

# DAVE MORRIS – SECOND OPENING STATEMENT 14.4.2021

## INTRODUCTION

1. I make this second Core Participant opening statement following the recent disclosure to me of a substantial volume of material showing the targeting of myself personally by UCO ‘Graham Coates’ ie his witness statement and related material that the police have had for years (and which I have just recently been able to read). I hope to respond briefly to some of the strategic issues raised, and explain a bit about being an activist.
2. I welcome the Opening Statement given by Kirsten Heaven on behalf of the non-state Core Participants. I don’t intend to repeat its points here, except for its conclusion – which I agree with:

*“The sheer scale of the spying operation, the volume of people and groups spied upon, the apparent lack of accountability, the exaggeration of risk, and the obvious imbalance in targeting by the SDS between the left and the right all suggests, in the submission of the NPSCPs, that undercover policing during this Tranche was from its inception unjustified and illegitimate. It was an unlawful enterprise conducted for political purposes and motivated by the desire to preserve the power of the establishment rather than protect the wider public interest.”*

3. I also reaffirm my previous Witness Statement from March 2020, and my Opening Statement of November last year (paragraphs 6-22 of which were formally endorsed by 90 of the non-State CPs).

## ABOUT MYSELF

4. As outlined in more detail during my previous statements, I have been involved since 1974 in a range of groups and campaigns trying to encourage people to support one another and to make the world a better place. Such groups include ones promoting libertarian socialist / anarchist politics, workplace solidarity, environmental campaigning (including London Greenpeace), opposition to corporate power and exploitation (including being one of the two defendants in the ‘McLibel’ case), and community groups promoting local mutual aid and self-organisation speaking up for their needs as local residents. I am currently Secretary of the Haringey Federation of Residents Associations, and Chair of the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces.
5. The essence of my personal motivation and political beliefs has remained constant throughout the last 50 years or so – the desire to tackle injustice, to seek improvements in society in the public interest, and to encourage and empower people to have as much control over their lives as possible.
6. I left school in 1972 at the age of 18 and then did 2 years of full time voluntary work placements with refugees and people with disabilities.

7. I then began my job as an Islington postal worker in 1974, and moved into that borough.
8. I first became aware of the anarchist groups through an October 1974 BBC 'Open Door' programme supportive of the movement. Why was I attracted to anarchist ideas back in the 1970s? Anarchism is defined as: '*A political theory advocating the abolition of hierarchical government and the organisation of society on a voluntary cooperative basis without recourse to force or compulsion.*' [OED / Lexico online]. Anarchist ideas are about seeking a society based on freedom and sharing, rather than power and greed etc, and an inclusive and collective way of working without hierarchical structures. These are traditional ideas which – along with authoritarian ideas too - can be found within the hearts of the majority of people, within the majority of all social and community groups, and in movements for a better society. There is also a need to take personal responsibility for what's around us – to care about others and to try to improve society regarding for example: people's rights to housing, public services, a decent income for all, good working conditions, and human rights; some real control over lives at work, in neighbourhoods, in people's private lives; and to protect the natural environment.
9. In early 1975, I believe, I started attending the Freedom newspaper collective meetings in Whitechapel. A few weeks later I got involved instead in the Anarchy magazine collective as the nearest group to me – meeting in someone's Islington's home. Also the group was good at discussing important everyday issues of housing, poverty, exploitation, feminism, parenting, industrial disputes, etc. It was a friendly, sociable group based on meetings advertised in the paper and open to all supporters.
10. I always tried to understand and appreciate a wide range of points of view within the anarchist movement, and indeed all related campaigning activities.
11. I was active in the Union of Postal Workers (UPW) up to 1980, encouraging a spirit of mutual support and solidarity in the workplace and discussing and taking up issues of concern to all members relating to terms and conditions of employment, wages and rights. I was elected from my branch to attend a UPW annual delegates conference of 3,000 delegates, and a National Rank and File Trade Union Movement conference of 1100 delegates. Eventually I was elected as the local UPW branch secretary. My branch of course took part in a number of local, London and national postal disputes. I did my job diligently and personally got on well with most managers I came in contact with. [Appendix 1: See my Post Office reference]
12. I never hid my views, nor did I try to force them on anyone else.
13. Anarchy magazine gave a platform for a range of views, some of which I disagreed with or was uncomfortable with but were legitimate subjects of information to impart and debate to be had: eg an anti-abortion article (I was concerned by a failure to put women's right to choose at the heart of the subject), anti-fascist news and strategy (concerned by it being too dismissive of mass community-based educational work needed), and about guerrilla groups abroad (concerned this was too militaristic and a substitute for grassroots movements for change).

14. I was opposed to the Soviet Union's system and empire, and keen to support dissidents. For example I took part in a pro-dissident picket outside the Bulgarian tourist office in 1977 (but was unfortunately arrested for 'obstruction' by the police despite no 'obstruction' occurring). I also visited Poland 3 times in the 1980s to support Solidarnosc union activists and young anarchists resisting Soviet-style rule. I was pleased to be able help establish direct links between those interned in Poland and Northern Ireland, and tried to help establish direct links between miners in eastern Poland and Yorkshire.
15. My increasing focus on the importance of grassroots movements (not just ideological groups or newspapers) and my increasing concern for the growing threats to the environment (especially the nuclear power industry) led me to drift towards getting involved in those movements towards the end of the 70s.
16. And since then being involved in community and environmental groups and movements has been my main focus.

### ***Relations***

17. With other people: Personally I try to get on with pretty much everyone. I value genuine friendships and honesty, especially within activist and community groups. I don't like violence between people, and I've never hit another person in my life as far as I can recall, even when I have been physically attacked. However I believe, as do most people and the law of the land, that people have the right to defend themselves (effectively but proportionately) when attacked or put under threat.
18. With Government: Groups and movements I am currently part of expect Government support and action for their cause. Hence I am happy to work constructively alongside both local and national Government who have access to the resources and decision-making powers communities need to work for them. On the local level I have been chair of my local Friends of Lordship Recreation Ground for the last 20 years - in which we have been successfully working in partnership with Haringey Council parks service to jointly manage Tottenham's largest public park. It has been recognised as an exemplary project with a national profile. At the national level over the last 3 years I have been on the sector/Government liaison body, coordinating its Community Empowerment workstream. [See Appendix 2: Letter to the NPPGS from Rishi Sunak MP when Minister for Parks.]

### **THE CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE SPECIFIC EVIDENCE OF 'GRAHAM COATES'**

19. I have read the statement and related disclosure.
20. Looking back on the surveillance and infiltration of groups I was involved with in the 1970s (and then later in the 1980s and onwards), and how I was personally targeted, I feel disgust at this cynical and blatant breach of trust. Not just for me but also for the other victims I knew and know – such as the family with young children whose home was where the Anarchy Collective held meetings. Of course I am outraged not just by

the tactics used but also by the very existence and purpose of the whole spying operation. This Stasi-like behaviour is totally unacceptable.

21. All my activity which was being monitored was traditional and legitimate political and campaigning activity, albeit much of it at the radical and libertarian end of the left/right spectrum viz: producing magazines, exercising hard-fought for rights to freedom of speech and assembly, attending or helping organise protests and social events (eg demonstrations, public meetings, picnics, attending union meetings and supporting industrial disputes, defence campaigns for people arrested) etc. These rights, explicitly enshrined in international conventions and laws, are supposed to be afforded specific and highest possible protection.
22. Secret political policing is not supposed to happen in this country, only in totalitarian regimes who hate any idea of human rights or effective opposition.
23. I and others I know who were targeted were friendly and trusting people – and not some sort of scary thugs from Planet Zog as implied by a few apologists for this 50 year operation. We were aiming to spread ideas which seek to protect and improve society for virtually everyone's benefit.
24. Graham Coates concludes: Para 110. '*The anarchists I reported on posed a minimal challenge to public order*'...and '*did not even really discuss activities that would be a public order threat*'. Para 113. '*I do not think either the IS or the anarchist movement was subversive in terms of their actions*'. Para 127 '*I do not believe any info I provided.. was particularly significant. I do not think it would have made any difference to public order if I had not worked for the SDS*'.
25. A key question therefore is: was the infiltration, and the resulting breach of trust and human rights (especially of protected human rights, for example to participate in political activity, to assembly, and to exercise freedom of speech) justifiable at all, let alone proven to be justified in the individual circumstances of each operation?
26. The spying operation against myself and others during the 1970s has not, on the face of it, been shown to have had any reasonable basis at all.
27. In fact the opposite is true. The right to take part in political, religious and trades union activity has additional legal protection at highest level. In my own experience, I have battled over those rights as they are fundamental to people's ability to challenge injustice and oppression. Here are just three, very different, examples:
  - being a litigant in person during the 'McLibel' trial throughout the 1990s, the longest case in English legal history. The campaign successfully used mass defiance to defeat McDonald's attempts to censor their critics – as a result it is thought that no corporation has taken a similar case to court since. Helen Steel and I also eventually secured a historic legal victory at the European Court of Human Rights in 2005. [Details in my first Opening Statement]

- in 2007 challenging the stop and search military-style police road blocks in Kent aiming to undermine and isolate a week long ‘camp for climate action’ at the site of Kingsnorth Power Station. I took part in a mass defiance effort which ensured the suspension and change of that police operation at the site. I was one of three people who took a successful legal case against the police afterwards which resulted in a declaration that mass stop and search against protestors was illegal.
- as a community activist in Haringey asserting the right to be able to distribute campaign leaflets to the public on the street. Enforcement officers had to recognise that political campaigners were exempt from bans on handing out commercial flyers in High Streets.

28. Of course countless thousands of others throughout the UK and throughout history have asserted their political and human rights, and will continue to do so.

#### ***Note on the strength of the evidence base in the documents disclosed***

29. Graham Coates states, in para 38 of his witness statement, that: *‘I have considered the reports in the witness bundle. I do not specifically recall the content of any [my emphasis] of these reports, however I accept that I must have provided information for a number [my emphasis] of them’*.

30. It is important to note that information in the relevant reports is not necessarily accurate. For example, a key report about me personally after a year of being targetted [UCPI 0000021741, 23.5.1978] states: *‘Morris was brought up in Hackney and Stoke Newington [Note: It was actually Ealing and Finchley], and gained GCE ‘A’ level passes in English [actually Physics] and Mathematics at a local school [actually it wasn’t local, it was Ealing and Finchley]’*. Some reports also seem to have been created up to a month after the event they purport to describe, with the text not in quotation marks (ie appearing to have been written by someone else who may or may not have seen some UCO notes, and who may or may not have edited, embellished or created content in any way they sought fit).

### **THE WIDER CONTEXT – THE REAL SOURCES OF VIOLENCE AND SUBVERSION**

31. In the relevant period there seemed to be an almost pathological obsession with the left, by those in charge of the spying operations. They seemed to cover the whole left spectrum. That included the reformist left, radical left, single-issue left, left parties, libertarian/anarchist left, left MPs, and left-leaning trades union activities. What unites all those left tendencies, whatever their tactical differences? The fact they are all motivated by seeking to protect and improve society and to encourage people to organise and speak up for their needs.

32. Such secret political policing is only supposed to take place under totalitarian regimes who despise human rights and any effective questioning and opposition to those in power.

33. In the mid-1970s someone decided I should be targeted by the SDS/SyS. As demonstrated elsewhere it seems clear that that extreme right wing and pro-nazi groups were virtually ignored.

34. But if the SDS/SyS had been genuinely worried about serious and large-scale criminality and subversion in the 1970s, and had carried out proper risk assessments on the key

existing and emerging threats to our society they would have been more likely to have targeted the following organisations active around the same period:

- **fossil fuels companies** (who 50 years ago were secretly suppressing the research findings of their industry's causing of global climate heating. This now threatens the lives of millions of people and the collapse of the eco-systems on which our species depends)
- **the tobacco companies** and their subversive advertising (encouraging people to smoke, leading to widespread disease and death)
- **the development of tax havens** (subverting the State and society by hiving off ££billions of tax revenue which could have gone to public services);
- **car companies** (and the rampant pollution, danger and deaths caused by cars, and the related industrial-scale criminality of breaching of laws on speeding, parking, pollution etc), all backed by subversive pro-car advertising. Traffic pollution contributes to thousands of premature deaths a year and has been at illegal levels in urban areas for many years.
- **the military in Northern Ireland** and the Bloody Sunday massacre of demonstrators calling for equal rights for all, followed by mass internment without trial of thousands of people (showing what the British Government is prepared to do to its citizens). This led to another 25 years of bitter war and hundreds of deaths, only resolved by political negotiations and solutions.
- **The police themselves**, with the institutional racism and racist use of 'sus laws' in the 1970s (believed to be the key cause of the 1981 uprisings and serious public disorder in Brixton and across the country).
- **the major construction companies** bitterly opposed a 1971 national strike to improve wages and conditions on building sites. Trade union pickets who became known as the Shrewsbury 24 were framed and some jailed. After nearly 50 years of campaigning the Court of Appeal last month declared a miscarriage of justice. During the appeal it was revealed that a secret 'anti-communist' unit within the Foreign Office, backed by the Prime Minister Edward Heath, had been involved. Meanwhile the illegal industry-wide blacklist to deny jobs to construction site union activists and others continued until recently. Why didn't the SDS or MI5 target these construction companies instead of union activists? Trades unionists continued to campaign against shocking safety conditions on building sites, and can report that the high rate of 240 recorded deaths a year in the early 1970s was down to 50 a year in the early 1990s. <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2021/mar/23/shrewsbury-24-court-of-appeal-overturns-1970s-picketing-convictions>  
[https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Deaths-of-UK-construction-employees-in-the-25-years-prior-to-the-CDM-Regulations-were\\_fig1\\_245407835](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Deaths-of-UK-construction-employees-in-the-25-years-prior-to-the-CDM-Regulations-were_fig1_245407835)

#### ***The targeting of London Greenpeace from the late 1970s onwards***

35. London Greenpeace begins to feature in the disclosed material from around 1978 onwards as far as I can tell. I first came across the group in the late 70s through their work to expose the truth about the **dangers of nuclear power stations**. I later got involved in the group in 1982. The group is a NSCP and is due to be scheduled to appear in later hearings covering the 1980s-2000s, so are not contributing a response at this stage to the disclosure so far.

36. Throughout the 1970s London Greenpeace campaigned against **militarism, and nuclear weapons** – which only exist to enable Governments to threaten to murder millions of innocent people. From 1981 the group supported what became a massive movement to oppose the siting of US cruise missiles on British soil from 1981, with tens of thousands involved in regular blockades of military sites including at Greenham Common. London Greenpeace proposed and helped coordinate a day of action against the profits from the arms trade in the City of London in 1983. In 1982 the group had supported opposition to

both sides in the Falklands War, which notoriously included the deaths of hundreds of soldiers from the sinking of an argentine ship, the Belgrano, outside an exclusion zone.

37. In the late 1970s the group began to focus more on the dangers of **nuclear energy production** - for which the group was targeted by UCOs [See disclosed files]. The group was also named in a Secret Anti-Terrorism Report to the Government in 1980, obtained under the 30 years rule. It states: '*Anti-nuclear power groups have been active since 1977 in arranging demonstrations in various parts of the country. In the past 2 years there has been a marked increase in the number of small anarchist dominated or influenced groups in the UK, the most prominent being London Greenpeace; the latter plays a major coordinating role in anti-nuclear affairs and is responsible for many of the international links.*' ... '*The bulk of the anti-nuclear power lobby (including most of the anarchist groups) in the UK is opposed to the use of violence and there is no evidence of any current terrorist threat from that quarter.*' [See attached Appendix: Secret Anti-Terrorism Intelligence Report extract, 1980].

But it was the industry itself that should have been investigated, with the 1979 Three Mile Island power plant meltdown in the USA a warning of the threat posed to the public. In 1986 the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown caused an estimated 9-16,000 deaths from air pollution throughout Europe over the following 20 years.

38. I was later involved in the London Greenpeace anti-McDonald's campaign. **The McDonald's Corporation** opened their first UK burger store in 1974. The campaign and subsequent McLibel trial successfully exposed the corporation's subversion of society (McDonaldisation of society), of the parent/child relationship (via advertising to children), daily industrial-scale breaches of laws protecting workers rights and animal welfare, and the fast food industry's seeking to replace healthy eating habits with the current unhealthy junk food culture. These resulted in serious rulings against the company at the end of the legal case. Yet why didn't SDS or the security services want to investigate and infiltrate this company? There will be more on this matter at a later stage of the proceedings. This will particularly focus on the 3 UCOs who infiltrated the group during this period, and the shocking and disgusting tactics they employed.

### SOME BRIEF CONCLUSIONS

39. The spying operation against myself and others during the 1970s has not, on the face of it, been shown to have had any reasonable basis at all. In fact just the opposite – it was unacceptable and unlawful.

40. It was a gross breach of peoples' trust and human rights, which maybe could have raised an arguable case if targeting active gangs of mass killers, but has no shred of legitimacy when it was actually being used to protect those who control society's wealth and power from the real needs of the public.

Dave Morris

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#### Appendices attached

- DM Post Office reference
- NFPGS Sunak reference
- Anti-Terrorism Intelligence Report[extract], 1980