheons and mounted on  
10 horses, and quite capable of dishing out extreme  
11 violence to unarmed protesters. Some harrowing reports  
12 are contained in accounts given by observers of  
13 the National Council for Civil Liberties, an independent  
14 organisation.

15 "Whatever the rights and wrongs of what happened, it  
16 appears that this outbreak of violence led to  
17 the authorities getting in a panic and seeking to  
18 understand this new militancy in advance of  
19 the October 1968 demonstration; and this led to  
20 the formation of SOS/SDS in the summer. And yet  
21 the answer to this militancy is given in the leaflet:

22 "The mood and temper of the demonstration on Sunday  
23 was determined by the nature of the American aggression.  
24 It is impossible to remain calm and peaceful before  
25 the barbarism of American aggression in Vietnam"

1           "What is interesting about this bizarrely selected  
2 and highly partisan package of material presented for  
3 the public inquiry in 2020 to consider, assuming it  
4 finds its way into the hearing bundle, is the huge  
5 absence of all the other documents that the British  
6 government continue to suppress. The requests made by  
7 the journalist Solomon Hughes in 2008 for disclosure of  
8 the Special Branch files about the VSC resulted in him  
9 being refused all access to the reports of  
10 the March 1968 demonstration. The only files disclosed  
11 were the ones that appear on the Special Branch Files  
12 Project website.

13           "What have the Met and the Home Office got to hide?  
14 This public inquiry cannot properly draw any conclusions  
15 about the March 1968 demonstrations without complete  
16 open access. But if this is really meant to be a public  
17 inquiry, then the public -- journalists and academics,  
18 historians and those of us who were involved at the  
19 time -- should be allowed to see the material.

20           "I would that had my account of both the October  
21 1967 demonstration and the March 1968 demonstration are  
22 set out in chapter 14 of my memoir, volume 2.

23           "Tab 4, MPS-0722106: This report of 2 April 1968 by  
24 Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon, signed off by  
25 Chief Superintendent, presumably A Cunningham (name

1 redacted), is, I presume, the C Squad (domestic  
2 extremism) report into the March VSC demonstration, and  
3 I assume belongs together with the report above.

4 "I think that Conrad Dixon is an important player in  
5 the history of SDS and it's a shame that he's now  
6 deceased, as I'm sure he would have plenty to say. In  
7 his 1999 obituary in the Times, it is stated that he was  
8 the leader and founder of SDS, having been born into an  
9 army family, educated at Oxford and joined  
10 the Royal Marines. At Special Branch he apparently  
11 'specialised in anarchists, Trotskyists and  
12 anarcho-syndicalists'.

13 "In 1968, he was sent for and asked what he needed  
14 to gather 'top grade information' on revolutionaries and  
15 applied '20 men, half a million pounds and a free hand'.  
16 I would like to emphasise the words 'a free hand', as  
17 this suggests a complicity at higher levels with SDS  
18 being allowed to thrive in a culture that broke  
19 the rules. I also note that this obituary is quite open  
20 about his role in SDS, in contrast to the institutional  
21 secrecy of the Metropolitan Police.

22 "Paragraph 3 of his report, suggesting that various  
23 groups were discussing proposals for violent action at  
24 Grosvenor Square, is not something that I recall, and  
25 I wonder if it's true. I note that Dixon says:

1            "'It is not possible to use these sources for  
2            evidential purposes, and no evidence of violent  
3            intentions was obtained by police officers who gained  
4            entry to some of these closed meetings.'

5            "This can only mean that there are existing  
6            Special Branch reports (perhaps filed in RF361/68/12  
7            Ad Hoc Committee?) that detail these supposed  
8            discussions.

9            "I would like to see them. If there was no evidence  
10           of violent intentions obtained by Special Branch  
11           officers, then I can only assume this gossip comes  
12           from 'informers'. This all sound like make-believe.  
13           Chief Inspector Dixon obviously knew what his masters  
14           wanted to hear. One wonders if the future creation of  
15           SOS/SDS was not out of desperation to try and find this  
16           supposed 'evidence' that was so sorely lacking.

17           "Paragraph 4 seems to imply that the Special Branch  
18           report is directly as a result of the Attorney General,  
19           Sir Elwyn Jones, seeking to justify not just  
20           the prosecution of the VSC leadership but the  
21           dissolution of the VSC itself under section 2 of  
22           the Public Order Act 1936, which was originally brought  
23           into law to deal with the British Union of Fascists.  
24           The truth is there was not the slightest evidence that  
25           VSC planned any form of violence. VSC only believed in

1 lawful resistance to police violence (ie lawful  
2 self-defence). It seems clear to me that this  
3 Special Branch report is obviously expressing and  
4 reflecting the political prejudices of the British  
5 government of the day and the police. It is utterly  
6 self-serving and the Inquiry should be aware of placing  
7 too much weight on it.

8 "At paragraph 10 it states that I was interviewed  
9 and gave the opinion that the police cordon across  
10 North Audley Street at the junction with  
11 Grosvenor Square had the effect of compressing  
12 the demonstrators to such an extent that they had no  
13 alternative than to try and break the cordon. There is  
14 a clear aerial shot available online which shows this to  
15 be true. This may have been a more or less accurate  
16 report of what I said.

17 "Mike Martin said that if the petition had been  
18 presented as planned then the violence could have been  
19 avoided. Pat Jordan stated the organisers had tried  
20 their best but had lost control of events.

21 "The prejudice displayed by Dixon against Tariq Ali  
22 is typical of the time. I refer the Inquiry to  
23 the dossier compiled by the National Council for Civil  
24 Liberties that provided independent observers on  
25 the day. This dossier is referred to by Peter Jackson,

1 Labour Party MP for High Peak, 1966 to 1970, in his  
2 speech to the House of Commons reported in Hansard on  
3 4 April 1968. He was apparently the only MP on  
4 the demonstration and was able to provide his own  
5 account, which supports mine.

6 "Tab 5, MPS-0732692: This is a report of a meeting  
7 on 4 April 1968 at Toynbee Hall. I assume it is correct  
8 that I was present. I've no recollection of this  
9 meeting as it is so long ago. I note the same  
10 Special Branch officer, HN299/342 'David Hughes' is  
11 the author of the report.

12 "Tab 6, MPS-0741312: These documents placed in  
13 Special Branch files in July 1968 for  
14 Chief Inspector Dixon to action are the first shown to  
15 me that are dated after the formal creation of  
16 the Special Operations Squad or SOS. These copies of  
17 the minutes of a VSC executive meeting held on  
18 5 July 1968 and the VSC national council on 10 July 1968  
19 are very faint and difficult to read. It is stated that  
20 I was present. I assume this to be true, but it is too  
21 long ago for me to recall. There's nothing in these  
22 meetings or minutes that was secret.

23 "Tab 7, MPS-0738693/692: This report, dated  
24 30 July 1968 by Chief Inspector Dixon, signed off by  
25 Chief Superintendent A Cunningham, is an account of

1 a meeting of 100 people at Toynbee Hall concerning  
2 the organisation of the forthcoming 27 October 1968 VSC  
3 demonstration. It's a reasonable summary of my views  
4 and those of the IMG.

5 "Tab 8, MPS-0738746: It's too long ago for me to  
6 remember this VSC meeting at Conway Hall on  
7 20 August 1968, but it is reasonable to assume that  
8 I was among the 20 or 30 people present. I presume  
9 the source of the information given as 'informant' means  
10 an undercover Special Branch officer, namely  
11 DS R Creamer, who was present, having presumably  
12 obtained a blue ticket and is the author of the report.

13 "DS Creamer is not listed on the UCPI website as an  
14 SOS/SDS officer, but the report is submitted by  
15 Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon, who was head of the new  
16 unit at the time.

17 "I note that a copy of the report was sent to  
18 'Box 500', which I understand to be code for MI5, with  
19 copies also to C and E squads. I therefore assume that  
20 this report was an SOS report. It is not clear to me  
21 why the RF references have been redacted in this  
22 document, and presumably the word 'Secret' at the top of  
23 the document. Can the Inquiry clarify the status of  
24 DS Creamer?

25 "Tab 9, MPS-0730063: This is another interesting

1 report, dated 10 September 1968, by the head of the new  
2 SOS unit, Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon, and contains  
3 what I would consider an utterly superficial and very  
4 opinionated police summary of contemporary British  
5 radicalism. It appears that the office stamp 'Secret'  
6 at the top and bottom of the page has been redacted.

7 "Dixon's report is very distorted, but just what  
8 I would expect from a secret policeman. His  
9 characterisation of Tariq Ali as a 'mob orator' and  
10 Ralph Schoenman as 'notorious agitator' and the general  
11 tone of the report suggests a policeman with a deep  
12 loathing of his subjects; he's perhaps aware that his  
13 career is better assisted by producing alarmist reports  
14 of this nature for his superiors than more carefully  
15 considered ones. The creation of SOS had to be  
16 justified.

17 "The report was written up just a few days after  
18 the VSC national council meeting in Sheffield on  
19 7 September 1968, about which there's no report  
20 disclosed, which confirmed the route of the October  
21 demonstration. As for the supposed rumours or reports  
22 about the acquisition of (fire) arms and the preparation  
23 of Molotov cocktails, these are the product of a febrile  
24 imagination, even he admits have no evidential basis.  
25 He even accepts that the anarchist conference

1 of 8 September 1968 in London condemned 'senseless  
2 violence'. I believe that there was a deliberate state  
3 tactic to foment public hysteria, to frighten people  
4 away from joining future demonstrations, notwithstanding  
5 that the increased publicity may have actually had  
6 the opposite effect.

7 "The report is inaccurate in respect of my role.  
8 I never at any time worked full time for the VSC, nor  
9 did Alan Harris, whom I knew quite well. People around  
10 the VSC were well aware of these facts. I was an IMG  
11 official.

12 "Tab 10, MPS-0738815: This is a report of a meeting  
13 of the north-west London Ad Hoc Committee on  
14 11 September 1968 at the Friends House in NW3. It's  
15 reasonable to assume that I was one of 30 people  
16 present. I've no memory of it. It is said that  
17 I reported back on a recent meeting in Sheffield (I note  
18 there are no Special Branch reports provided to me from  
19 regional Special Branch). Two Special Branch officers  
20 were present, Chief Inspector Dixon and a Detective  
21 Inspector HN332 whose identity has sill still not been  
22 disclosed.

23 "Tab 11, UCPI 0000005782: This report of PC Barry  
24 Moss and Chief Inspector Dixon, dated 19 September 1968,  
25 attaches a report said to be written by me on

1 the Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation.  
2 Unfortunately, this document is almost completely  
3 illegible and impossible to read. There may be a copy  
4 in IMG archive collections somewhere. I do not recall  
5 writing this. A copy was sent to MI5.

6 "Tab 12, MPS-0722099: I don't remember this meeting  
7 of 32 people of the VSC Lambeth branch at  
8 the Duke of Cambridge on 26 September 1968, authored  
9 by 'William Paul Lewis' HN321 (displayed 1968 to 1969).  
10 His state of hearing was obviously poor. As he  
11 suggests, I referred to the coming demonstration  
12 as 'the October revolution', instead of 'the October  
13 demonstration', which was being discussed.

14 "It says I talked of trying to secure the support of  
15 the working class and trade unions for  
16 the demonstration, which I'm sure is correct. Perhaps,  
17 as a consequence, we raised a little money at  
18 the meeting for the AEF (Engineering Union) strike fund.

19 As for HN321, I note that the Metropolitan Police  
20 applied in July 2017 for his cover name to remain  
21 anonymous, despite the fact this is meant to be a public  
22 inquiry. The application states that he did not take  
23 his identity from a deceased child. But aside from  
24 this, we know nothing. It's a shame that the Inquiry is  
25 unwilling to provide me with a copy of his statement to

1 be able to comment on. His 'minded to' note granting  
2 anonymity over his real name states:

3 "HN321 is now in his 70s. He was deployed against  
4 two groups which no longer exist, for one year, between  
5 September 1968 and September 1969. There is not and has  
6 never been any known allegation of misconduct against  
7 him. He undertook the role of an undercover officer on  
8 the understanding that his identity would be kept  
9 secret. He's concerned about possible media interest if  
10 his real identity were to be revealed. He is in  
11 particular concerned about the impact on his wife, also  
12 in her 70s. His concerns are not irrational. In  
13 the unlikely event that disclosure of his cover name,  
14 which can be made, prompts evidence from one or more  
15 members of the target groups, it will not be enhanced by  
16 disclosure of his real name. It is likely that  
17 disclosure of his real name would prompt intense and  
18 unwelcome media interest in him, and so would give rise  
19 to serious interference with his and his family's right  
20 to respect for their private life under Article 8 of  
21 the European Convention, which would not be justifiable  
22 under Article 8.2. Closed reasons accompany this note.  
23 I repeat that I'm pleased to see that the Inquiry is  
24 underlining the importance of the right to respect for  
25 private and family life and I trust the same important

1 right will be afforded to the people who were spied on  
2 when and if any judgments are reached concerning  
3 the gross interference with this right as practised by  
4 the Metropolitan Police Special Branch and others.

5 Tab 13, MPS-0742197. This report dated  
6 2 October 1968 relates to a VSC press conference at  
7 Conway Hall called by the ad hoc me for the October  
8 demonstration and attended by 30 representatives of  
9 the press and national media. The route of  
10 the demonstrates was confirmed especially that there  
11 were no plans to go to the US Embassy this time. It is  
12 reported that I said the demonstration would be much  
13 bigger than the last two, up to 100,000 people. I was  
14 right. The report is submitted by inspector R Wilson,  
15 presumably not an SOS undercover officer but a regular  
16 Special Branch officer of C Squad. I'm presuming he's  
17 the author of the book 'Special branch 1883 to 2006,  
18 a history'. The name of the chief superintendent is  
19 redacted. The VSC press statement is not attached to  
20 this report.

21 Tab 14, MPS-0730096. This report, another by  
22 Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon, dated 3 October 1968, is  
23 said to be a regular weekly report on the preparations  
24 for the national demonstration in three weeks' time.  
25 I'm mentioned in this police report as an IMG member and

1 member of the VSC executive. Interestingly, this  
2 document was made public in 2008 obtained by  
3 the journalist Solomon Hughes but paragraph B was  
4 redacted for some reason. It mentions a supposed attack  
5 by London School of Economics students on the stock  
6 exchange and an occupation of the LSE itself. According  
7 to the Times obituary of 1999 Dixon was involved as an  
8 undercover officer in that occupation on 25 October and  
9 seized the telephone exchange. I presume this is  
10 the reason for the redaction. I note his observation  
11 regarding students who he says provided the bulk of  
12 the support for the VSC demonstrations thus far and  
13 that 'their behaviour on demonstrations was largely  
14 spontaneous'. I agree. There was never any plan for  
15 violence in the IMG or the VSC. Rather the complete  
16 opposite. We wanted a huge but peaceful demonstration.

17 "Insofar as the Maoist wanted a more militant  
18 approach by confronting police in Grosvenor Square, we  
19 in the VSC were opposed to this and three Maoist  
20 controlled VSC local branches had been disowned by  
21 the national council for this reason. It is note  
22 worthily that the Maoist contingent was said to number  
23 no more than 100 people.

24 Dixon's report concludes that it is the people who  
25 are not represented on the VSC, anarchists, Maoist

1 and 'foreign elements' who are' most likely to use  
2 violence and to be hostile to the police'. When all  
3 this is considered, what is obvious is that there were  
4 a tiny number of people who were desirous of a clash  
5 with the police and that any situation that arose would  
6 be largely spontaneous. The fact of undercover  
7 policing, or even regular Special Branch reporting, made  
8 not the slightest difference to the manner in which  
9 events transpired on 27 October 1968. The Times  
10 obituary of 1999 gives Dixon credit for advising that  
11 the police lines needed to be thicker to prevent  
12 demonstrators breaking through. At half a million  
13 pounds, this was expensive indeed and related only to  
14 basic current control.

15 Tab 159, MPS-0742228. This is the Daily Telegraph  
16 report of our press conference on 2 October 1968. I'm  
17 on the platform, off to the left Tariq Ali is speaking.  
18 In the report he made a plea to flush out anybody who  
19 was planning violence.

20 Tab 16, MPS-0730091. This is  
21 Chief Inspector Dixon's next weekly reported dated  
22 6 October 1968 signed off by chief superintendent  
23 A Cunningham. Both myself and my partner Jess Mackenzie  
24 are listed as prominent in VSC affairs.

25 Tab 17, MPS-072099. This report is about a meeting

1 of VSC Lambeth branch held in the old queen's head  
2 Stockwell on 17 October 1968 with 32 people present.

3 I do not recall this meeting but I presume I was  
4 indeed present at this meeting with my partner  
5 Jess Mackenzie as reported. The report appears to be  
6 produced by HN321 Bill Lewis, who was present in his  
7 undercover capacity as a deployed Special Branch SOS  
8 officer.

9 Tab 18 -- this appears to be the definitive police  
10 report of 27 October 1968 VSC demonstration submitted by  
11 chief superintendent A Cunningham. Chapter 17,  
12 the second volume of my memoir gives a much better  
13 account from, of course, a quite different perspective.  
14 I disagree with the statement that the VSC was 'to  
15 a considerable extent responsible for the violence which  
16 occurred at the demonstrations in London on  
17 October 1967, March and July 1968'. I note in passing  
18 no documents are disclosed to me about the July  
19 demonstration. It is unfair to characterise  
20 the approach of the VSC and myself as simply 'paying lip  
21 service' to the concept of an orderly demonstration.  
22 This is what we wanted. We did disagree with  
23 the Maoist, see my answer to question 8.1 below, and  
24 excluded them. His statement that 'the majority were  
25 well disciplined and acted in an orderly manner under

1 the direction of the VSC marshals' is correct and rather  
2 belieis his earlier dire warnings of considerable public  
3 disorder being likely. Tariq Ali is rightly mentioned  
4 as urging demonstrators at Trafalgar Square to continue  
5 along Whitehall and not to go to Grosvenor Square.  
6 There's mention of 500 Maoist and anarchists  
7 independently splitting off and going to  
8 Grosvenor Square where there was some very limited  
9 disorder which resulted in 17 arrests. I would say  
10 the credit for the overall good discipline and peaceful  
11 nature of the VSC March should be given to the VSC.  
12 Insofar as Chief Inspector Dixon and his SOS and  
13 the Metropolitan Police wish to claim credit, then  
14 surely this was the moment for SOS to be disbanded as  
15 a separate quad within Special Branch and for the senior  
16 officers to take back the ' free hand' that Dixon had  
17 insisted on.

18 Tab 19, MPS-0735443. This, I'm told, is a picture  
19 of Chief Inspector Conrad Dixon, I presume from 1968,  
20 perhaps when he was in the London School of Economics.  
21 I've no recollection of having seen him, and it's not  
22 clear if our paths ever crossed. It would be more  
23 helpful to have photos of HN299 and HN291, HN2 -- and  
24 HN322.

25 Tab 20, MPS-0731364. This is a report on an IMG

1 meeting of about 30 people held in The Earl Russell on  
2 Sunday, 3 November 1968. I do not recall this meeting  
3 as it is so long ago but it's reasonable to assume I was  
4 there with my person Jess Mackenzie. The meeting was to  
5 discuss the political situation in Northern Ireland  
6 where of course I was from. HN321 'William Paul Lewis'  
7 was again present and wrote up the report. I am  
8 assuming by now he had become an IMG member. I note  
9 a copy of this report went to MI5 and a copy to B squad  
10 ('Irish extremism'). The context was that the first  
11 Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) march  
12 had taken place on 24 August 1968 in Dungannon drawing  
13 4,000 people. This passed off peacefully but on  
14 5 October 1968 another NICRA march was viciously  
15 attacked by police officers of  
16 the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). This is what  
17 became the to the start of what became known as  
18 The Troubles. Once again the serious violence was from  
19 the police not the protesters.

20 Tab 21, MPS-0730768. This is a report by  
21 Chief Inspector Dixon of a meeting of the VSC at  
22 Conway Hall on 11 November 1968. 100 people were  
23 present and although I cannot recall this meeting, I'm  
24 recorded as speaking. This was a meeting to discuss  
25 the 27 October demonstration. I note that further

1           undercover officers were present. TN0034,  
2           a detective sergeant, HN321 'William Paul Lewis',  
3           HN329 'John Graham', HN326 'Douglas Edwards'. No  
4           witness statements of any of these officers are in  
5           the witness pack. I note that in the anonymity  
6           application by the Metropolitan Police  
7           HN326 'Doug Edwards' is said not to have used  
8           the identity of a deceased child and that 'the extent of  
9           his infiltration was more superficial than that of later  
10          officers', a role that lasted three years.  
11          The anonymity order states 'HN326 is in his 70s, he was  
12          deployed against three groups two of which no longer  
13          exist in any form. For two and a half years, between  
14          1968 and 1971. He's been careful to preserve his  
15          anonymity and is worried about disclosure of his real  
16          name. He's concerned that it may be discovered by  
17          organisations such as undercover research.net and fears  
18          media intrusion. He suffers from conditions which may  
19          be exacerbated by worry'.

20                 "In respect of 'John Graham' all we are told  
21                 is 'HN329 is now in his 70s. He was deployed against  
22                 two groups with no longer exist for one year between  
23                 1968 and 1969'. I do not know if I came across any of  
24                 these officers at the time, tab 22 MPS-072299. This is  
25                 a report by Chief Inspector Dixon of a VSC meeting at

1 Conway Hall on 20 December 1968, some 55 people  
2 attended. I do not recollect this meeting but I can  
3 presume that I was present. Officers HN321 and HN329  
4 were there.

5 "Tab 23, UCPI0000005797. This is a report by  
6 Chief Inspector Dixon of the VSC national conference  
7 held on 1-2 February 199 at Conway Hall in London at  
8 which I'm recorded at present. The nature of  
9 the chief superintendent are redacted as are the small  
10 areas at the top of each page no doubt stamped secret.  
11 11 documents are appended to the report including one  
12 under the name of Alan Harris, Pat Jordan and myself,  
13 dated 31 January 1969.

14 Question 7: the documents in your witness pack  
15 include reports of VSC meetings at which you are  
16 recorded as having been present both before and after  
17 the creation of the SDS believed at this stage by  
18 the Inquiry to have been on 30 July 1968. What  
19 additional access to the would the use of  
20 undercover officers as opposed to plain clothed police  
21 officers have given to the SDS.

22 Answer: I don't know. It probably made it easier  
23 for them to steal membership lists.

24 Question 8: you're recorded as having been a 'dove'  
25 on the question of violence by comparison to the '

1 hawk', 'Albert Manchanda' in the report dated  
2 30 July 1968, MPS-0738/6938, tab 7.

3 Answer: this is gossip I've never heard before.

4 Question 8.1: is the description of the differences  
5 between you and 'Albert' Manchanda contract?

6 Answer: my disagreements with Manchanda were  
7 fundamentally about what should be the (inaudible) of  
8 the VSC. I did not know at that time what his views  
9 were about violence in relation to the Vietnam protest  
10 movement. I never discussed this issue with him.

11 I never trusted him. He led a splinter group which  
12 tried to wreck the founding conference in 1966. For  
13 a description of this, see page 88, volume 2 of my  
14 memoir. The Maoists formed a separate organisation,  
15 the Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front, or BVSF.

16 Question 8.2: please explain in your own words  
17 the tensions between you and those who subscribed to  
18 your way of thinking and Manchanda and the Maoists whom  
19 the Inquiry understands he led during 1968 and 1969.  
20 The Inquiry is particularly interested in understanding  
21 these tensions in the context of the planning and  
22 execution of the 27 October 1968 demonstration.

23 Answer: see answer to question 8.1 above.

24 Question 8.3: please look at the photograph in your  
25 witness packed marked MPS-(inaudible) at tab 19.

1 The Inquiry understands this to be a photograph of  
2 Conrad Dixon who signed the above report dated  
3 30 July 1968. Do you recognise him? If so, what can  
4 you recall about him and what he did?

5 Answer: no, I've no memory of ever having seen that  
6 person.

7 Question 9: please look at the report dated  
8 10 September 1968 MPS-0730063 at tab 9.

9 Answer: see my comment on tab 9 above. I reproduced  
10 this document at volume 2 of my memoir which was  
11 published in 2014. I received it from Solomon Hughes of  
12 the guardian in 2008 along with Paul Mason of ITV taste  
13 took legal action to force the police to release it.

14 Question 9.1: at the bottom of page 3 the report  
15 records that you were employed full time at the premises  
16 of the VSC located on the second floor of offices  
17 situated at 120 Commercial Road London E1. Was that  
18 information correct?

19 Answer: no.

20 Question 9.2: in the first paragraph on page 4  
21 the report states that 'the more cautious  
22 representatives of International Socialism and  
23 international Marxist groups paid lip service to  
24 the vision of a peaceful demonstration'. Is that an  
25 accurate assessment of what happened?

1           Answer: this is gossip from sources that were not  
2 involved in the campaign. We and the leadership of VSC  
3 and the Ad Hoc Committee were totally committed to  
4 peaceful demonstrations and if violence took place, it  
5 was incidental and outside of our control. This is why  
6 we did not go to Grosvenor Square on 27 October 1968.  
7 It was mainly a peaceful event, much to the a surprise  
8 of the police who by that time had frightened  
9 the authorities into a state of panic. See the ' street  
10 power' leaflet that was given out to demonstrators by  
11 the October 27 Ad Hoc Committee reproduced at volume 2  
12 of my memoirs at page 212 that explicitly sought to  
13 avoid the confrontation with the police.

14           Question 9.3: later in the same paragraph the report  
15 states all the indications are that the Maoists and  
16 anarchists will disregard any sort of instruction from  
17 police or march leaders and take an independent line on  
18 that day'. Would you have agreed with that assessment  
19 on 10 September 1968? If not, why not?

20           Answer: I and the rest of the leadership of the VSC  
21 suspected the Maoists would take an -- would make an  
22 effort to hijack the demonstration as it made its way  
23 past Trafalgar Square. That's why we stopped  
24 the demonstration in the middle of the street when they  
25 tried to divert it to Grosvenor Square. We effectively

1           policed our own demonstration. See my account of  
2           the day in chapter 17 of my book, entry pages 266 to  
3           267.

4           Question 9.4: on page 5 there's a list of tactics  
5           which are regarded as having been suggested at branch  
6           but not national level. To what extent were you aware  
7           of such suggestions? To the extent that you were aware,  
8           (a) to what extent did you approve of them and (b)  
9           insofar as you approved of them, what did you do about  
10          them?

11          Answer: this is the product of the fevered  
12          imagination of the security services who seem to be out  
13          to frighten their superiors and the Wilson Labour  
14          government. It looks like every piece of scary  
15          information from whatever source and whatever they  
16          invented was used for this purpose. We the organisers  
17          of this (inaudible) one to which the participants could  
18          bring their families without the fear of being exposed  
19          to violence. That's why the Ad Hoc Committee adopted  
20          a (inaudible) that ended up with a rally in Hyde Park.  
21          What happened on that day highlights the wisdom of that  
22          decision. Over 100,000 people turned out.

23          Question 9.5: later on the same page there's  
24          a reference to a meeting of the National Council of  
25          the VSC in Sheffield at which a general outline of

1 the activity of the 26/27th October emerged. Were you  
2 at this meeting? And if so (a) did it decide the route  
3 of this demonstration as described on the following page  
4 and (b) what if any attempts were made to keep details  
5 such as these confidential.

6 Answer: yes. That's where we finalised the decision  
7 on the demonstration route. It was the major  
8 discussion. No, there was no policy to keep the route  
9 secret.

10 Question 10: please look at the Special Branch  
11 report dated 19 September 1968 and the attached document  
12 UCPI0000005782, tab 11.

13 Question 10.1: did you in fact prepare the attached  
14 document as the report asserts?

15 Answer: it's possible I wrote at a document but the  
16 obvious photocopying of photocopies so many times has  
17 made it illegible.

18 Question 10.2: the document refers to the overthrow  
19 of western capitalism and concludes with a reference to  
20 revolutionary action which has as its goal the overthrow  
21 of the total society. Do these aims accord with your  
22 understanding of the aims of the IMG?

23 Answer: see above. The document is illegible. If  
24 you can provide me with a legible copy, I'd then be  
25 happy to answer.

1           Question 11: is the Inquiry correct to understand  
2 that you moved to Canada in or around April 1969?

3           Answer: yes.

4           Did your involvement with the British anti-Vietnam  
5 protest end when you moved to Canada?

6           Answer: yes.

7           Question 11.2: did your involvement with the IMG in  
8 Great Britain end when you moved to Canada.

9           Answer: no.

10          Recollection of events.

11          Question 12: please provide a factual account of  
12 events at the demonstration of 27 October 1968 in  
13 particular for the view of the freedom of the VSC to  
14 mount a demonstration and with regards to policing in  
15 any public order that you might have witnessed?

16          Answer: the factual accounts are provided in my  
17 memoir as stated above.

18          "Impact.

19          "Question 13: if not already covered in your answers  
20 to the above questions please explain when you were  
21 first aware that the VSC had been the subject of  
22 undercover policing and the impact that had on you.  
23 Please also explain the impact that sight of the reports  
24 in your witness pack recording your political activities  
25 has had.

1           "Answer: the first I heard of the Inquiry was in  
2           June 2019. I'd not seen anything about it in  
3           the Canadian press. I'm pleased that the Inquiry is  
4           taking place and I hope it will finally compose  
5           the gross violations of people's civil liberties that  
6           took place at the hands of the British security services  
7           for so many years. It is an outrage has has been  
8           reported to the BBC in 2002 in their three part  
9           documentary True Spies and it is only one example that  
10          an undercover policeman known as 'dick Epps' HN336 said  
11          he copied the keys of the offices of the International  
12          Marxist Group, which he also had infiltrated and passed  
13          them on to MI5. It is suggested that MI5 later burgled  
14          those offices, which is a crime, to obtain membership  
15          and financial records. I would like to see a copy of  
16          his witness statement and see how he identifies  
17          committing crime in this fashion and who authorised it.  
18          I'm also concerned that some of these officers may have  
19          adopted similar tactics as discovered later of sleeping  
20          with female activists and it may now be too late to  
21          uncover this repulsive tactic. The Inquiry has to  
22          decide whether it will simply protect the interests of  
23          the police and the state even after all these years or  
24          whether it will come down on the side of civil liberties  
25          and right of people to have a private life free from

1 intrusion by state security forces. I hope that  
2 the Inquiry will lead to legislation and public  
3 oversight that will limit their ability to harass those  
4 who happen to be critical of society or of fighting for  
5 social change. I note that the illegal surveillance  
6 programmes were moulded by both the royal Canadian mounted  
7 police, RCMP, and the US federal bureau of  
8 investigation, FBI, throughout the 1950s, 1960s and  
9 1970s. These both led to inquiries which declared  
10 the activities illegal. The royal commission knowns  
11 the McDonald commission in 1977 to 1981 in relation to  
12 the RCMP and the co-intel pro scandal reported on the by  
13 the Select Committee of the US Senate known as  
14 the church committee in 1976. I believe the findings of  
15 the latter are instructive and worth considering because  
16 at the very time that senator Frank church was  
17 delivering his damning verdict the British state  
18 was engaged in much the same activity.

19 Question 14: is there anything else you wish to that  
20 had may of be of assistance to the work of the Inquiry?

21 Answer: no, not at this time, but I would welcome  
22 the opportunity to make a supplemental statement if need  
23 be after seeing the witness statements of the officers,  
24 the openings statements of the Home Office and  
25 Metropolitan Police, or any other documentary material

1 of importance.

2 "Documents.

3 "Question 15: do you have any documents that may be  
4 potentially relevant to the work of the Inquiry, eg  
5 photographs, diaries or other contemporaneous sort of  
6 contemporary documents? If so, please explain what they  
7 are. If you're content to provide copies to the Inquiry  
8 for use as evidence, please do so. Alternatively, if  
9 you're concern about providing copies now, please set  
10 out your concerns briefly and the Inquiry will contact  
11 you to discuss them.

12 "Answer: of course there's my two volume memoir  
13 "Revolutionary Activism in the 1950s and 60s" which I've  
14 already referred to, but I'm also aware of documents  
15 from the period concerning the VSC and IMG held by  
16 Warwick University Coventry and the international  
17 institute of social history, IISH and the international  
18 institute for research and education, IIRE, both in  
19 Amsterdam, and also the Tamiment Library New York and  
20 the Bertrand Russell library in Hamilton Ontario.  
21 The archives in whole contain the (inaudible) report on  
22 the March 1968 demonstration and additional papers.  
23 The Special Branch Files Project website Special Branch  
24 files.UK has other Special Branch reports relating to  
25 the October 1968 VSC demonstration some authored by

1 Chief Inspector Dixon which have not been sent to me in  
2 the witness pack but they may be of relevance. There  
3 are also numerous photos of the VSC demonstrations  
4 available online. In particular there's an aerial view  
5 showing the crush at North Audley Street at  
6 the March 1968 demonstration. Attached to this  
7 statement A in the electronic copy of my book  
8 "Revolutionary Activism in the 1950s and 60s" referred  
9 to above, (b) an extra copy from Hansard debates  
10 (inaudible) in respect of the March 1968 VSC  
11 demonstration to Grosvenor Square. (c) a copy of  
12 the April 1968 national council for civil liberties  
13 report into the same demonstration, (d) a copy of  
14 the February 2016 paper to the university of East  
15 Anglia, the building the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and  
16 its consequences for the British left authored by myself  
17 and Phil Hearse (e) a copy of 1999 The Times obituary  
18 concerning Conrad Dixon, (f) VSC campaign bulletins  
19 issues 12, 1968 and 18, September 1968 found at  
20 [www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/vsc/index.htm](http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/vsc/index.htm).

21 Diversity what is your racial origin -- what is  
22 your gender, answer male."

23 And, sir, the statement concludes:

24 "I believe the contents of this statement to be  
25 true, signed Ernest Tate dated 31 January 2020 and in



1 months. He was then told by Detective Chief  
2 Superintendent Arthur Cunningham that he, along with  
3 a dozen or so others was joining the SDS. He recalls:

4 "I didn't opt into it and I don't think it occurred  
5 to anyone there that we could opt out. There was no  
6 formal training or guidance provided for the role."

7 HN218 recalls that he:

8 "Plucked the cover name out of thin air."

9 He used a cover flat merely as an address to write  
10 on attendance lists at meetings. He did not live there.  
11 He used his own vehicle registered in his own name to  
12 attend those meetings.

13 In his witness statement, HN218 recalls that the SDS  
14 was to be a short term unit and that the "ultimate  
15 objective was gathering information on the October  
16 demonstration". He is able to draw a comparison between  
17 the roles of an officer in the SDS to that of  
18 Special Branch, identifying the main difference as  
19 actually joining groups rather than merely attending  
20 public meetings.

21 He was tasked by Conrad Dixon on which groups were  
22 of interest, but how the information was gathered was  
23 left to undercover officers under the supervision of  
24 senior managers. Whilst deployed, HN218 had almost  
25 daily contact with Chief Inspector Dixon and

1 Detective Inspector Saunders. He also continued to make  
2 regular visits to Scotland Yard.

3 In relation to tasking, HN218's recollection is that  
4 he joined the Maoist Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front,  
5 the BVSF. He does not recall joining the Vietnam  
6 Solidarity Campaign, the VSC, however (inaudible)  
7 the reports included in the hearing bundle that they're  
8 his name.

9 The reports held by the Inquiry and linked to  
10 HN218's service date between 6 August and  
11 24 September 1968, although his recollection is that he  
12 would have been to many meetings before 6 August of that  
13 year.

14 The reports relate to five different bodies,  
15 the joint committee of communists, the Earls Court --  
16 branches the VSC, the committee for solidarity with  
17 Vietnam and the Vietnam Solidarity Committee's Ad Hoc  
18 Committee.

19 HN218 recalls that there were common personalities  
20 to these groups and there may have been a shared Maoist  
21 ideological connection. He was reporting on a mix of  
22 public and private meetings largely concerned with  
23 planning for the October 27 demonstration, including  
24 indoctrination sessions, banner making, slogans and  
25 discussion of the proposed routes to be taken by each

1 different group.

2 On 24 September 1968 at a meeting of  
3 the October 27 committee for solidarity in Vietnam it  
4 was recorded that a decision was made to break away from  
5 the main demonstration to target the American Embassy.

6 HN218 confirmed at that some meetings there were SDS  
7 officers and ordinary uniformed officers not working  
8 together. At other meetings there would be more than  
9 one SDS officer, simply because their respective groups  
10 had attended the same meeting.

11 At a public meeting of the VSC's October 27th Ad Hoc  
12 Committee, nine police officers are stated to have been  
13 present, including the majority of the SDS's senior  
14 officers. According to the report, the significant  
15 occurrence at the meeting appears to have been a vote  
16 against the proposal made by Maoists to march to Downing  
17 Street 26 October and then to Grosvenor Square on  
18 27 October '68.

19 HN218 concluded that some of the meetings raise  
20 nothing "of particular interest to Special Branch".

21 As with other reports held by the Inquiry,  
22 the reports linked to HN218 have common features, these  
23 being detailed descriptions of branch members, including  
24 those with no previous trace or Special Branch record,  
25 notes of speakers expressing political opinions,

1 provision of activists literature in this attributed by  
2 HN218 to the core participant Ernest Tate, and reporting  
3 of contact between a group and a journalist to arrange  
4 private discussion.

5 A report authored by HN218 after he left the SDS  
6 concerned the support of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.  
7 This was a group on which the SDS did report and appears  
8 to be an example of the non-SDS sources of intelligence  
9 available to Special Branch on this group.

10 HN218 recalls that he was the first officer to leave  
11 the SDS, withdrawing prior to the 27 October  
12 demonstration in order to attend an accelerated  
13 promotion course. He thinks he may have made up  
14 a family incident that required him to leave London as  
15 part of his withdrawal strategy. He was replaced by  
16 HN335, detective constable Tyrell who he introduced as  
17 his "best pal" and (inaudible) a meeting of the Earls  
18 Court VSC --

19 HN218 does not think that he witnessed subversive  
20 activity whilst under cover stating, "The group I joined  
21 wasn't really trying to overthrow the government, they  
22 just wanted a big demonstration". He does recall two  
23 pieces of information that "were probably passed on for  
24 use in policing", the possibility of protestors carrying  
25 ball bearings to use on police horses and women being

1 told to flirt with officers on the frontline to try and  
2 win them over.

3 In his witness statement, HN218 states that whilst  
4 his reporting alone would not have made a great  
5 difference to policing, he does think that the October  
6 demonstration was well policed and any disorder at it  
7 was controlled as a result of the intelligence provided  
8 by the SDS as a whole.

9 HN218 returned to the SDS as a detective chief  
10 inspector in February 1980. He was promoted to the rank  
11 of Superintendent in early '81 and left the SDS in  
12 December of the same year. In 1995, he became commander  
13 of operations in Special Branch. His remit at that time  
14 included the SDS.

15 He became Head of Special Branch in October 1996.

16 Sir, that concludes the summary of HN218 and I'll  
17 move, if I may, to 334.

18 HN334 served on the SDS using the cover name  
19 "Margaret White". There is a restriction order in force  
20 preventing the publication of the real name of this  
21 officer.

22 Prior to joining the SDS, HN334 was a detective  
23 constable in Special Branch. In her witness statement  
24 she recalls attending the some sort of political  
25 meetings, both as an officer serving with Special Branch

1 and with the SDS. The distinction she draws between  
2 the two roles is the need for her identity to be  
3 completely secret as an undercover officer, and like  
4 with Special Branch where she would give her name, if  
5 asked.

6 It is not clear from HN334's recollection, or  
7 the documents, when she joined and left the SDS. She  
8 was serving with the a attending meetings of  
9 the Havering VSC between 30 September and  
10 29 October 1968. She does not appear on the list of  
11 the unit's personnel in the document entitled  
12 "Penetration of Extremist Groups" dated 26 November '68  
13 suggesting, in accordance with her recollection, that  
14 she left the unit shortly after the 27 October  
15 demonstration.

16 HN334 does not recall any training for the role.  
17 She created her assumed background over a couple of days  
18 before she joined the SDS altering her appearance by  
19 wearing a long haired wig, adopting a cover name and  
20 cover employment, and finding a flat where she would  
21 stay occasionally.

22 In her witness statement, HN334 recalls that she  
23 understood she would be on a short term deployment  
24 concluding with the October demonstration. She was  
25 deployed to her target group, the Havering branch of

1 the VSC with a partner, HN330. They were instructed to  
2 act as girlfriend and boyfriend attending all of  
3 the meetings together. She understood that she was to  
4 report exactly what she saw and heard.

5 Whilst she adopted a cover name like (inaudible)  
6 meetings of activists, she did not attend any of these  
7 meetings alone, nor did she author the reports.

8 HN334's recollection is that she was tasked to  
9 infiltrate the Havering branch of the VSC because senior  
10 officers thought that it would be a trouble making  
11 group. She recalls that from what she saw and heard, it  
12 was not.

13 She describes the group as having no formal  
14 membership structure or procedure.

15 The Inquiry holds reports relating to  
16 the Havering branch dated between 30 September and  
17 29 October '68. The reports record small private  
18 meetings, mainly concerned with preparations for  
19 the October demonstration, including discussions about  
20 the composition, printing and distribution of leaflets,  
21 lines to take with the press, elections for the post of  
22 secretary and treasurer and the likely maximum size of  
23 the Havering contingent, that being 100 in number.

24 Save for the assertion that the branch would perhaps  
25 fly post, there is no evidence of any intention to break

1 the law, or a militant attitude in the officer's  
2 portrayal. Her recollection of the demonstration is  
3 that she marched with the group under a banner.

4 In addition to reporting information about  
5 preparations for the October demonstration, a feature of  
6 the reports is that they record information about  
7 political activity of an individual in the Labour Party.

8 The final report concerning a meeting held on  
9 29 October '68 contains the officer's account of  
10 the views of her group about the demonstration. Those  
11 views being that it was "a complete and utter disaster".  
12 HN334 used this observation as an excuse to leave  
13 the group. She then withdrew from her service with  
14 the SDS and returned to Special Branch.

15 Within the hearing bundle for this officer, there  
16 are reports authored by her both before and after her  
17 deployment. HN334 recalls that she was only deployed  
18 into one group during her time, that being  
19 the Havering VSC. Any or reports, she suggests, were  
20 a result of specific tasking whilst a member of  
21 Special Branch and not in her undercover identity.

22 One report authored by HN334 in August 1968  
23 concerned an individual and her correspondence in  
24 connection with the funding of an art college's October  
25 revolution account. Other reports from the same period

1           arise from attendance by HN334 and HN68 whom  
2           the document suggests was a member of the SDS at the  
3           time at a private meeting of the Camden Branch of  
4           International Socialism. The subject of the meeting was  
5           recorded as being "Negro struggles in America" with  
6           the report recording information about activism in  
7           racial equality. The five reports in the hearing bundle  
8           relate to her work in Special Branch after leaving  
9           the SDS. They relate to groups in which the SDS did  
10          report and appear to be examples of non-SDS sources of  
11          intelligence available to Special Branch on those  
12          groups, such as the Women's Liberation workshop and  
13          the Stop the Seventy Tour Committee.

14                 HN334 submitted a number of photographs of early  
15          members of the SDS taken as she believes shortly after  
16          the 27 October demonstration.

17                 Sir, that completes the summary on behalf of  
18          the second officer.

19          THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. That completes  
20          proceedings for today. We will resume at 10 o'clock  
21          tomorrow morning.

22          MR BARR: Sir, if I may interrupt.

23          THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

24          MR BARR: I'm terribly sorry, but there's one more thing  
25          I do have to add.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: I do apologise. I had omitted a task that  
2 you had now to perform. I apologise to you. Please  
3 complete it.

4 MR BARR: In addition to publishing on the Inquiry's website  
5 today the witness statement and documents for each of  
6 HN329, HN218 and HN334, we will also be publishing  
7 documents associated with the deployments of six other  
8 former SDS officers from whom we have not been able to  
9 obtain a witness statement.

10 The first of these is HN68, who used the cover name  
11 Sean Lynch. He targeted the International Socialists  
12 and Irish campaign groups, including the Irish civil  
13 rights campaign, the Northern Ireland  
14 Civil Rights Association and Sinn Fein.

15 Our analysis of those documents can be found in  
16 appendix 2 to Counsel to the Inquiry's opening  
17 statement, starting at page 79.

18 The second officer is HN331, whose cover name is  
19 unknown. HN331 infiltrated the Notting Hill Vietnam  
20 Solidarity Campaign and our analysis commences at  
21 page 85 of appendix 2 to Counsel to the Inquiry's  
22 opening statement.

23 The third officer is HN323, Helen Crampton, whose  
24 cover name is unknown. She infiltrated the Notting Hill  
25 Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and our analysis of her

1 documents commences at page 88 of appendix 2.

2 Fourth, HN327, David Fisher. Whose cover name is  
3 unknown, who infiltrated the Notting Hill Vietnam  
4 Solidarity Campaign and the Croydon Vietnam Solidarity  
5 Campaign. The analysis is at page 90 of appendix 2.

6 Fifth, HN318, Ray Wilson, cover name unknown, who  
7 infiltrated various manifestations of the Vietnam  
8 Solidarity Campaign, including the north-west London  
9 Ad Hoc Committee, the Notting Hill VSC, Croydon VSC,  
10 the Earls Court VSC and the VSC's October 27 Ad Hoc  
11 Committee, as well as the libertarian left.  
12 The analysis is at page 96 of appendix 2.

13 Finally, HN335. Mike Tyrell, whose cover name is  
14 unknown, who infiltrated Maoist groups, including  
15 the Earls Court VSC, the October 27th Committee for  
16 Solidarity with Vietnam, the south-east London Ad Hoc  
17 Committee, the Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front,  
18 the March 9th Committee for Solidarity with Vietnam and  
19 the Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation.  
20 The analysis starts at page 111 of appendix 2.

21 Thank you, sir.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That now does conclude  
23 proceedings for the day and we will resume at 10.00  
24 tomorrow.

25 MS PURSER: Thanks very much, everyone. The hearings have

