
**Opening statement in Tranche 1
Phase 2 to the Undercover Policing
Inquiry on behalf of:**

**Richard Chessum
'Mary'**

**James Scobie QC | Garden Court Chambers
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14th April 2021

Opening Statement in Tranche 1 Phase 2 on behalf of Richard Chessum and 'Mary'

We represent four Core-Participants who are directly affected by Undercover officers whose evidence is to be heard in this Phase.

Richard Chessum and 'Mary' were spied upon by Detective Constable Richard Clark. We are using his real name because it is one of the few that the Inquiry has disclosed. Every other officer that we refer to, and there are many, is referred to by their cover name.

We also represent Lindsey German and John Rees. They were spied upon, at the very least, by 'Phil Cooper' and 'Colin Clark'. The evidence of other officers impacts directly on the *Socialist Workers Party*, the organisation in which they held Central Committee Roles.

We were directed to provide this written Opening Statement by the 14th April 2021. That direction was made on the basis that the Inquiry would disclose the evidence of these officers by the 4th March 2021. That was not done.

The material in respect of Clark was not provided until the 1st April 2021

At the time of writing, the Inquiry has still not served a witness statement from 'Colin Clark.' It has not served a single page of disclosure in respect of 'Phil Cooper.'

We have asked that these officers be put back to the next phase, to give those who were spied upon a chance to contribute. The Inquiry has refused. That has denied these people the opportunity to provide an opening statement before the evidence is given. The Inquiry has denied itself the opportunity of looking at that evidence from the perspective of those that were spied upon, rather than those doing the spying.

It is obvious to anyone, and plainly to this Inquiry, that late or non-disclosure inevitably restricts the ability of Non-State Core-Participants to review the material, investigate the detail and ultimately put forward their side of the story. Is this a deliberate policy?

Despite the limitations that have been forced on us, we will:

1: show that the Special Demonstration Squad went far beyond its original remit. That DC Clark manipulated the democratic processes of an organisation to place himself in a high position of responsibility. From there he was able to de-stabilise and attempt to decapitate the organisation.

2: to achieve that he used and exploited the trust of law-abiding citizens, including four women victims, of his manipulative sexual relationships.

3: show that those in positions of power in the Metropolitan Police were fully aware of his tactics.

4: show that his deployment served to direct those undercover officers that followed to take up organisational roles, which then became the norm.

5. show that ultimately, authority for all of this came from the highest level of Government. Prime Ministers were aware of the activity and remit of the Special Demonstration Squad.

We will also draw attention to the evidence showing wide-spread blacklisting of individuals because of their political views, and invite the Inquiry to properly scrutinise this evidence and deliver a degree of belated justice to the victims.

We will also demonstrate that the Inquiry has the evidence to effectively challenge these officers, when they try to justify their behaviour. We urge the Inquiry to take the perspective and experience of the ordinary people that were spied on, and directly make that challenge. It has a duty to do so.

DC Richard Clark:

In December 1974, Richard Chessum and 'Mary' were students at Goldsmith's College. 'Mary' was studying to become a teacher. Richard was finishing off a Sociology degree. Both were members of the College's *Socialist Society*. Intelligent people committed to helping others.

'Mary' was 27 years old. She had come to the UK having grown up in South Africa. She had witnessed the state violence and injustice of the Apartheid Regime. She campaigned on issues of anti-racism, women's liberation, civil liberties and free

speech. She was an elected Student Union Officer and devoted much of her free time to campaigning and helping others.

Richard Chessum, was 32. He had been a Methodist lay preacher, working full time at the South London Mission. He was involved in the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an international movement committed to active non-violence to change the world for the better. He had worked as a political officer for his local *Labour Party* and been involved in the *Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament*. He demonstrated against the war in Vietnam and against Apartheid. He joined the *Anti-Internment League* and organised the lobbying of MPs in the aftermath of the shooting of unarmed civilians by the British Army on Bloody Sunday.

At the same time - in December 1974¹, DC Richard Layton Clark was deployed into Goldsmith's College by the Special Demonstration Squad. He was 29 years old, married with children. A police officer for five years². He stole the identity of a deceased child, Richard Gibson, from the records at Somerset House. He enrolled at the College on a Portuguese language course.

Clark's target was the *Troops Out Movement*. An interesting target from the perspective of this Inquiry, because it did not fit with the stated aims of the Special Demonstration Squad.

The movement posed no public order risk at all. Its aims were publicly stated and straightforward:

- i. Self-determination for the people of Ireland and
- ii. the withdrawal of British Troops from Northern Ireland.

Their methods were lobbying Members of Parliament, drafting alternative legislation, and raising awareness with the occasional low-key demonstration, talks and film-screenings.

The *Troops Out Movement* had already been infiltrated, as recently as 1974, by (HN298) 'Mike Scott' who concluded that "*It had no subversive objectives and as far as I am aware did not employ or approve the use of violence to achieve its objectives*".

¹ MPS-0724140

² MPS 0724152

³ 'Scott' was right. There was no history of any public order issue related to the Movement, either before Clark's deployment or in the many years that followed.

So, what was the justification?

DC Clark is dead. Therefore, we don't have a witness statement from him or the opportunity to ask him questions.

However, we have had sight of disclosed reports that he wrote. Reading those alongside the evidence of Richard Chessum and 'Mary,' we can gain significant insight into how he worked.

Step 1 - Identifying a Target Organisation:

First, his remit was meticulously planned.

Shortly before he was deployed, he wrote to the national office of the *Troops Out Movement*. He told them he was a student at Goldsmiths and asked about any local South East London branch that he could join. He already knew that there wasn't one.

Richard Chessum had previously been involved with the *Anti-Internment League* and so was known to some in the national office of the *Troops Out Movement*. He had not become involved because he was studying hard and had recently been ill. He had not joined and had no plans to do so. Nonetheless the national office contacted Richard Chessum, and a meeting was arranged between him and Clark.

By February 1975, using the *Socialist Society* as a tool, Clark had succeeded in creating an entirely new branch of the *Troops Out Movement*. There were five founder members of that branch; Mary, Richard Chessum, Richard Chessum's partner, another student and DC Richard Clark.⁴

Clark had completed Step 1. He was in the *Troops Out Movement*. But rather than infiltrating a branch, he had actively established one. He generated something to spy on. He encouraged and organised demonstrations, such as the picketing of the local Woolwich barracks⁵ and the homes of local MPs⁶. This created the potential for the

³ HN298 Statement paragraph 167.

⁴ MPS-0728678

⁵ MPS-0728676

⁶ MPS-0728704

public order problems that the Special Demonstration Squad supposedly existed to prevent.

He created targets to spy on. Neither 'Mary'⁷, Richard Chessum⁸ nor his partner⁹ had Special Branch files in their names until they became involved with Clark. Richard Chessum had come to Special Branch's attention before, because he had merely written a letter to the *Black Dwarf* publication¹⁰, but there was no file on him. In all three of their cases their Special Branch files were tagged with 1975 as the year of their creation i.e. after they had met Clark.

What was the result of Clark's work?

Richard Chessum and 'Mary' had their personal lives reported and monitored to an extent that was both sinister and ridiculous. Details of their private lives passed up the chain of command and along to MI5. Their physical appearances, commentary on their body size¹¹, addresses, personal relationships, place of work, hairstyles¹², immigration applications¹³, health issues¹⁴, what theatre productions they went to¹⁵, where they were going on holiday to and who with¹⁶, right down to the brand of cigarette they smoked.¹⁷

There was no reason for any of this. None of these people posed a threat to anyone. They were targeted first, because of their politics. Secondly, because they were useful, and Clark used them.

Step 2 – Developing an identity and building trust

Clark aimed to get himself into a position of trust and responsibility. He managed to do exactly that.

⁷ UCPI0000012136

⁸ UCPI0000012122

⁹ MPS-0728701

¹⁰ MPS-0728205

¹¹ MPS-0728938

¹² UCPI0000012136

¹³ UCPI0000012136

¹⁴ MPS-0728205 and UCPI0000012135

¹⁵ UCPI0000006936

¹⁶ UCPI0000012737

¹⁷ MPS-0728938

What were his difficulties? He had no back history. He had just appeared. So, before he could engineer himself into a key position he needed to establish a background for himself and a place in the social network of political activists. That was Step 2.

He did that by exploitation. 'Mary' is unequivocal. Clark used sexual advances on activists as part of a way of ingratiating his way into the group as a whole and building a backstory. He certainly did that with her. Clark initiated a sexual relationship with 'Mary' having been invited by her into her home.

But, it was not just 'Mary.' In total he had sexual relationships with **four** activists that we know of. A pattern emerges from his reports. We can see that Clark exploited each one of those women to assist him with his infiltration of the *Troops Out Movement* and on at least one occasion to gain a tactical advantage. The other three women were, a 'friend of Mary's' (who, for the sake of anonymity we'll call simply "Mary's flat-mate") and two activists from the organisation *Big Flame* that was an additional target of Clark's in the latter part of his deployment. We will address these relationships as we go through the timeline of DC Clark's deployment.

The sexual relationship with 'Mary,' and the establishment of a close friendship with Richard Chessum were part of a tactical strategy and helped him achieve Step 2.

Step 3 – taking positions and moving up the hierarchy of a target organisation

As one of the founder members of the South East London branch of the *Troops Out Movement* Clark used it to gain access to the national movement. This was Clark's Step 3. It was to prove quite difficult, but he managed it with an astonishing level of ruthlessness.

By the **18th March 1975** Clark had got himself elected as the Secretary¹⁸ - the top position in the branch. He and Richard Chessum were then elected as voting delegates to the *Troops Out Movement* Liaison Committee conference. That move gave Clark access to the Movement at a national level and exposure to the leadership, with the added credential of being a branch Secretary. It ensured that he would be accompanied there by Richard Chessum, a man with a proven track record of genuine commitment. Clark's cultivated friendship with Richard Chessum gave him credibility.

¹⁸ MPS-0728710

On both the **2nd 19 and 7th 20 April 1975** Clark got himself elected as a delegate to the London Co-ordinating Committee of the Movement and the All London meeting. On the last of those occasions he had chaired the branch meeting which had taken place at Richard Chessum's home. He was becoming known at a National level.

At a branch meeting on the **21st April 1975**²¹ he pointedly took an opportunity to, in his own words, "...severely criticise" another section of the Movement. It was a move that appeared to ensure that he was elected as the branch's delegate to the National Co-ordinating Committee of the *Troops Out Movement*.

The **16th June 1975**²² was a key date. There was political division within the *Troops Out Movement*. That was replicated in the South East London Branch. The group *Workers' Fight* had mobilised their members to the branch, in an attempt, as far as Richard Chessum was concerned, to take control of it. There was significant political infighting at the meeting. Despite this, Clark was – once again - elected to be a delegate for the next London Co-ordinating Committee but this time he was elected along with a member of *Workers' Fight*.

Where previously his position as a founder member had guaranteed his delegate roles, the influx of *Workers' Fight* members could make things problematic for him. If they succeeded in completely taking over the branch then Clark would no longer be able to attend the London and National meetings. He would fail at Step 3.

On the **23rd June 1975**²³ again Clark and the member of *Workers Fight* were elected, this time as delegates to the National Co-ordinating Committee.

Four days later²⁴ Clark attended a private meeting organised by the head of the National *Troops Out Movement*, Gery Lawless. There were only 10 people in attendance. They were people that were seen as key to supporting Lawless's position in the National Movement against *Workers Fight* and the *Revolutionary Communist Group* to take control of the organisation as a whole. Clark was one of the 10. He had used his attendances at the London and National Committee meetings to get close to

¹⁹ MPS-0728718

²⁰ MPS-0728721

²¹ MPS-0728730

²² MPS-0728667

²³ MPS-0728669

²⁴ MPS-0728675

Lawless and was now seen as a key supporter. In his report Clark noted that the group *Big Flame* had also formed an “uneasy alliance” with Lawless.

On the **7th July 1975**²⁵ at a branch meeting, there was an “*unprecedented*” turnout with a number of additional attendees from *Workers Fight* and the *Revolutionary Communist Group*. One of those additional attendees was ‘Mary’s flatmate’, who was a member of *Workers Fight*. She had attended various *Troops Out Movement* pickets over the preceding weeks but this was her first attendance at a meeting. The chances of Clark continuing to be elected as a branch delegate to the London and National meetings were rapidly reducing as it was.

Two months later, on the **16th September 1975**²⁶ there was another meeting of the South East London Branch. This one was overwhelmingly attended by members of the *Revolutionary Communist Group* and *Worker’s Fight*. There was an election for delegates to attend the London Co-ordinating Committee meeting 3 days later. This particular Committee meeting was going to be an important one, because it would select delegates that could stand for National Positions. The two South East London branch delegates would be potential candidates for those positions. One member of *Workers Fight* was elected as a delegate. For the remaining position: Clark stood **against** Richard Chessum, and he was elected by an additional two votes. This is significant as we believe that one of those votes was from ‘Mary’s flatmate,’ a member of *Workers Fight*, who, conveniently, Clark had been having a sexual relationship with.

The next day²⁷, at a *Big Flame* meeting, Richard Chessum lamented the takeover of the South East London branch by members of *Workers Fight*. Clark was present.

Sure enough, on the **19th September 1975**²⁸ at the London Co-ordinating Committee that Clark was a delegate to, he was elected to the Organising Committee for London. It was a National position. He had now passed beyond branch level politics.

Clark had first stood against his friend Richard Chessum, and in doing so an Undercover Officer had deprived the Movement of a National Officer who genuinely had the interests and aims of the Movement at heart. Clark had replaced a decent

²⁵ MPS-0728697

²⁶ MPS-0728753

²⁷ MPS-0728754

²⁸ MPS-0728755

man, Richard Chessum, with himself, an undercover police officer. To get there he had secured the support, we believe, of at least one member of *Workers Fight*, a female activist who he just happened to have been sleeping with.

By the **29th September 1975**²⁹ the *Workers Fight* takeover of the branch was complete with all 5 of the delegates elected to the TOM National Conference being from that group (including Mary's friend). It no longer mattered to Clark because he had already passed beyond the branch, he would be going to the National Conference by reason of his new National Officer role. On the **13th October 1975**³⁰ he resigned the position of Branch Secretary. He no longer needed it, and made what he himself called, in his report to his police superiors, "a scathing attack" on *Revolutionary Communist Group* and *Workers Fight*. Richard Chessum remembers that resignation differently. He recalls Clark simply saying a few words in a laid back and matter of fact announcement. But that apparently 'principled resignation' would demonstrate to the national leadership of the *Troops Out Movement* (particularly Gery Lawless) that he was on their side, that he was part of the "clique run by Gery Lawless".

In his new role on the Organising Committee of the *Troops out Movement*, Clark quickly became the London Organiser, nominated for the position by Gery Lawless himself³¹. Shortly afterwards he was again nominated by Lawless, this time for a position on the National Secretariat³². He obtained this position and was then one of only seven people in charge of the whole movement.

He continued his relationship with Richard Chessum, primarily because he had friends in *Big Flame*. That organisation had been notoriously difficult for the Special Demonstration Squad to infiltrate, but Clark was targeting it. He continued to attend meetings at Richard Chessum's home³³ and reported on him. He recorded that Richard Chessum had started a new job at the London Electricity Board³⁴ - this information was passed to MI5. Mary and her flat-mate largely disappeared from Clark's reporting, now that they had served their purpose.

²⁹ MPS-0728761

³⁰ MPS-0728732

³¹ MPS-0728736 20th of October 1975.

³² MPS-0728762

³³ UCPI0000009283

³⁴ MPS-0731417

Clark busied himself with activities in the *Troops Out Movement*. He became an organiser of the national rally³⁵, where he failed to secure the attendance of any of the proposed headline acts. They included John Lennon³⁶, who also had a Special Branch file open in his name, and Peter O'Toole, who may or may not have had a file held on him.

Clark also pushed for the removal of the *Troops Out Movement* Press Officer from the Secretariat³⁷ and then secured himself a position on the Press Committee³⁸. He arranged speakers for the Movement's public meetings. He even helped to arrange what was called "...a strong contingent of Stewards" to prevent attacks from the *National Front*³⁹. That was a legitimate protective measure. Yet we expect to see those from *Youth Against Racism in Europe*, *Anti-Nazi League* and the *Socialist Workers' Party*, criticised for the same thing in a later part of the Inquiry.

By March 1976⁴⁰, when Gery Lawless had to stand down for paternity leave, Clark took his position as Convenor of the Secretariat. He was then in charge of the whole movement for several months.

What did Clark do in this leading position?

We do know that he proposed, and persuaded delegates to vote for, postponing a long-planned *Troops Out Movement* Trade Union delegation to Ireland⁴¹. A Press-statement was then prepared explaining that decision, presumably by Clark in his additional position on the *Troops Out Movement* Press Committee. We know that he used his position as National Convenor to "severely criticise" another individual member whose name has been redacted⁴² and was involved in the censuring of Sean Matgamna, a very prominent member of the *Troops Out Movement*.⁴³ In the course of his stewardship at least one prominent organisation withdrew its affiliation.⁴⁴ There was also serious dissent with the *International Marxist Group* over decisions taken in

³⁵ MPS-0728772

³⁶ MPS-0728774

³⁷ MPS-0728774

³⁸ MPS-0728779

³⁹ MPS-0728776

⁴⁰ MPS-0728785

⁴¹ UCPI0000012332 and UCPI0000012328

⁴² UCPI0000009684

⁴³ UCPI0000009733

⁴⁴ UCPI0000009790

respect of the trade union delegation to Northern Ireland.⁴⁵ By the time Gery Lawless returned four months later, two members of the Secretariat had resigned⁴⁶. Remember this was a serving Metropolitan Police officer, working undercover, making day to day decisions for a campaigning organisation.

Clark had also entirely re-positioned his loyalties. Having been an ardent supporter of Lawless and using his support to manoeuvre himself into the Secretariat, he now turned against him.

In reports to his superior officers, Clark referred to “typical Lawless tantrums”⁴⁷ and on the **25th July 1976**⁴⁸ he took the highly unusual and hugely risky step of holding a meeting at his own police cover flat. The meeting, with *Big Flame* members, was “*attempting to offer some form of resistance to the leadership (i.e. Lawless’s supporters) within TOM.*” They were discussing an internal coup, decapitating the Troops Out Movement of its long-time head.

On the **2nd September 1976** a further meeting with *Big Flame* took the coup project further.⁴⁹ Clark noted in his report at the time: “*Independent elements within the TOM have over recent months become increasingly frustrated at carrying out the doctrine of the “Lawless clique”... Big Flame members in TOM have been instrumental in bringing together some of the more influential members of the organization in the hope of formulating a common policy with which to fight the leadership at the next National delegate conference, due to take place in late November*”.

Clark described the meeting as a “*significant beginning*”; “*the major aim of those represented would have to be the defeat of the present leadership and the replacement of them by independent members*”. The new leadership was proposed at that meeting. It included four redacted names and Clark himself.

What were his motives? Was it to de-stabilise and decapitate the *Troops Out Movement*? Was he trying to ingratiate himself with *Big Flame*? Perhaps his plotting was a means of doing that. He had spent the summer trying very hard to infiltrate them,

⁴⁵ UCPI0000009790

⁴⁶ UCPI0000009790

⁴⁷ UCPI0000010704

⁴⁸ UCPI0000010775

⁴⁹ UCPI0000021388

chairing meetings, listing himself as a “member” in reports.⁵⁰ Clark also embarked on sexual relationships with two female members of the *Big Flame*. For him, sexual relationships were a tried and tested tactic of getting exactly where he wanted to go. He had used Mary to give himself a background and authority; her flat-mate to ensure a vote to get him up to National level in the Troops Out Movement, and two *Big Flame* activists to try to cement his position in that group, in the process firming up support for his coup.

However, with *Big Flame*, Clark had over-reached himself. We do not know exactly what his mistake was. Was it holding a meeting in his un-lived in undercover flat? Or was it (as another officer has suggested) that he gave different accounts of his background to *Big Flame* activists he was sleeping with?⁵¹ Perhaps it was that his Machiavellian approach was just too obviously dishonest? Perhaps, as Richard Chessum suspects, *Big Flame* were canny enough to recognize that Clark had no political background knowledge. Whatever it was, members of *Big Flame* also went to Somerset House and they found Rick Gibson’s birth certificate, and then they found his death certificate.

They confronted Clark with both. Richard Chessum tells of how he heard about this confrontation from his friends in *Big Flame*. How he went white and nearly started to cry. His ambitious plot to unseat Gery Lawless was over.

What was the fall out? Clark took flight and disappeared from the political scene altogether. Richard Chessum later saw a dossier that *Big Flame* had prepared, that included a letter from Clark written to one of the female activists, saying that he “had to go away”.

Clark’s exposure is significant for one other clear reason.

When he walked out, there was no threat of physical violence towards him, and no attempt at retribution. A stand-out theme across the groups that were infiltrated over the decades is that none of them were interested in violence, unless they had to defend themselves. If there was ever a reason and an opportunity for violence against an

⁵⁰ UCPI0000012396, UCPI0000009748, UCPI0000009775, UCPI0000009822, UCPI0000009818, UCPI0000010803, UCPI0000010825.

⁵¹ Closed Officer Gist paragraph 23.

Undercover Officer, this was it. It was not how these groups, who stood for principles, conducted themselves.

This example highlights the Special Demonstration Squad attempts to justify their infiltrations, and their applications to have their identities hidden. They look desperately inadequate.

Were the Commanders and Commissioners of the MPS aware of what was going on?

Clark's taking of high office was known to his superiors all the way up to the Commander of the Metropolitan Police Service⁵². The early principle of the Special Demonstration Squad that "*members of the squad should be told, in no uncertain terms, that they must not take office in a group, chair meetings, draft leaflets, speak in public or initiate activity*"⁵³ had been completely abandoned.

Equally, the fact that he engaged in sexual relationships with activists was no secret either. Two officers, to date, have been honest enough to disclose that they knew of DC Clark's behaviour.⁵⁴ One of those officers has gone further and admitted that sexual relationships were talked about at the weekly officer meetings⁵⁵ and that his supervising officers would have been aware because they were present. He recalls two separate occasions when Clark's sexual

relationships were raised at those meetings. He thinks that other officers and managers were present on both occasions.⁵⁶

It was inevitable that they would talk about it. Police officers, in an almost exclusively male environment. Relaxed with their guards down, amongst their own, in the late 1970s when institutionalised sexism was endemic. To suggest otherwise would be to turn a blind eye to reality.

⁵² MPS-0732954

⁵³ MPS-0724119

⁵⁴ Closed officer Gist paragraph 23 and HN304 statement paragraph 146 (a)

⁵⁵ HN304 paragraph 146 "*jokey remarks were occasionally made in SDS meetings which I took at face value and believed to be based on truth. I assumed that the women involved were activists, but cannot say whether this was the case or not. My supervising officers would have been aware of these remarks because they were present at the meetings when they were made.*"

⁵⁶ HN304 paragraph 146 (a) and 146 (b).

It is refreshing to see that at least officer 'Coates' told the truth. How many will pretend that they did not hear? Or were out of the office on those days? Or simply, when presented with simple questions, get angry and indignant that they are being asked at all?

Counsel to the Inquiry has an abundance of material to test these officers thoroughly. Should officers lie on oath, as sadly is anticipated, one wonders how the Inquiry will deal with such dishonesty.

Senior officers knew about Clark taking prominent roles and interfering in the democratic process of the *Troops Out Movement*. They also knew he was sexually abusing female activists. Despite this he left the force with a special medal, a Detective Inspector's pension and his conduct certified as "exemplary"⁵⁷.

There is only one explanation for this. His conduct was deemed acceptable. It continued for years. The Category H women are testament to the decades of sexual misconduct at the hands of these officers.

Following Clark, the taking of positions of responsibility and trust in these organisations, was common place.

Many of the officers we will hear from say that they cannot remember being elected to the position of trust, that they plainly were elected to. Or they will say that they did not really have a choice but to be elected - it just happened. Or they say that the role was not really a position of trust at all. The institutionalised dishonesty creeps into every aspect of their evidence.

Political Policing and Positions of Trust

'Mike James' (HN96) started his deployment in the *Socialist Workers Party* where he was elected to a position on the Hackney District Committee⁵⁸. After two years he moved on into the *Troops Out Movement*, where Clark had been 4 years before.

'James' is an interesting officer because he's one of two that give different accounts of the position they reached. In his impact statement, a document arguing the case for

⁵⁷ MPS-0742190

⁵⁸ UCPI0000013376

his continued anonymity, he described himself as the “National Secretary”⁵⁹ of the *Troops Out Movement* i.e. the top role. Once his anonymity was secure, he shifted, and tried to play down and minimise the importance of his position.

He was the National “Membership and Affiliation Secretary”⁶⁰ of the *Troops Out Movement* for a good 18 months.⁶¹ He is one of the officers that seems to suggest he just happened to fall into these roles⁶² rather than actively pursuing them. But he was on the top level of the organisation, the National Steering Committee, which he occasionally chaired.⁶³ He was one of nine people with a direct influence over the direction of the movement⁶⁴ and he controlled the lifeblood of any organisation, its membership. He was also on a number of additional committees, specifically tasked with organising demonstrations.⁶⁵

But it was not just Clark or ‘James’. Once the dam had cracked there was a flood of undercover police officers taking roles in the organisations they infiltrated. In some case officers took national leading roles. What resulted from this was not just information, but also the opportunity to have a say in the direction of the organisation, and ultimately to seek to derail that organisation.

(HN348) ‘Sandra Davies’ has already said that she did not remember being elected to the Executive Committee of the Women’s Liberation Front. She did not remember voting to oust the founding leader and create a completely new group, the Revolutionary Women’s Union.⁶⁶

(HN155) ‘Phil Cooper’ and (HN80) ‘Colin Clark’ were so close to the Central Committee of the Socialist Workers Party that they were able to access the Headquarters of the organisation.⁶⁷ ‘Phil Cooper’ was so involved that, in his own words, he got to sleep with “groupies”⁶⁸. We don’t yet know exactly how prominent

⁵⁹ HN96 statement paragraph 200.

⁶⁰ UCPI0000018080

⁶¹ HN96 statement paragraph 206.

⁶² HN96 statement paragraph 201.

⁶³ UCPI0000018365

⁶⁴ UCPI0000018080

⁶⁵ HN96 paragraph 96 and UCPI0000018381

⁶⁶ UCPI0000027021 and UCPI0000010908

⁶⁷ UCPI0000027519 and Chairman’s ruling 40, paragraph 4.

⁶⁸ Statement of Brian Lockie paragraph 7. Statement of David Reid paragraph 7.

they became within the organisation, because 6 weeks after the deadline for disclosure the Inquiry has still not provided us with their documentation.

(HN200) 'Roger Harris,' does not remember being the Contacts Organiser for the Twickenham branch of the *International Socialists*⁶⁹, a branch which was then involved in a de-stabilising break-away from the main group to form the *Workers' League*⁷⁰.

(HN300) 'Jim Pickford' chaired meetings, attended national conferences as a delegate, wrote articles, ran classes, argued against individuals being granted membership⁷¹. He was granted position of Branch Treasurer, he booked halls for meetings.

(HN13) 'Barry Loader' was described by his own superior officer in an internal memo as "an active and trusted member of the *Communist Party of England (Marxist-Leninist)* who is to attend the National Conference⁷².

(HN353) 'Gary Roberts' claims he was never in a position of responsibility for the *International Marxist Group*⁷³. However, his cover was as a full-time degree course student at Thames Polytechnic (with his fees paid for by the Metropolitan Police). Whilst in that cover, he became the **Vice President** of the Student's Union. He was a delegate at National National Union of Students conferences and attended the *International Marxist Group* caucuses at those conferences,⁷⁴ involved in the selection of "revolutionary" candidates.

He does not remember being trusted enough by the *International Marxist Group* to be asked to be a delegate on overseas trips including to Romania (then in the Eastern bloc), France and Belgium "**on behalf of the International Marxist Group**

⁶⁹ UCPI0000007328

⁷⁰ UCPI0000009608

⁷¹ UCPI0000012685

⁷² MPS-0730696

⁷³ HN353 statement paragraph 36.

⁷⁴ HN353 statement paragraph 66.

leadership⁷⁵. He says he must just have been the driver. He has no recollection of being on any of the many committees that his reports say he was clearly on.^{76 77 78 79}

(HN354) 'Vince Miller' was elected a District Treasurer and on the social committee of the Outer East London District branch of *Socialist Workers Party*. He resigned from his position to mark the "*Disorder and ineffectiveness*" within the branch. Resignation combined with strong criticism is deliberately de-stabilising to the organisation.

(HN296) 'Geoff Wallace' was elected as the "Flame" organiser for the *Socialist Workers Party* (Hammersmith and Kensington branch)⁸⁰ and a *Socialist Workers Party* Organiser⁸¹. He attended the London Regional Delegates conference and was one of three organisers of the *Anti-Nazi League* Carnival⁸². We do not know what he would have to say about any of this because there is no statement from him, not because of death or ill-health but because the Inquiry has not got hold of him because he's abroad. In the age of telecommunications it seems strange they have not been able to track him down, in an Inquiry of this importance.

(HN351) 'Jeff Slater' cannot remember being the *Socialist Worker* newspaper Organiser for the North London District of the *International Socialists*⁸³.

(HN356) 'Bill Biggs' was the branch Treasurer of South East London *Socialist Workers Party*⁸⁴, chaired meetings⁸⁵ and became the *Socialist Worker* Organiser for the branch. At an aggregate meeting for the South East District he voted (as a delegate) on a proposal to condemn a decision taken by the Central Committee⁸⁶. He spoke as a Guest speaker at another branch's meeting⁸⁷ and was the branch Treasurer for *Socialist Workers Party* (Brixton branch)⁸⁸.

⁷⁵ MPS-0730694

⁷⁶ UCPI0000010685

⁷⁷ UCPI0000010777

⁷⁸ UCPI0000008235

⁷⁹ UCPI0000010744

⁸⁰ UCPI0000017698

⁸¹ UCPI0000016921

⁸² UCPI0000011981

⁸³ UCPI0000012014 (and his statement at paragraph 45).

⁸⁴ UCPI0000011996

⁸⁵ UCPI0000013021

⁸⁶ UCPI0000013229

⁸⁷ UCPI0000013688

⁸⁸ UCPI0000015441

(HN126) 'Paul Gray' became *Socialist Worker* Paper Organiser for Cricklewood branch⁸⁹ and then for the whole of the North West District⁹⁰. He was on the District Committee⁹¹ which had control over all of the branches that the District covered. He was re-elected in 1979⁹² and 1980⁹³. He chaired meetings⁹⁴. He was on the Organising Committee of the West Hampstead *Anti-Nazi League*⁹⁵ and the North-West London *Anti Nazi League* Co-ordinating Committee⁹⁶. He was also a delegate to the *Camden Against Racism Committee*⁹⁷

He says he does not remember any of the last roles. He says his role as *Socialist Worker* Paper Organiser was collecting newspapers and dropping them off⁹⁸ basically he was just a delivery boy with a van.

That is a major difference from the story he gave when he was trying to secure his anonymity. Like 'Mike James' above, 'Paul Gray's' risk assessment plays up his role and in his case states that he was **a key organiser in the Grunwick dispute**⁹⁹, a strike with National coverage and importance.

With his anonymity secure he has rowed back from that now.

So, what is the truth?

***Socialist Workers' Party* and political policing**

It is clear in respect of the *Troops Out Movement*. Both Clark and "James" reached the very top.

None of the officers in the *Socialist Workers Party* have been very helpful about what their positions of trust and responsibility involved. Of course, at the time they made their statements there were no Core Participants or witnesses from the *Socialist*

⁸⁹ UCPI0000011354

⁹⁰ UCPI0000013123

⁹¹ UCPI0000013111

⁹² UCPI0000013536

⁹³ UCPI0000013949

⁹⁴ UCPI0000013135

⁹⁵ UCPI0000011497, UCPI0000011412, UCPI0000013006

⁹⁶ UCPI0000013135

⁹⁷ UCPI0000012960

⁹⁸ HN126 statement paragraph 167

⁹⁹ HN126 statement paragraph 240.

Workers Party in this Inquiry. They could safely describe their roles as they wanted, with no risk of their credibility being undermined.

That position changed on the **2nd March 2021** when three former Central Committee members of the Socialist Workers Party secured Core Participant status. Between them, Lindsey German, John Rees and Chris Nineham had four decades of experience on the Central Committee from 1979 to 2009.

Because they are late comers, and the disclosure from the Inquiry has been woefully late, they will not be able to be as involved as they need to be until Phase 3. However, they can assist at this stage, in respect of the structure of the Party and the roles that the infiltrating officers obtained.

The last four officers that we have mentioned, Wallace, Slater, Biggs and Gray all had positions as *Socialist Worker* Organisers. Critically, they were **organisers**, but they were more than that. The *Socialist Worker* was the organisation's newspaper. It was the scaffolding of the whole organisation. The newspaper was a major source of income for the organisation and key to recruiting new members. It was the political mouthpiece of the organisation, through which they communicated their politics with the public. The sale of the paper was also a regular flashpoint for public disorder, with sellers regularly attacked by members of the National Front. The *Socialist Worker* newspaper was understood by these officers to be the central component of the organisation as a whole. The role of organising that paper was absolutely pivotal.

At branch level the organiser was second only to the Branch Secretary. At District level the role was even more critical. The District newspaper organiser, along with the District Secretary, would be the link between the Central Committee and the members. These two roles were responsible for setting the political line within their district every single week¹⁰⁰; they decided what the paper sellers in their district would speak to the public about. The *Socialist Worker* newspaper organisers had responsibility, trust and authority. They had a direct role in shaping the progress of the Party.

These officers knew that. 'Paul Gray' even reported to his superiors¹⁰¹ that he had been spoken to in public by the National *Socialist Worker* Organiser. He was told that

¹⁰⁰ Along with any full-time Organiser, if the District had such a position.

¹⁰¹ UCPI0000013435

“every organiser should know exactly where each paper was sold every week and that spot checks should be made on members to see that paper sales were being carried out”. Gray was given a list of selling techniques and told to visit all of the branch offices regularly and *“constantly remind them that to sell [the paper] is the most important duty of a SWP member”.*

At that time, the state of the *Socialist Workers Party* nationally was at “an all-time low”¹⁰². Membership and paper sales were down. The North-West London District, where Gray was second in command was characterised by “apathy”. A year later, having done the job for two years¹⁰³ he was replaced.¹⁰⁴

This is one clear example of an officer taking a role of responsibility and trust and wilfully undermining the organisation, by not doing the job properly.

Three things stand out:

1: From Clark onwards, every officer in this phase took a position of trust. The only exception was (HN304) ‘Graham Coates.’ He was unable to take a position in any hierarchy simply because he infiltrated anarchist groups and they did not have hierarchies.

2: In different ways these officers all impacted on the progress or direction of the organisations they infiltrated. From taking a role that deprived a genuine member of the chance to do a committed job, to de-stabilising and even de-capitating the organisations.

3: There is a distinct lack of honesty about the role they played or the extent to which their superiors were aware.

Blacklisting – a direct effect of political policing.

The question of Blacklisting. We have raised this in Richard Chessum’s statement and our first Opening Statement. To date there have been no answers. We just have the bare fact of the correlation, between

¹⁰² UCPI0000013385

¹⁰³ HN126 statement paragraph 174

¹⁰⁴ UCPI0000015183

- 1: Clark opening the File and passing Richard Chessum's details to MI5 and
- 2: his subsequent inability to secure any significant job.

Despite his education, decency, intelligence and lack of criminality, the door was closed on teaching, lecturing and research jobs and even sorting mail.

What we have seen in this new phase of disclosure are countless examples of civilians having the details of their employment passed up the chain to MI5. Each time, their political affiliation is included next to the note of their employment, union memberships are also regularly noted¹⁰⁵. People targeted are those in the public sector or public service jobs, such as working for local council¹⁰⁶, NHS doctors, hospital workers¹⁰⁷¹⁰⁸¹⁰⁹, a senior priest¹¹⁰, post office workers¹¹¹ a job applicant with HM Customs and Excise¹¹², a social worker and a probation officer¹¹³ and numerous teachers¹¹⁴. Reports on a traffic warden and a public office clerk even include details of their sexuality¹¹⁵.

Many of the officers say that these were just little details to "up-date" files. Occasionally there will be an officer who gives a more realistic answer, equating the Undercover Officer interest in employment with preventing problems in workplaces - problems like the democratic right to strike¹¹⁶ - people campaigning for fair pay, health and safety conditions.

Both Special Branch and MI5 were specifically asking for employment details on individuals.¹¹⁷ The Special Demonstration Squad obliged. We know that at least one member of the *Socialist Workers Party* was sacked from a Government body simply

¹⁰⁵ UCPI0000013156, UCPI0000013227, UCPI0000021245, UCPI0000016795,

¹⁰⁶ UCPI0000017609

¹⁰⁷ UCPI0000017789, UCPI0000012378, UCPI0000012378

¹⁰⁸ UCPI0000021640

¹⁰⁹ UCPI0000015384

¹¹⁰ MPS-0728739

¹¹¹ UCPI0000013100, UCPI0000015005

¹¹² UCPI0000015005

¹¹³ UCPI0000013171

¹¹⁴ UCPI0000021635, UCPI0000021636, UCPI0000011379, UCPI0000015483

¹¹⁵ UCPI0000018061 and UCPI0000016202

¹¹⁶ See for example HN351 re: individuals applying for or gaining employment at HM Customs or Royal Mail. "I can only comment that Special Branch would have been interested in employment that was taken up by IS members because they may have created problems within their workplaces by arranging strikes and the like".

¹¹⁷ MPS-0739241

because of her political opinion.¹¹⁸ Both her name and the nature of the Government body have been redacted by the Inquiry. We also know that both MI5 and Special Branch were confident that her sacking would not be traced back to the Undercover Officer that had caused it.

Attempts by officers to justify their deployment:

With information being freely and regularly being passed from the Metropolitan Police's Special Demonstration Squad to MI5, this brings us to our next point in this opening statement - the question of justification.

There was no public order rationale for the infiltration of the *Troops Out Movement*.

There was no rationale for the spying and reporting on Richard Chessum and 'Mary.'

There have been attempts by Officers to justify infiltrations of campaigning and political organisations. Many of those justifications relate to the *Socialist Workers Party*.

Because of time limitations, we will have to address most of the detail at the beginning of Phase 3. However, some aspects have to be raised now, so that the Inquiry has them in mind for the future.

As far as Graham Coates was concerned, the *Socialist Workers Party* were "very dull".¹¹⁹ These deployments were not designed for officers' entertainment. It is assumed he means "dull" from a policing perspective.

'Mike James' said that the *Socialist Workers Party* were not engaging in subversive activities¹²⁰ - that most members were "entirely peaceful"¹²¹ - that there were some elements that looked "to engage in violence at events"¹²² but he accepted that these were involved in a breakaway group¹²³. The *Socialist Workers Party* **did not promote violence**.

¹¹⁸ UCPI0000029219

¹¹⁹ HN304 statement paragraph 55.

¹²⁰ HN96 statement paragraph 174.

¹²¹ HN96 statement paragraph 175.

¹²² HN96 statement paragraph 175.

¹²³ HN96 statement paragraph 177.

The Party had a rigorous policy of expelling members who engaged in squadist confrontational violence¹²⁴. 'Mike James' knew that the breakaway group, *Red Action*, had actually been expelled, because he had reported on it.¹²⁵

Generally, we accept these particular assertions of these two officers. But where officers go beyond that, for example as we set out below, we dispute their evidence. We hope that it will be appropriately challenged by Counsel to the Inquiry.

In respect of one particular officer we do make some observations.

'Paul Gray' has made a number of remarks about the *Socialist Workers Party*, in particular about levels of subversion and violence, that are plainly not true.

First, of course, they are contradicted by a number of his fellow officers.

Secondly, they are entirely unsupported by evidence. He gives a grossly exaggerated account of the demonstration in Grosvenor Square in 1968¹²⁶, when he was a uniformed officer. He then asserts that he experienced the same level of violence in the course of his undercover deployment¹²⁷. He is clearly lying.

In the hundreds of pages of his reports, there is no reference to him witnessing any violence.

'Paul Gray' claims that his lack of reported violence is because the SDS only provided advanced intelligence.¹²⁸ He says they did not provide reports on violence or disorder that they had **witnessed**, only on violence or disorder that they were **expecting**.¹²⁹ That is a very convenient explanation for a total lack of such evidence. It is simply a lie.

It is clear that SDS officers **did** give retrospective intelligence about public order events. We can see that from officers who did witness such events.¹³⁰

¹²⁴ "Squadists" – in 'Mike James' own words – "...small groups breaking away from the main body at demonstrations and violently confronting the 'enemy.'" UCPI0000018238

¹²⁵ UCPI0000018238.

¹²⁶ 1968. HN126 statement paragraphs 242 to 243.

¹²⁷ HN126 statement paragraph 245.

¹²⁸ HN126 statement paragraph 245.

¹²⁹ HN126 statement paragraph 246.

¹³⁰ For example see Closed Gist officers paragraph 35.

It is also clear that despite his denials, 'Paul Gray' **did** give retrospective intelligence. From a policing perspective it is common sense. It would be valuable intelligence if targets were actually involved in violence or disorder. The difficulty that 'Paul Gray' faces, is that his retrospective reports show no violence or disorder at all.¹³¹ One report shows a single arrest for nothing more than obstructing a police officer.¹³²

There are no reports of violence witnessed, nor of any expected violence either.

His allegations are post event attempts at justification. 'Gray' is "*extremely angry*"¹³³ that there has been disclosure of how the SDS operated, and that this has led to this Inquiry¹³⁴.

He says that his time undercover had no impact whatsoever on his "welfare"¹³⁵ but that answering questions for this Inquiry **is** impacting on his welfare.¹³⁶ That is because he now has to justify the fact that, in reality, he busied himself with pointless and personally intrusive reporting.

In one report on a member of the *Socialist Workers Party* he spent two whole paragraphs detailing private sexual behaviour¹³⁷. Another is solely dedicated to reporting on a member who was employed as a Tax Officer and, and as he notes, was "*believed to be a homosexual*"¹³⁸.

For someone so interested on reporting the sexual relationships of others, he is surprisingly silent on the sexual relationships that his fellow officers had with activists. He was in the Special Demonstration Squad with 'Vince Miller,' 'Mike Hartley,' 'Alan Bond' and 'Phil Cooper.'¹³⁹ He emphatically denies any knowledge of their sexual activity¹⁴⁰ and maintains that the conduct of his contemporaries was "*exemplary*".¹⁴¹

¹³¹ UCPI0000015467

¹³² UCPI0000012951.

¹³³ HN126 statement paragraph 322

¹³⁴ HN126 statement paragraph 323

¹³⁵ HN126 statement paragraph 315

¹³⁶ HN126 statement paragraphs 315, 324,

¹³⁷ UCPI0000015536

¹³⁸ UCPI0000015603

¹³⁹ HN126 statement paragraph 298

¹⁴⁰ HN126 statement paragraph 301

¹⁴¹ HN126 statement paragraph 324

One of the features of this phase is the number of reports on school children.¹⁴² ‘Gray’ reported on more children than any other officer¹⁴³. Recording the minutiae of their lives and sending them on to MI5. Almost all of these reports have photographs of the children attached. He reports on a 15 year old school-girl¹⁴⁴, 15 and 13 year old school-girls and their parents¹⁴⁵. In two separate reports he describes the photographed school-boys as “*effeminate*”.¹⁴⁶ In one report he comments on how much time a school-boy spends at his girlfriend’s house.¹⁴⁷

The closest ‘Gray’ ever comes to reporting on violence is his note that a school-boy had a fight with his brother.¹⁴⁸

These children were either the children of *Socialist Workers Party* members or children who were engaged enough with their society to be part of the *School Kids Against the Nazis*.

And to justify this he reverts to type and suggests that these children were either subversive¹⁴⁹ or violent.¹⁵⁰ On behalf of Lindsey German and John Rees, who were well aware of the actual activities of *School Kids Against the Nazis*, we dispute that entirely.

In the course of ‘Paul Gray’s’ deployment, *Column 88* were threatening to burn down the homes of SWP members.¹⁵¹ The National Front were attacking Bengalis in Brick Lane, smashing up reggae record shops and graffitiing mosques.¹⁵² They were burning down Indian restaurants¹⁵³ and murdering young men like Altab Ali and Ishaque Ali in Whitechapel and Hackney¹⁵⁴. Whilst they were doing that, Gray and his so called “*exemplary*” SDS colleagues were writing about what **they refer** to as

¹⁴² See for example: UCPI0000021558, UCPI000009576 and UCPI0000009734.

¹⁴³ UCPI0000011275, UCPI0000011361, UCPI0000011406, UCPI0000021266, UCPI0000021267, UCPI0000013607, UCPI0000021004, UCPI0000021011, UCPI0000017113, UCPI0000017991,

¹⁴⁴ UCPI0000017113

¹⁴⁵ UCPI0000018230

¹⁴⁶ UCPI0000021266, UCPI0000021267,

¹⁴⁷ UCPI0000013607

¹⁴⁸ UCPI0000021004

¹⁴⁹ Simply because they were associated with the SWP and/or had a Special Branch file see HN126 paragraph 154.

¹⁵⁰ HN126 statement paragraphs 207,

¹⁵¹ UCPI0000011244

¹⁵² UCPI0000011814

¹⁵³ UCPI0000010947

¹⁵⁴ UCPI0000011380

“jewish” finance of the *Anti-Nazi League*,¹⁵⁵ a “negress” activist¹⁵⁶, an activist with a “large jewish nose”¹⁵⁷ and “coloured hooligans”.¹⁵⁸ Language and views that are beneath contempt.

Instead of investigating the racist firebombing that killed 13 young black people in New Cross¹⁵⁹, the Special Demonstration Squad were reporting on school children and providing MI5 with copies of *Socialist Workers Party* baby-sitting rotas.¹⁶⁰

The question of Government and Cabinet Knowledge:

Several of the Phase 2 officers refer to visits to the SDS safe-house by the Commissioner of the Met Police. One refers to congratulatory messages straight from 10 Downing Street.¹⁶¹ Another, who himself went on to become a Detective Chief Inspector, was told “*that the continuation of the unit was one of the first decisions that a new Home Secretary had to make*”.¹⁶²

That anecdotal evidence is supported by the 1976 authorisation for the Special Demonstration Squad’s continued existence.¹⁶³ It was signed off by Robert Armstrong, later Baron Armstrong of Ilminster. He was Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service. Between 1970 and 1975 he had been the Principal Private Secretary to two Prime Ministers, both Ted Heath and Harold Wilson. It is difficult to imagine a more highly placed Civil servant.

In the statement provided to Phase 2 of the Inquiry by ‘Witness Z,’ the Security Services themselves confirmed that “*the pressure to investigate these organisations often came from the Prime Minister and Whitehall*”.¹⁶⁴

So there can be no doubt now that the existence and functioning of the SDS was known of, and authorised, at the very top.

¹⁵⁵ UCPI0000011970

¹⁵⁶ UCPI0000010659

¹⁵⁷ UCPI0000021776

¹⁵⁸ MPS-0733369

¹⁵⁹ UCPI0000016467

¹⁶⁰ UCPI0000012021 and UCPI0000012025

¹⁶¹ Closed Officer Gist paragraph 37

¹⁶² HN354 statement paragraph 175.

¹⁶³ MPS-0730742

¹⁶⁴ UCPI0000034308, Paragraph 56

It is interesting that every annual application for funding refers to the officers fully recognising “the political sensitivity”¹⁶⁵ of the unit’s existence; accompanied by assurances that all necessary steps have been taken to ensure security.

Authorisation is only ever granted “*in view of the assurances [given] about security*”¹⁶⁶. In other words, as long as you can promise us we will not get caught, you can carry on.

This fixation on security is important. First, successive Governments were well aware of the need to keep the extent to which they were spying on law-abiding civilians, absolutely secret.

Secondly Governments were repeatedly told that a significant part of this “security” effort involved the creation of water-tight cover stories and false identities.¹⁶⁷ From at least 1975 every officer is clear that the use of a dead child’s identity was the only authorised way to create a viable back-story. There is no realistic way that Government could not have known that this method had been comprehensively adopted.

The conclusion of that aspect of this Inquiry must be that the Government endorsed the use of deceased children’s identities, and that the Metropolitan Police used them specifically to ensure that Government was protected. That is a damning enough conclusion in itself.

But the inevitable consequence from that is critical. The Metropolitan Police were protecting the Government from, what they referred to in the 1977 Annual Report, as

¹⁶⁵ See for example MPS-0728980 paragraph 14 and MPS-0728985 paragraph 7

¹⁶⁶ MPS-0730718

¹⁶⁷ Examples:

1979: MPS-0728963 paragraph 7: “*careful attention is paid to establishing the background of officers...*”,

1980: MPS-0728962 paragraph 10: “*Supervisory staff place great emphasis on the need to ensure that an officer’s cover is as secure as possible before he enters the “field”. Subsequently, operational officers have to devote a considerable amount of time to their cover backgrounds, as the groups to which they belong become increasingly security conscious.*”

1981: MPS-0728985: paragraph 7: “*Careful attention is paid to ensuring that every operational officer’s cover is as secure as possible before he enters the field*”.

1982: MPS-0730904: paragraph 8: “*Each new operational officer is carefully selected, thoroughly schooled in a “cover story” [redaction for one line] provided with appropriate documentation to substantiate his “new” existence.*”

“embarrassment”.¹⁶⁸ There is nothing embarrassing, for a Government, about spying to prevent crime.

But the de-stabilising of democratic movements, the wholesale and widespread intrusion on law-abiding civilians, and their exploitation for political advantage. That is worth keeping secret.

This Inquiry has been set a challenge - to get to the truth. This means asking difficult questions, again and again... to uncover the truth.

Ordinary people have been involved in campaigns for a better society, for social equality, anti racism, anti-fascism, against apartheid and for trade union rights. The best of reasons, and the best of traditions.

We hope the Inquiry is ready, willing and equipped to meet that challenge. The Inquiry must be fearless and unflinching in the pursuit of the truth. The people of this country expect nothing less.

James Scobie QC (Garden Court Chambers)

Piers Marquis (Doughty Street Chambers)

Paul Heron (Public Interest Law Centre)

14th April 2021

¹⁶⁸ MPS-0728981 paragraph 10