

OPENING STATEMENT FOR T1P2 ON BEHALF OF
CELIA STUBBS
REPRESENTED BY BHATT MURPHY SOLICITORS

1. Blair Peach was killed by a police officer.
2. In April 1979 he was attending a demonstration in West London. Police officers alighted from a vehicle and struck a blow to Blair Peach's head that killed him.
3. Celia Stubbs was Blair Peach's partner at the time. She has campaigned for justice in relation to Blair Peach's death ever since.
4. No police officers were ever brought to justice for the killing of Blair Peach, because of a concerted and co-ordinated police cover-up. Fellow officers refused to provide important evidence. A key report - "the Cass Report" - that identified the officer suspected to have struck the blow was withheld from those representing Celia Stubbs at the inquest into Blair Peach's death.
5. Celia Stubbs is a core participant in this Inquiry because she was placed under surveillance while doing that campaigning at the very time the co-ordinated police cover-up and perversion of the course of justice was taking place.
6. The killing of Blair Peach by a police officer and the cover-up that followed it was, and remains, one of the most notorious events in the history of British policing. It is – and should be – a national disgrace. It is a permanent stain on the Metropolitan Police in general, and the Special Patrol Group, in particular.
7. This Inquiry cannot make good the historic injustice of Blair Peach's killing. However, it has a unique opportunity to examine the behaviour of undercover police officers at that time, who were deployed to spy on Celia Stubbs and others while they were campaigning for accountability and justice.

8. The surveillance of Celia Stubbs is of particular significance to the remit of this Inquiry. This is because her experience reveals that, from its very inception, the work of undercover policing was corrupted by misguided political motivation. As socialist, anti-racist campaigners Blair Peach and Celia Stubbs were the subject of intelligence gathering even before his death. But importantly, following Blair Peach's death those campaigning for police accountability became a focus of the undercover policing. It is a vivid illustration of how undercover policing was inappropriately deployed against those seeking to hold police officers to account for their misconduct. That abuse and misuse of undercover policing against campaigns by bereaved members of the public occurred in relation to the death of Blair Peach and continued in the years and decades that followed.

The killing of Blair Peach and subsequent campaign for justice

9. Celia Stubbs has set out the details of Blair Peach's tragic death and the subsequent campaign for justice in her statement to this Inquiry.¹ A photograph of Blair Peach is at DOC020. Her account reveals the brutality of the Special Patrol Group ('SPG') of the Metropolitan Police Service which led to Blair Peach's death, and the sustained cover-up that followed it.
10. Both Celia Stubbs and Blair Peach were campaigners prior to his death on issues which they considered to be of importance to society. Blair Peach was a well-respected teacher and trade unionist. He was a member of the National Union of Teachers. He was particularly concerned with campaigning against racism. In 1974 he had come to the attention of the police after he challenged the landlord of the Railway Tavern in Mile End who refused to serve a black customer. He was also part of a campaign to close the National Front headquarters in Hackney. In 1978 he was elected President of the East London Teachers Association and he believed that MI5 or Special Branch likely had a file on him. That suspicion transpires to have been well founded.
11. Both Celia Stubbs and Blair Peach were members of the International Socialists, subsequently the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP). In Celia Stubbs' experience these were socialist organisations that believed in justice and equality and highlighting injustice. Although the theoretical background was based on revolutionary socialism, their activities

¹ UCPI0000034309

were based around everyday activism and justice such as trade union activities, demonstrations and anti-racist activities.²

12. Celia Stubbs and Blair Peach were both members of the Anti-Nazi League. It was that interest which led to their participation in the anti-racist protest in Southall on 23rd April 1979. A poster for the event is at DOC019. It invites attendance at a “Unity & Peace March” and a “peaceful sit-down outside Southall Town Hall.” The march was in protest against the National Front holding a meeting at Southall Town Hall.
13. Celia Stubbs was at the march but not present with Blair Peach at the time of the fatal blow. She witnessed officers on horse and on foot chasing demonstrators into Southall Park and hitting people with truncheons.
14. In the course of the march six officers from the SPG alighted from a van onto the junction of Orchard and Beechcroft Avenues. Blair Peach was present and one of those SPG officers struck a blow to his head, killing him.
15. Commander Cass of the MPS conducted an internal investigation but was met with silence from the six SPG officers who were present. By any standards, their behaviour in shielding a fellow officer from justice for murdering a member of the public is a disgrace.
16. Commander Cass concluded that the officers were “*clearly obstructing police officers carrying out their duty of investigating this serious matter.*” Commander Cass’s report was clear that a police officer had killed Blair Peach and that the officers present intended to protect one another and keep the truth hidden. It was also Commander Cass’s report that confirmed the killer to be a police officer³. He identified Inspector Murray as the first officer to have alighted from the police vehicle before Blair Peach was struck and stated that “*grave suspicion*” attached to him. However, that internal report was not made public until April 2010, 31 years after the death.
17. Commander Cass’s report was not shared with the jury in the inquest concerning Blair Peach’s death. The inquest was a travesty of what ought to be expected of an inquest and returned a conclusion of ‘misadventure’. Many years after the event it transpired that the Coroner, John Burton, had written to Ministers part way through the inquest dismissing

² See the statement of Celia Stubbs at UCPI0000034309/11, paragraph 31

³ At paragraph 297 of the Cass Report: “*There is some evidence to suggest that the fatal blow was struck by a member of the first carrier at the scene, U11, and indeed an indication that it was the first officer out of the vehicle. This of course was Officer E*”. It was subsequently revealed that ‘Officer E’ was Inspector Murray.

the belief that Blair Peach was killed by a police officer as political fabrication. After the inquest Mr Burton wrote a draft Paper entitled '*Blair Peach – the unpublished story*' which he proposed to publish. It expressed the belief that the National Front and the police were blameless, and the killing was the fault of the demonstrators, including Blair Peach himself. The Home Office, internally, shared concern that the report would discredit the impartiality of coroners and that its publication could do "*a great deal of harm ... in respect of the Home Secretary's decision that a public inquiry should be resisted.*" That is, Mr Burton's draft report had revealed to the Home Office that there had not been an impartial investigation and that there was every reason for a public inquiry. But that draft report was kept hidden.

18. As a result, the long-running campaign for justice for Blair Peach never achieved its aim. The campaign did uncover that unauthorised weapons had been found in SPG lockers at Barnes police station, including a lead weighted rubber cosh. At the home of one of the six SPG officers was found a lead weighted wooden cosh, swords and bayonets and a collection of Nazi regalia.
19. Celia Stubbs has dedicated much of her life following her partner's death to campaigns not only for justice for Blair Peach, but also to assist others who have suffered injustices. That there is now a charity, INQUEST, which helps hundreds of families each year through the inquest process is in part in thanks to Celia Stubbs who was one of the founding members and at one point was its secretary. She has supported a number of campaigns for people who have died in police custody. She was also a member of the Hackney Community Defence Association (1988 to 1996). As she says in her statement, "*All of these campaigns have been about strengthening civil society, campaigning on issues like legal aid, lawyers groups and Parliamentary lobbying.*"⁴
20. It is against the background of bereavement and subsequent cover-up that Celia Stubbs has learnt, through the limited documents disclosed through this Inquiry, that throughout her campaigning the SDS was secretly gathering information about the campaign.

The disclosed documents

21. As set out below, it is apparent that there are very significant gaps in the disclosed documents. What has been disclosed does reveal that both Celia Stubbs and Blair Peach

⁴ UCPI0000034309/10, paragraph 28 (as amended in paragraph 54)

were the subject of Special Branch registry files, prior to Blair Peach's death in 1979.⁵ The reference numbers indicate that the files were opened in 1974 and 1978 respectively. Those registry files have not been obtained or disclosed to Celia Stubbs by the Inquiry. The SDS reported Celia Stubbs as being present at the inaugural public meeting of the Hackney Community Relations Council in August 1976⁶ and a meeting of the International Socialists in July 1976⁷ but no documents have been disclosed about Blair Peach before his death.

22. Following Blair Peach's death the subsequent campaign for justice was a frequent subject of SDS reporting. In forwarding the SDS annual report for 1979 and seeking approval for its continuance from the Home Office it was reported by the Assistant Commissioner at New Scotland Yard, in his letter of 7th March 1980, that the "*focal point*" of so-called "*extremist activity*" had been the General Election held in May 1979 and that the "*culmination of the virulent anti-fascist demonstrations was the death of the Anti-Nazi League supporter Blair Peach and the subsequent campaign against the Police.*"⁸ It is striking that Blair Peach's death and the "*subsequent campaign against the Police*" was reported by the SDS to be a focus. This secretive group, purportedly working to protect the state from extremists and subversives, was justifying its existence to the Home Office with reference to Blair Peach's death and surveillance of the campaign seeking justice in respect of a man killed by a police officer. The Home Office responded on 1st April 1980 by "*noting the continuing value of the squad*" and authorising its continuance.⁹ At that time Commander Cass's damning report had already been completed and the inquest was imminent. The concern is that the interest of the SDS and Home Office in the Blair Peach campaign was not that the campaign was subversive or extremist, but that it was subjecting the actions of the Metropolitan Police around the killing of Blair Peach to intense and uncomfortable scrutiny.

23. The Blair Peach campaign features in various SDS reports, such as reports of a SWP meeting on 26th April 1979 urging attendance at a "*peaceful vigil*,"¹⁰ and a meeting of 3rd May 1979 referencing the SWP conducting its own investigation.¹¹ On 23rd May 1979 the

⁵ Celia Stubbs RF/402/74/481 and Blair Peach RF/402/78/251

⁶ UCPI0000010769

⁷ UCPI0000010779

⁸ MPS-0728963/2, paragraph 3

⁹ MPS0728963/1

¹⁰ UCPI0000021207

¹¹ UCPI0000021218

SDS provided a list of persons present at a demonstration regarding Blair Peach's death organised by the Indian Workers Association.¹²

24. On 30th May 1979 a SDS report attached a leaflet produced by the 'Friends of Blair Peach Committee'.¹³ The leaflet described that answers were sought to the questions "*Who killed Blair Peach and why?*", "*What were the activities of the police, especially the Special Patrol Group, in Southall on April 23rd?*", and, "*What orders were given and by whom?*". The leaflet suggested actions such as phoning a local radio station, writing to the local newspaper, contacting a local MP, and organising pickets. There was nothing subversive or extremist.
25. A report of 4th June 1979 noted connection between the 'Friends of Blair Peach Committee' and the SWP.¹⁴ Several reports referenced plans for pickets at police stations and at the inquest, some listing those that were in attendance.¹⁵
26. A source of significant distress for Celia Stubbs is that the SDS were present at Blair Peach's funeral on 13th June 1979. A report of 13th July 1979 lists a number of individuals present at the funeral¹⁶ and other reports include photographs of some of those in attendance.¹⁷ According to the gist of the closed statements one officer describes attending the funeral.¹⁸ It is said that they would have been expected to attend and so they did so in support of their cover identity which they feared would be undermined if they had not. If the suggestion is that officers only attended to protect their cover, that is not accepted; an excuse for not attending one event could easily be made. In any event, intelligence was gathered and reported and photographs were taken of attendees, whom SDS officers were subsequently asked to identify. The attendance at the funeral was obviously an intelligence gathering exercise. The gist goes on to indicate that the officer reported on the Blair Peach campaign but cannot recall who tasked them to do so.
27. It is clear that the SDS was interested in the methods considered by the 'Friends of Blair Peach Committee' to further its campaign for justice. An SDS report of 28th July 1980 reported that the committee were "*at present attempting to form a national co-ordinating*

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¹³ UCPI0000021297

¹⁴ UCPI0000021313

¹⁵ E.g. 1st October 1979 (UCPI13435) and 15th October 1979 (UCPI-13468).

¹⁶ UCPI0000021047

¹⁷ E.g. UCPI0000013532, UCPI0000013547 and UCPI0000013539

¹⁸ UCPI0000034307/7, paragraph 36

body with other such committees concerned with the cases of 'State brutality' by the police and prison authorities".¹⁹

28. It is also apparent that SDS interest in the campaign regarding Blair Peach's death did not diminish even over many years that followed. A report of 28th July 1998,²⁰ with the heading "*touchy subject*", reports that April 1999 represented the 20th anniversary of the death of Blair Peach and to commemorate the event local trade unions were organising a large rally and demonstration which, it was said, would "*be presented with a strong anti-racist/anti-police flavour.*" The report also suggests that the event would attract "*anti-police type groups*" and "*the potential for disorder will be significant.*" It might be noted that disorder would represent a departure from the preceding 20 years of peaceful campaigning.
29. Viewed through the prism of these reports, it can be seen that legitimate campaigns for accountability and justice were approached in terms of the speculative potential for disorder, even when there was little evidence to support such speculation. It is misguided and tragic, but also disturbing and revealing that there was little attempt to see those campaigning against police misconduct as potential allies of a police establishment that should have shared a common interest in justice. The legitimate grievances could have been respected as aligning with important principles of transparency and policing by consent. Instead they were characterised as public order risks, no matter how remote or unlikely,
30. It is clear that the targeting of justice campaigns continued and expanded, beyond the Blair Peach campaign and the period with which this part of the inquiry is concerned. A report of 25th July 1995 describes the first public meeting organised by the Colin Roach Centre which was chaired by Celia Stubbs and launched the '*Justice for David Ewin campaign*'.²¹ The Colin Roach Centre was a campaign group on issues of police injustice and David Ewin was a man shot by police in February of that year. Curiously, the report states that "*there was no disorder and no arrests were made*", not that disorder or arrests were ever the remotest of possibility given the nature of the group. The closest thing to disorder was what was described as the "*warm round of applause*" which met the criticisms of the police complaints process made by Deborah Coles of Inquest. In future tranches the inquiry will

¹⁹ UCPI0000014149/1

²⁰ MPS-0001219

²¹ MPS-0742216

hear of significant surveillance of the Colin Roach Centre which was infiltrated by an undercover officer called Mark Cassidy.

31. Also reported on is Celia Stubbs' involvement in the Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA)²² and in the campaign regarding the conviction of Malcolm Kennedy.²³
32. Celia Stubbs is also concerned to discover that lawyers who assisted her were the subject of the interest of Special Branch. Sir Stephen Sedley, now a retired Court of Appeal judge, represented Celia Stubbs at the inquest into Blair Peach's death. He is described in a Special Branch report of 3rd February 1981 as having spoken at a conference on '*Racism and the Police*'.²⁴ Sir Stephen is ascribed a registry file number and was plainly of interest to Special Branch. It appears that Mike Seifert – a solicitor who represented Celia Stubbs– was also the subject of a registry file.²⁵
33. An additional feature of concern to Celia Stubbs is the manner in which the Metropolitan Police appears to have instructed their lawyers to present a knowingly false position to the inquest, and the extent to which their lawyers acquiesced in that process. It is very difficult for her to reconcile the allegations made against protestors by police lawyers at the inquest, and their attempt to deflect responsibility for the killing of Blair Peach away from officers, when at the time they were doing so, the police establishment and their lawyers were well aware of the contents of the Cass Report and the fact that it was being withheld from those representing Celia Stubbs.

The purpose of gathering intelligence regarding the Blair Peach campaign

34. This gathering of intelligence regarding the Blair Peach campaign begs the question as to why it was gathered, and to what use it was put.
35. It clearly cannot have been for the purpose of preventing public disorder. This is because the intelligence relating to the campaign reveals not just the absence of disorder or any attempt at disorder, but that the campaign was determinedly using only peaceful and lawful means to carry out its work.

²² E.g. MPS-0245835

²³ E.g. MPS-0246124

²⁴ UCPI0000016366

²⁵ UCPI0000027014

36. It was suggested by the Designated Lawyers in the opening prior to part 1, that SDS personnel “*did not infiltrate or target justice campaigns*”, and that such campaigns were “*only referred to in SDS intelligence reports if and to the extent that they came into contact with those who were being reported on.*”²⁶ The suggestion appears to have been that any intelligence gathered on justice campaigns was wholly incidental to some other objective or target. We now know from the disclosed documents that the Designated Lawyers’ suggestion was incorrect. It should be corrected and withdrawn. The following is significant:

- As outlined above, one officer describes targeting the Blair Peach campaign and specifically being tasked to do so, albeit he cannot remember who by.²⁷
- Blair Peach’s death and the subsequent campaign was expressly highlighted in the 1979 SDS annual report. It is untenable to suggest that the campaign itself was not being targeted for surveillance by senior officers in Special Branch.
- A reasonable reading of the reports undermines the suggestion that surveillance of justice campaigning was merely incidental to reporting on others: frequently the subject of the report is limited to the Blair Peach campaign itself. On other occasions it refers to other, linked but similarly lawful and peaceful campaigns for justice.
- If the suggestion of the Designated Lawyers was correct, who were the individuals being reported on? The majority of reports detail no one other than law abiding citizens such as Celia Stubbs and have nothing to do with public disorder.
- It is also apparent that over a period of at least two decades the SDS surveillance covered a large number of justice campaigns, including organisations such as to the Colin Roach Centre and the Hackney Community Defence Association. It is untenable to suggest that this happened only incidentally and by chance.

37. There is a single document which relates not to the gathering of information on the Blair Peach campaign, but the use to which that information was put. It reveals the use of intelligence gathered by the SDS, not for any purpose connected with disorder, but for use by the MPS in responding to the Blair Peach campaign and its efforts towards obtaining justice:

- A Special Branch memorandum of 25th April 1980 reports senior Special Branch officers having met with Deputy Assistant Commissioner of operations of the MPS “*regarding the Friends of Blair Peach Committee*” and consideration being given to

²⁶ Dy 5, page 127

²⁷ Gist of the closed statements: UCPI0000034307/7, paragraph 36

applying for a High Court injunction *“to prohibit the further publication of the names of SPG officers allegedly involved in Peach’s ‘murder’.”*²⁸

- As described in the memorandum, the Deputy Assistant Commissioner was told that the Friends of Blair Peach Committee was *“an umbrella organisation dominated by the SWP and ANL.”*
- A number of *“leading figures”* were identified, including Celia Stubbs, as was the location from which the committee operated and where printing for the committee was carried out.

This was around the time of the inquest regarding Blair’s death. It is clear that SDS information was circulated by Special Branch to a very senior officer within the MPS to assist in its response to the actions of the Friends of Blair Peach Committee and whether a High Court injunction would be sought.

38. That Special Branch maintained files on lawyers who at one time represented Celia Stubbs - Sir Stephen Sedley and Mike Seifert – adds to the picture of covert intelligence gathering being used for purposes other than protecting against public disorder. The relationship between lawyer and client is or ought to be sacrosanct. To Celia Stubbs it is disturbing that those who represented her and from whom she expected to receive confidential advice were the subject of surveillance.

39. Celia Stubbs served her statement on this Inquiry prior to any disclosure, save a few redacted intelligence reports. She expressed the suspicion that surveillance was used *“not to protect the public from harm but to protect [the police] themselves from facing justice. They wanted to know what I was doing and what others who were helping me were doing, with the obvious inference that they did so to ensure that they stayed one step ahead of our campaign to hold Blair’s killers to account.”*²⁹ That suspicion has been entirely borne out by the disclosure.

40. In her statement Celia Stubbs says of first receiving disclosure: *“it was extremely upsetting to see this material and to see how the police treated our actions and events that were law abiding and were simply trying to get to the truth of what happened. I was surprised by how upset and angry I felt. It seems that they lost all sense of the fact that Blair had been killed by police officers and that our distress about this was criminalised. It is hard to*

²⁸ MPS-0733406/1

²⁹ UCPI0000034309/2-3, paragraph 9

*describe how violating this is.*³⁰ The campaign arose out of the shortcomings of the inquest and legal procedures. It only ever used entirely proper means of peaceful protest and legal redress and yet remained the subject of reporting by SDS and Special Branch over two decades, gathering information and sharing it across the MPS. No legitimate purpose can be discerned from this surveillance and, as noted in paragraph 37 above, the obvious intention was to stay a step ahead of the Blair Peach campaign. That certainly shocks Celia Stubbs, and it should shock the Inquiry.

Policing public disorder and intelligence gathering

41. That intelligence gathering on the Blair Peach campaign had little if anything to do with public disorder is consistent with what appears to have been a broader role of general intelligence gathering by the SDS for the Security Services and Special Branch. A key component of intelligence gathering appears to have been overtly political, focusing on left-wing activity, even in the absence of evidence of violence or disorder.

42. A February 1976 Special Branch memo³¹ invited a review of the SDS and its activities and objectives. It observed that the SDS had initially been set up to produce intelligence *“at a time when ultra-extremist left-wing activity on the streets of London was at a peak”* but that over this preceding seven years *“this form of political activity by minority extremist groups has dwindled considerably.”* A study group was established to consider the continuing need for the SDS and *“the proportion of the overall intelligence gathered”* that was *“of primary benefit towards assisting uniform police to control public meetings and demonstrations, and that which is of interest mainly to the Security Service.”* The answer, it appears, is that by the late 1970s the intelligence gathering had very little to do with public disorder and was primarily gathered for the interest of Special Branch and the Security Service.

43. This much is made explicit in a number of the undercover officers’ witness statements. HN353, for example, states that much of the information he provided *“was probably more helpful to the security services than the police”*,³² even though he also noted that, *“I don’t think anything I witnessed was actually subversive”*.³³

³⁰ UCPI0000034309/16, paragraph 46

³¹ MPS-0730658

³² e.g. HN353, p9-10

³³ Ibid, p25

Missing evidence

44. It is apparent that the disclosed documents reveal only a fraction of the intelligence gathering of the SDS. A number of UCOs observe that they drafted a considerably greater number of reports than shown to them.³⁴ For example, HN299/342 explains that he would attend six meetings a week and a demonstration at the weekend, and put in a report for every meeting, yet there are fewer than 200 reports in his witness pack.³⁵ Given that the 1979 annual report highlights the Blair Peach campaign as one of the key focuses of that year, one would expect to see a greater number of documents.
45. It is also evident that intelligence was gathered and placed in registry files, yet those registry files have not been obtained and disclosed by the Inquiry. The registry files would give a more complete picture of the intelligence gathered on any given individual, and of whether and to what extent particular individuals were targeted.
46. What also causes concern is not just that documents are missing but which documents are missing.
47. It is striking that in relation to the controversial events of Red Lion Square (the death of Kevin Gately in 1974) and Southall (the death of Blair Peach) virtually nothing exists, notwithstanding – or more likely because of - the two fatalities at those events.
48. To the extent that the SDS was purportedly concerned - at least in part - with public disorder, one would expect detailed reports on significant events. For example, in relation to the National Front march in Lewisham on 13th August 1977 there is a 56-page report which describes, in detail, the events leading to the march and the march itself.³⁶ There is a further six-page document detailing the de-briefing of 18 Special Branch officers who had been present.³⁷ Separately, there is a document detailing the views of some SDS officers.³⁸ As one officer described his role: *“Most of my reporting would have been about demonstrations. This would include reporting in advance of demonstrations about the likely numbers attending the demonstration, the location and any information I had picked up about the demonstration. It would also include reporting after attending a demonstration....If it was a big demonstration, there might be reports from 2 or 3 SDS*

³⁴ E.g. HN354, p11

³⁵ MPS-075773/16, paragraphs 72-73

³⁶ MPS-0733367

³⁷ MPS-0733369

³⁸ MPS-0732886. See, also, MPS-0732885.

*officers that attended in their roles and I believe that the back office would combine them into one report.*³⁹

49. However, against that background there is nothing in relation to Red Lion Square. The only reasonable inference is that these important reports were considered damaging to the police and have been deliberately destroyed. HN301 recalls being present at Red Lion Square and being punched by a police officer despite not having done anything to warrant being hit,⁴⁰ but his reports are missing. These omissions are troubling. In the Scarman Report,⁴¹ one of the key issues identified as contributing to the events was a misunderstanding between the organisers and the police as to the route of the demonstration⁴² and whether the actions of the demonstrators were spontaneous or pre-meditated. These are precisely the matters upon which the SDS would be expected to report⁴³ particularly in circumstances that the 1974 annual report identified the event as the “*most traumatic*” of the year.⁴⁴

50. Similarly, for the march in Southall in which Blair Peach died there is nothing. It follows from the practice and role of the SDS, that there must have been reporting both leading up to the event and its aftermath and this is suggested in the 1979 annual report.⁴⁵ Further, it is stated in the gist of the closed statements that one officer was present at the demonstration at which Blair Peach sustained fatal injuries. It is stated that “*in both instances advanced and retrospective intelligence was provided about the events*”.⁴⁶ Despite this explicit confirmation that such intelligence was supplied by SDS officers, not a single document has been disclosed.

51. What is most troubling about this missing evidence is that it leads to an inexorable conclusion that important material that is directly relevant to the role of undercover policing in respect of the most controversial events has been deliberately withheld either from the Inquiry by the police or by the Inquiry from the core participants. On a structural level, this strikes at the very heart of the remit and purpose of the Inquiry. On a personal level, for

³⁹ HN200, p23

⁴⁰ MPS-0742600/29, paragraph 84. HN301’s account was presumably not provided to the Scarman inquiry in which Lord Justice Scarman largely praised the MPS response and rejected allegations of misuse of truncheons other than to note that he “*did not exclude the possibility of one or two incidents of the misuse of a truncheon*” (p23).

⁴¹ The Red Lion Square Disorders of 15 June 1974, Cmnd 5919, February 1975

⁴² Ibid, para 14-16

⁴³ E.g. HN353 states that he filed reports on the preparations for the Wood Green and Lewisham anti-racist demonstrations including scouting the route and reporting back on weaknesses in the police response MPS-0740413/9

⁴⁴ MPS-0730906/13

⁴⁵ MPS-0728963/10

⁴⁶ UCPI0000034307/7, paragraph 35

those who have been bereaved, such as Celia Stubbs, it is yet another example of the obstructions she has faced in her search for truth and accountability. The absence of any intelligence in relation to the policing of the event still leaves open the question of whether he, or any of his companions on the day, were being specifically targeted.

Conclusions

52. It is apparent on reviewing the disclosed documents that there remains significant difficulty in understanding the extent and malevolence of the work of the SDS.
53. That is in large part due to missing documents. The significant gaps in the disclosed documents is such that the available evidence raises as many questions as it answers.
54. It is also, in part, because the evidence gathering process is so weighted towards the narrative of events being revealed through the perspective of the SDS. The primary documents are almost exclusively documents created by the SDS and Special Branch. They describe events as told through the perspectives of the authors. Some documents, notably the annual reports, are drafted specifically to justify the SDS's very existence. These documents are an important starting point, but they also present a one-sided and skewed narrative.
55. The opportunity for a fair and balanced narrative has been extremely limited. Non-state core participants had the opportunity to provide witness statements some time ago, but at a time when there was extremely limited disclosure. The statements were therefore provided at a time when the activities and interests of the SDS were not known, other than in the most general sense. Whereas, the police material has been available to the Inquiry for a matter of years, it has been made available to the non-state core participants only weeks prior to the hearing with some key witness statements still being outstanding at the time this statement was prepared. The opportunity for a genuine forensic examination of the relevant material is lost and is replaced with a set of witness statements by undercover officers that establish an accepted narrative about the function, ethics and practice of the SDS. There has been no real opportunity to input into which witnesses are called to give evidence.
56. One important opportunity to test the narrative told by the SDS documents is the questioning of witnesses. But the scope for the representatives of the non-state core participants to ask questions is extremely limited. That compounds the sense of

unfairness. Celia Stubbs urges the inquiry to re-engage with the non-state core participants at the conclusion of this phase of hearings to consider issues such as disclosure and questioning of witnesses and improve the process to one which better facilitates the participation of non-state core participants.

57. Notwithstanding the points made above, the Inquiry must still do what it can in this phase of hearings to test the purported justifications for the work of the SDS and to understand the actual uses to which gathered intelligence was put.

58. Celia Stubbs has always been a law-abiding citizen, as was Blair Peach. She is here for answers and accountability. She is not, of course, under any obligation to explain why she should not have been the subject of surveillance: it is for the state to justify why it engaged in such significant and covert intrusions into the private lives and activities of her and others involved in the campaign for justice for Blair Peach. It is for the Inquiry to forensically test the justifications being put forward.

59. As it appears to Celia Stubbs, the disclosed documents do not reveal any justification at all for the covert gathering of intelligence on her or the campaign regarding the killing of Blair Peach.

60. Finally, Celia Stubbs and her legal team would like to thank the Chair for permitting access to the T1P2 hearing bundle to Dr Graham Smith, another core participant and a leading academic in police accountability. The work in preparing for these hearings has been greatly assisted by his input and the Chair may wish to consider the contribution that can be made by academics and researchers as the Inquiry progresses.

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