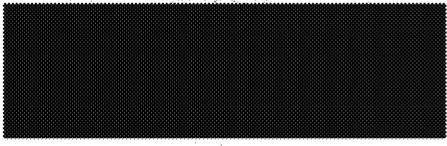


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**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

**SPECIAL
BRANCH**

SDS Discussion Paper





DISCUSSION PAPER

**SDS TARGETING STRATEGY AND DEPLOYMENT
IN RELATION TO THE
ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT**

PART ONE

THE CHITTY CASE

PART TWO

CURRENT POLICY AND PRACTICE



Dunes writer
in Tradecraft



FOREWORD

Like all families, the SDS has, over the years, rejoiced spontaneously in the successes of its members. At the same time it has struggled - again, no doubt, quite typically - to come to terms with its failures. If we accept, as Ray Davies put it in *Celluloid Heroes* (The Kinks, 1971, RCA Victor), that success walks hand in hand with failure, then perhaps we have a duty to tend to our casualties as well as to fete our heroes. Accidents will occur in the best-regulated families, Mr. Micawber noted, and if the family doesn't care for the victim, who else will?

And if the casualty is embittered; rejected by the family that once nurtured him, should anyone be surprised if he, with apparent malice, seeks to bring the old family home crashing to the ground?

The writer, as SDS field officer, mentor to field officers, and, currently, SDS operations manager, has ten years continuous experience of the SDS undercover operation and, particularly, the targeting of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). Not surprisingly, he has a few ideas on the subject! More importantly, he has enjoyed privileged access to the collective wisdom of SDS managers, field officers and support staff for the duration. If, therefore, any coherent observations appear in the pages that follow then he is indebted to them. But, as they will know, he has never balked at the prospect of plagiarism.....

A particular debt is owed to two colleagues whose knowledge, experience and judgement have been invaluable in trying to make sense of the complex world of undercover policing.

Firstly, there is, of course, former Detective Sergeant John Dines, who emerged from four years (1987-91) deployment in the ALF, bruised, battered and outstandingly successful; his professionalism and spirit unquenched, despite enduring the most arduous working conditions in the history of the SDS. His trenchant observations on tradecraft remain as pertinent as ever and are to be passed on to new operatives.

More recently, the writer has had the benefit of listening to the authoritative views of Detective Chief Inspector HN86 2 (Officer In Charge, SDS, 1990-94). Suffice to say, those parts of the paper that deal with strategies for selection and the subsequent monitoring of the welfare of field officers are his brainchild(ren?!) and currently in place at his initiation. Recently transferred to other Special Branch duties, current field officers are united in praising his commitment to their operational safety and wellbeing.

1.





If this paper has been prompted by a former field officer's fall from grace, then the writer (wearing his present SDS hat) clearly has a duty to current and future field officers to ensure that the case is properly understood, analysed, and discussed openly and frankly, both with them and senior management. Over the years the SDS has learnt some hard lessons; if the Chitty case provides another opportunity to learn from mistakes, all well and good. As Oscar Wilde observed, experience is the name we give to our mistakes.

It is important to acknowledge the inherent dangers in long term undercover policing, and in doing so, work as hard as possible to counter them.

A final word should go to acknowledge a debt to a commodity so useful when analysing problems of this kind: hindsight.

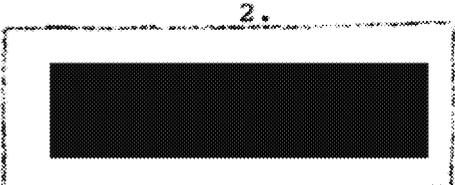
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Bob Lambert

R.A. Lambert

Detective Inspector, SDS

May, 1994




CIRCULATION NOTE

THIS DISCUSSION PAPER IS CLASSIFIED 
AND MUST BE PASSED BY HAND UNDER SECURE COVER
AT ALL STAGES AND RETAINED BY DCI EDMONDSON
IN THE SDS OFFICE

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Management perspectives of an SDS field officer's performance are influenced by a number of factors, but perhaps most consistently by the quality of the intelligence he, or she, produces. Within the field, however, an undercover officer judges a fellow team member according to his professionalism; that is to say, his tradecraft. Minor, sometimes substantial mistakes, will be forgiven by senior members of the team where the officer is brave enough to admit the error and demonstrate an ability to listen to wise counsel and learn from experience. Nonetheless, certain behaviour is never acceptable to the professional field officer. This, quite simply, consists of any breach of the golden rule of tradecraft: maintain cover in all situations and at all costs, and later, when returned to normal duties, do nothing to compromise the integrity of the operation. Without such a single minded emphasis on tradecraft, risks to the safety of field officers and their families would be unacceptable.

1.2. Ironically, on two separate occasions in the past, two field officers have failed to maintain cover in the same apparently innocuous situation: when being processed for drink/driving offences while on duty and in their cover identities. Both volunteered their true identities to the Station Officer (one was actually in possession of documentation in his true identity). Contemporary field officers were appalled at this seemingly wanton disregard for professionalism and, in

First to go
"rogue"



consequence, team morale suffered and the officers in question lost their 'street' credibility.

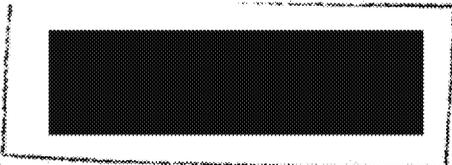
1.3. Until the Mike Chitty case, however, no former field officer had ever breached the two-part golden rule by making an unauthorised subsequent return to his cover identity. Let it be clearly understood at the outset then, that this is by far the most important aspect of the case for all current and former field officers. However psychiatrists might explain his unprofessional behaviour, to the field officer, DS Chitty's conduct will remain totally unacceptable, showing, as this paper will illustrate, a reckless disregard for the safe running of the SDS operation.

1.4. Therefore, although the case obviously raises questions about the provision of welfare to DS Chitty himself, it is his wilful disregard for the safety of current and former field officers that must be the writer's priority concern.

1.5. The SDS has provided secret and reliable intelligence concerning the criminal activities of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) continuously for the last ten years (1984-94). Throughout, SDS operatives have been successfully targeted within the extremist wing of the animal rights movement to allow access to individuals known or suspected to be ALF activists. The long term nature of SDS deployment has been particularly suited to this target where hard won credibility and trust are prerequisites for high grade intelligence.

5.





1.6. It has recently come to light that DS Chitty, a former undercover operative in this field, resumed use of his cover identity after his tour of duty had finished. That is to say, he renewed his relationship with associates from the animal rights movement without authority and for periods while employed on other Special Branch duties. The writer is not qualified to deal with the psychological, or indeed psychiatric, implications of the case; that will be the subject of a report by the relevant professionals. Instead, he hopes to place this example of unprofessional behaviour in context and to set out the facts of the case clearly so that relevant lessons may be learnt in relation to future operations.

1.7. However, this paper will deal with all aspects of the SDS operation in relation to the ALF (and other operational areas where relevant) so that the professionalism of past and present members of a small team of dedicated officers is not overshadowed by the failings of one.

1.8. In summary, in addition to analysing the Chitty case, it is hoped the paper will serve to review the SDS performance, provide valuable management information and assist in future targeting strategy. Part One will deal with the Chitty case (making appropriate comparisons with current policy and practice) and Part Two will deal with current policy and practice in relation to the ALF wherein it may be timely and useful to address the following matters in some detail:





- (a) nature of the target organisation (the ALF);
- (b) Home Office guidelines in respect of participation in crime;
- (c) welfare of SDS operatives;
- (d) dissemination of SDS intelligence;
- (e) SDS assessment of impact of recent arrests of leading ALF activists;
- (f) likely intelligence gains emanating from the current SDS operation;
- (g) factors to be weighed in relation to future deployment within the ALF;
- (h) selection of Special Branch officers for deployment on SDS duties within the ALF.





PART ONE

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CHITTY CASE

2.1. DS Chitty was the first SDS officer to be deployed in the animal rights movement and started work in the field in April 1983. At this time the major related policing problem was public disorder at large scale animal rights demonstrations. Hence it was a relatively easy matter for him to infiltrate a local campaigning group, South London Animal Movement (SLAM), and obtain useful intelligence concerning public order events.

2.2. Essentially, he was working amongst well meaning, idealistic campaigners who were unable to accept either cruelty to, or abuse of, animals in virtually any context, but especially in relation to vivisection. Typically, they would be peace loving, compassionate people, members of such established national groups as the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV), the National Anti Vivisection Society (NAVS), Animal Aid and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). Within their ranks was a small but growing number of militant activists prepared to take the law into their



own hands.

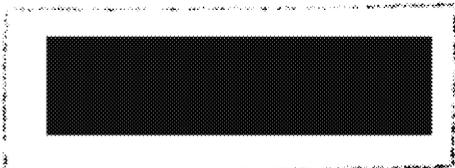


2.3. At this point, it is submitted that DS Chitty would not have been selected for the job if current selection procedures had been in place in 1982 when he was chosen. In the first place, he did not have anywhere near the qualifying two year minimum period of service in Metropolitan Police Special Branch. It may be that undue weight was attached to his record of having worked for Bermuda Special Branch and, a 3rd party organisation

14

[REDACTED]; whereas, the purpose of insisting on a minimum of two years service within MPSB is so that a wide cross section of authoritative opinion can be canvassed by the selecting officers. In DS Chitty's case he had only served for six months on D Squad (naturalisation enquiries) and six months at Heathrow Airport (domestic arrivals/departures); significantly he had no operational or enquiry work experience. With all due respect to supervisors on D Squad and at Heathrow at the time, it begs the question: who, within the Branch, could vouch for his ability to work in a stressful environment?

2.4. Current selection procedures involve three interviews with the applicant, psychometric profiling under the guidance of Dr. Felicity Gibling, a psychologist at the Police Staff College, and a visit to the applicant's home address to interview his/her partner. Any relevant personality traits are fully discussed with the applicant to help both parties make a decision about what is clearly a significant career move. In contrast, DS Chitty (then DC Chitty) arrived at a selection interview thinking he was





applying for the SB surveillance team and only half way through realised it might have something to do with undercover policing!

2.5. Equally, for the record, it has to be said that his wife was not visited at home by the interviewers and subsequently she only ever met his supervisors once a year at a Christmas party. This lack of attention to the person who experiences first hand the domestic impact of undercover policing may have been a serious omission; certainly, she has recently confided in the writer that she never felt able to talk to 'the office' about her husband's lack of interest in his home life during and after his SDS tour of duty.

2.6. Two important qualities for a prospective SDS officer were never much in evidence in DS Chitty's character: loyalty to the Branch/Service and a developed sense of team spirit. Instead, he has always seen himself as 'an intelligence officer' rather than a 'police officer' or a 'Branch man' and often demonstrated independent, selfish, behaviour. Of course, on one level, he had an impressive curriculum vitae, but on reflection one has to ask if five years of covert monitoring of private telephone conversations in Bermuda is a fair indication of suitability for any job where inter-personal skills are essential, never mind undercover police work on the streets of London.

2.7. This is not to detract from his performance as a field officer where he was consistently shrewd in maintaining cover and providing intelligence. Rather, it acknowledges faults in the





selection process at the time and begins to address character defects which help explain the officer's unsuitability for the undercover role and culminate in unprofessional behaviour on his part.

2.8. While it is impossible to generalise, there are common experiences within each field of SDS operations. For example, a select band of officers who have penetrated extreme right wing groups report feelings of occasional extreme antipathy towards some of their close undercover associates; when a  tour of duty is completed they have no desire at all to return to the bosom of activists who are often violent, crude and bigoted. If, for any obscure reason, they did return secretly to such groups they would inevitably come to the attention of police very quickly. That, in itself, would therefore act as a deterrent.

14A

2.9. Similarly, over the years, a number of SDS officers have operated within extreme left wing groups where the principle requirement is strict adherence to party doctrine (an extreme version of 'political correctness'); often a situation where friendship is less crucial than theoretical soundness. Thus an officer contemplating an unauthorised return to, say, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), would have to share the ideological stance of the organisation - rather like a convert to the Jehovah Witnesses. In practice, officers returning to normal duties find it a great relief to leave such zealots behind them. Again, it has to be said, that if a former field officer made an unauthorised return to a group such as the RCP it would

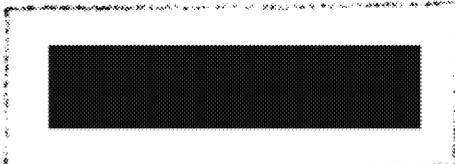




be no soft option. Instead, the officer would have to demonstrate renewed dedication and a full time commitment to the Party. Thus to be 'turned' would amount to an ideological conversion.

2.10. In contrast, all officers who have worked in the animal rights field admit to having formed close friendships with activists for whose cause - if not their means - they have some natural sympathy. (There is also much anecdotal evidence to suggest that the same is true in respect of officers who have worked in the closely allied, and often overlapping, anarchist field.) A tour of duty over there is bound to be a fleeting desire to return to a field of operations where excitement was a regular feature of life and where the alter ego's domestic responsibilities were non existent. Hence the importance of selecting officers who are strong minded and loyal with the advantage of stable personal relationships.

2.11. Again, it is worth placing on record, that where officers have been targeted against hardliner activists within the animal liberation and anarchist fields, they, too, would find it impossible to make a subsequent unauthorised return to their alter ego's lifestyle without a 100% commitment on their part and thus with the concomitant high risk of coming to Branch/SDS attention. As will become clear, DS Chitty's return to his undercover lifestyle and associates was relatively easy and went undetected for so long because he had been targeted against 'soft' activists who were of no real interest to police.





2.12. It is difficult to gauge whether DS Chitty's marriage was in poor shape before his SDS operation. Managers and colleagues had several indications during his tour of duty, however, that he intended to seek a divorce once his son was settled in higher education and he had paid off a sufficient part of his mortgage. In any event, that he did little to nurture the relationship is confirmed by his wife notwithstanding her abiding loyalty. For his part, he has long confided in the writer that his marriage held no interest for him after his tour of duty. Thus, he appears to have had no real emotional counter balance to the temptation to return secretly to the warmth of a close female associate in the animal rights movement. But this is to run ahead of the story....

2.13. In 1983 DS Chitty was operating successfully in a new field; both supervisors and colleagues had no misgivings about his method of operation. By late 1984, however, the public order threat posed by various animal rights groups had all but disappeared and the prime police concern was to combat the growing criminal campaign of the ALF. Nonetheless, DS Chitty was able to convince his management team that he was gainfully employed monitoring legitimate animal rights groups in South London on the basis that ALF activists would be recruited there - and thus, maybe, identified by him. It was an argument with theoretical merit.

2.14. In practice he became immersed in the cosy world of middle class animal rights campaigning and declined opportunities to

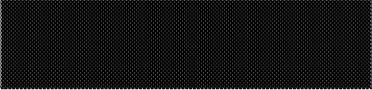




perform the harder task of penetrating the ALF. His reputation within the animal rights movement was entirely sound, no one ever doubted his credentials. Why should they? From the viewpoint of one of his undercover animal rights associates there was never any need to question the authenticity of his cover identity. Surely, they might reasonably argue, no infiltrator of any hue - undercover policeman, paid informant or investigative journalist - would be content merely to take part in leafleting and socialising and show no interest whatsoever in ALF activists participating in arson, burglary, criminal damage and intimidation against their opponents....

2.15. Indeed if members of the ALF were told then or now that DS Chitty had spent four years (1983-87) as an undercover policeman monitoring their activities they would be inclined to dismiss the claim as absurd. They would remember him, vaguely, as one of the many middle of the road campaigners who just didn't have the 'bottle' or the inclination to get involved in direct action - and, thus, by their standards, of no use whatsoever. Quite simply, he was never aware of their clandestine, criminal activities because they had no reason to tell him and he had no inclination to find out. Not surprisingly, his intelligence shed little light on the ALF and certainly had no adverse impact on their criminal activities.

2.16. Throughout 1984, the South East Animal Liberation League (SEALL) - specialising in large scale forced entries to vivisection laboratories - was an ideal vehicle for acceptance



into the ranks of the ~~more security conscious~~ ALF. DS Chitty spurned this opportunity; the writer, on the other hand, having recently entered the field, took it and provided intelligence that lead to the arrest of twelve leading SEALL activists at Whickham Laboratories. He now ponders over DS Chitty's private comments to him at the time concerning tradecraft. In short, the writer was reprimanded by his senior colleague for reporting prior knowledge of the laboratory raid in so far as he was, allegedly, being negligent in respect of maintaining cover. While indignant at what he perceived to be an unjustified professional slur, he did not see fit at the time to question, in turn, DS Chitty's loyalty or motivation.

2.17. In fairness, DS Chitty was not unique amongst field officers at the time, in wishing to avoid the risks and hassle inherent in criminal participation. Obviously, if a secretive, security conscious group has reason to search for an informer in its midst then an undercover police officer (for it is he the organisation is searching for!) has to invest substantial time and ingenuity convincing the group that it is not him. Perhaps DS Chitty genuinely felt that his cover was insufficient to withstand such scrutiny. In any event, no doubt the writer's thoughts at the time went along the lines: 'oh well, if Mike Chitty can get paid the same money for taking it easy (not busting a gut) then good luck to him!' (the philosophical response of working policemen to lazy colleagues down through the ages and throughout the service).





2.18. To pause in the narrative briefly, research reveals supportive evidence of a dilemma which should provide the basis for a suitable management study. In outline, a group of respected former field officers who have, in SDS terms, worked at the sharp end, report mixed feelings about a small number of field colleagues who have, like DS Chitty, been allowed to operate in relatively tranquil waters to little or no effect. 'Passengers' as one of this group of elder statesmen would insist on having it. They would argue that such individuals have been allowed to operate in stress free environments because of an essential weakness, or susceptibility on the part of managers, to having at least one or two members of a ten or twelve man team relaxed, compliant and regularly available to take charge of important social and team building events. This interpretation may be harsh but there is no denying the validity of the field officers' subjective perceptions. The potential dangers of allowing a two-tier system of performance and expectations to develop amongst a tight knit group over a four year period should not be underestimated.

2.19. For the writer, the problem has been largely eradicated by selecting committed, highly motivated officers and targeting them against worthwhile groups. Much more will be said on current policy in Part Two of this paper but in so far as DS Chitty constitutes a problem inherited from an earlier era, strongly held views of other former field officers should not go unremarked.



not worthwhile
deployment??



2.20. So, to resume, DS Chitty continued to produce reliable, if largely irrelevant, intelligence through to the end of his operation in May 1987. In fairness to his supervisors then, it must be remembered that he was a shrewd operator who could market his product well and, this being prior to and, latterly, at the inception of the Animal Rights National Index (ARNI), there was little to measure his intelligence against. Also, it should be recalled, from all other viewpoints, he was an ideal officer to manage; reliable, punctual, co-operative, never rocking the boat like some of his more outspoken field colleagues. (If it has taught the writer anything it is that as a manager he must not be swayed in favour of a poor field officer merely because he, or she, is a 'good team member' who ingratiates himself with his supervisors and colleagues.)

2.21. The purpose of these recollections is not to apportion blame between a lazy field officer and his managers. Rather it is intended to focus on one salient and telling point: if the activists DS Chitty was monitoring were of little interest to Special Branch at the time, then, upon his unauthorised return to them two years later, they were, by then, clearly understood to be unworthy of SDS attention. Thus, when planning a secret return to his alter ego's lifestyle in 1989 he would know exactly the nature of current SDS coverage in South London and appreciate that visits to old comrades would probably not come to the attention of the SDS. Of course, he was still taking a calculated risk, and no doubt that formed part of the attraction too.





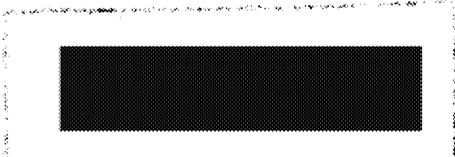
2.22. Therefore, in ~~one important respect~~, DS Chitty is unique. Officers who have since been deployed in this field have been targeted against groups and individuals who are at the cutting edge of ALF activity. Each would find it impossible to emulate DS Chitty's repeat performance without coming to the attention of the SDS and/or ARNI. This is not to suggest that a professional operator needs such a restraint nor is it to be complacent about a risk inherent in any long term undercover operation.

3. RESUMPTION OF COVER IDENTITY

3.1. After completing his SDS tour of duty, DS Chitty continued his specialism in covert operations, working first on S Squad (Unit 2) and then at Putney attached to SO 11 (Special Intelligence Section (SIS)). Part of his duties on Unit 2 entailed  which, of course, he was considered well qualified to deal with. Perhaps, though, such an enclosed, covert environment is none to healthy for an ex SDS officer; certainly not for one who is hankering after his old lifestyle.

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3.2. In the event, his subsequent move to Putney gave him the freedom he was searching for; he was able to prepare the necessary documentation and logistical backup required to return convincingly to the field. Informal discussions with a



he acquired
previous identity
r "self deployed"
to old g/try



contemporary at SO 11 confirms that he took full advantage of the flexible working arrangements that existed there then. Suffice to say he appears to have had sufficient 'down time' between operations to devote ample time to his 'second' life.

3.3. Dealing briefly with documentation and logistics, one can say that he merely repeated the strategies that had served him well between 1983 - 87. Indicative of premeditation, he

36

failed to return items capable of supporting his legend.

No doubt a contact address was the most difficult, certainly the most expensive, aspect of cover for him.

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In addition to using the address for correspondence he appears to have been able to take advantage of one of the bedsit rooms for entertaining purposes.

3.4. In terms of transport he claims to have used a car purchased at an auction and not registered in his name with the approval of SO 11 for covert police duties and, naturally, for his own covert use as 'Mike Blake'. Owing to the subsequent disciplinary case against DS Chitty, the writer has deemed it

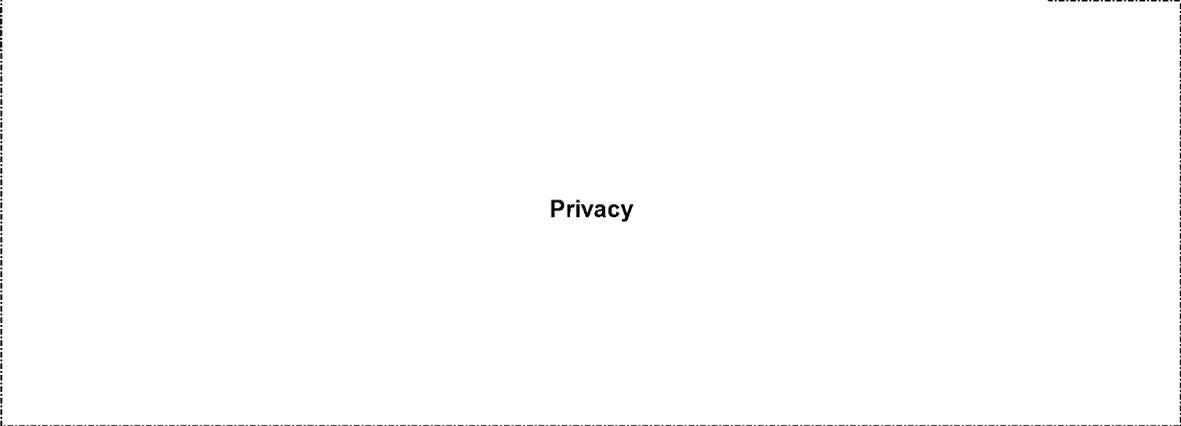


prudent not to explore ~~the veracity of this particular claim.~~

3.5. During his official tour of duty DS Chitty was romantically attached to a number of women within the South London Animal Movement (SLAM). In fact it was a standing joke amongst activists that SLAM was more of a dating service than a viable campaigning group. By mid 1986 he was known to be a close associate of

Privacy

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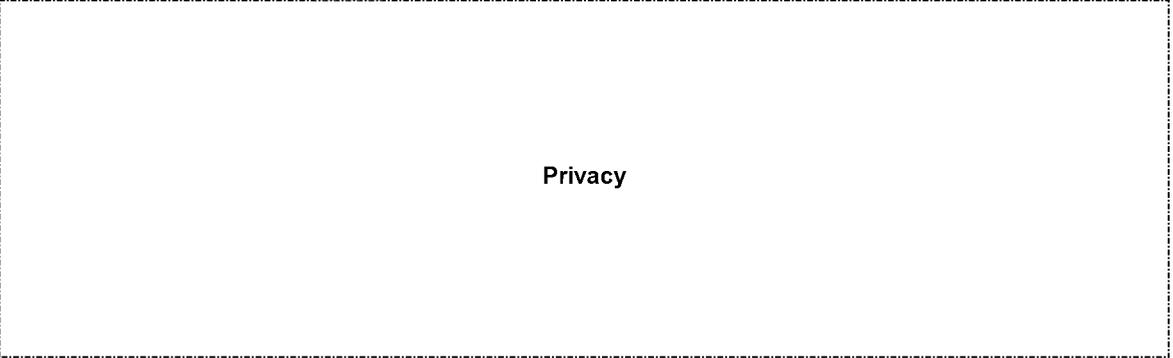


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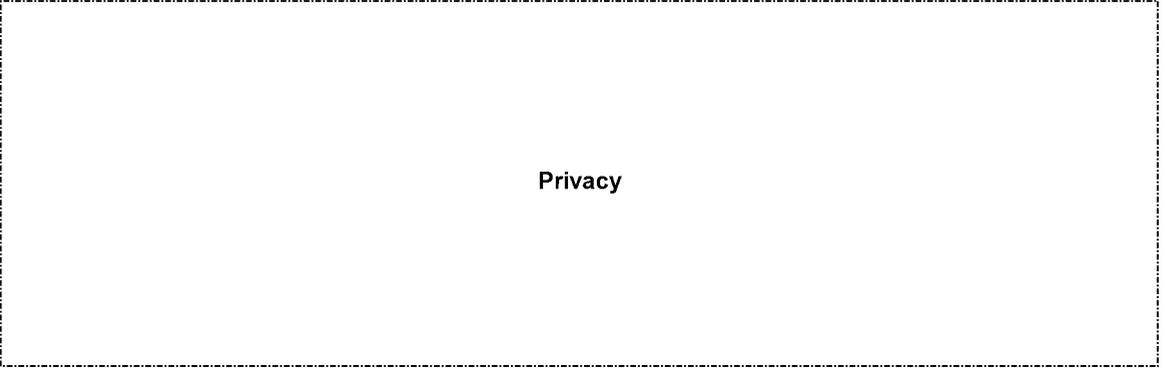
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Blake met many former associates from the animal rights movement who by now, like him, were no longer actively involved in the struggle, preferring instead to demonstrate their support through a lifestyle that included vegetarianism and the purchase of cruelty free cosmetics and toiletries. No danger here of DS Chitty bumping into current SDS operatives who, he might rightly have guessed, were more gainfully employed infiltrating elusive



cells of the ALF.



3.10. In conversation with the writer DS Chitty admits to cross contamination of his two identities in one important respect: employment. Obviously, during the period 1989 - 91 (and perhaps

38A

later), [Privacy] would wish to know how he managed to lead an apparently comfortable and highly mobile lifestyle. He told them he was a club racing driver and a mechanic for other club racing drivers (a time consuming occupation he was well known to be engaged in by colleagues within the police service!). Vanity, apparently, got the better

38A

of him when he gave [Privacy] a photograph of Chitty/Blake being congratulated by rock star Chris Rea after victory in a Caterham Seven car race at Brands Hatch in 1990. (Rea and the racing world knew him as Mike Chitty (not Blake), albeit not as a policeman).

3.11. There is little doubt that DS Chitty's unprofessional behaviour was prompted by romantic and social considerations rather than an ideological attachment to the cause of animal rights.

3.12. Appendix A details some of the documentation, correspondence, photographs and logistical backup involved in the unauthorised cover operation. [Privacy]

38A

[Privacy]



Privacy

38A

Privacy

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3.14. For what it is worth, DS Chitty hints that he can never reveal certain aspects of his unauthorised double life for fear of further disciplinary charges.

4. DISCIPLINE

4.1. Many colleagues recall DS Chitty's unreasonable response to being returned from SO 11 to routine SB duties in 1990. One can see now how, for example, a three month stint as reserve room controller must have cramped Mike Blake's style! On the Rest of the World desk on E Squad he was notable for his poor work return and frequent absences from the office 'on enquiries'. Doubtless he viewed a subsequent transfer to A Squad, protection duties, with a mixture of relief and anticipation. Here again, was a





posting that would allow him unlimited time away from home and, if he was clever, scope to give free reign to his alter ego's lifestyle. Another important factor which the officer would not have overlooked was that the posting was likely to boost his overtime earnings - an essential ingredient in his activities.

4.2. Again, here, one must reflect on a lost opportunity to curtail his activities. Former Detective Chief Superintendent Wait had long established best practice whereby ex SDS field officers were not allowed to perform high profile protection duties within a sensible time after finishing their SDS tours of duty. That officers themselves should want to do so is evidence of negligence on their parts and has, on one occasion, led to an officer being identified on television by former undercover associates. (Acting Detective Chief Superintendent HN337 has 50 tightened up on this since taking over the running of CE Squad.)

4.3. In the event DS Chitty was too clever and careless. A Squad staff noticed that he was recording excessive mileage, particularly when compared with his protection partner, and looked into the matter. It transpired that he was, for example, purchasing petrol in Redhill when he was officially on duty in Wiltshire claiming an overnight lodging allowance.

4.4. The discrepancies were put to him by Detective Superintendent Harper in June 1992; he offered no explanation, choosing instead to launch into a personal attack on the senior officer (which, incidentally, he has continued with remarkable



Discipline
initiated Feb
1994

[REDACTED]

ferocity up to the present day). He was told that he was being relieved of his firearms authorisation immediately and that the matter would be investigated. After breaking down in tears in front of A Squad civil staff he was escorted home by Detective Inspector TN0027 and has been placed sick with stress ever since.

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4.5. The writer must interrupt the narrative here to make an important recommendation. Whenever managers on any Special Branch Squad have to take serious disciplinary action against a former SDS field officer (or if they are dealing with a serious welfare problem) they should alert SDS managers in advance. This is not aimed at securing special treatment for former field officers but rather to enable SDS managers to prepare and enhance the necessary welfare support mechanisms.

4.6. To continue, CIB conducted an investigation into alleged offences by DS Chitty while engaged on protection duties. His attitude to the investigating officers was hostile and non co-operative throughout. Having established that there were no criminal charges to be answered he was formally served with discipline papers in February 1994.

4.7. Welfare visits to the officer between June 1992 and February 1994 proved to be a hazardous affair. On one such visit in August 1992 the writer and DC [REDACTED] (both former field 54 colleagues) had to escort DS Chitty from a saloon bar in a public house in Redhill when the licensee could no longer tolerate the latter's loud profanities used to illustrate his loathing for

[REDACTED]



Superintendent Harper. But ~~whereas Federation~~ representatives received short shrift (and A squad officers dared not go within a mile of Redhill) the writer felt that the old SDS bond still counted for something in his dealings with the unrepentant officer. Throughout this period he showed a remarkable fixation with a conspiracy theory which received some formal expression in a letter he passed to CIB constituting a complaint against Mr. Harper (investigated and found to be unsubstantiated).

4.8. The clues he gave the writer during this period about his use of old cover identity were not sufficiently clear to prompt the relevant enquiry. Once he expressed the view that the 'conspiracy' against him was based on compromising information concerning personal problems that had probably come to light during a vetting enquiry. Thus, he reasoned, 'they' were out to get him on some trumped up charge concerning mileage. When asked to elaborate on these 'personal problems' he declined. At the time this was seen as just part of a never ending stream of ranting about persecution; anything rather than focus on the specific charges he faced.

4.9. Perhaps a better clue was to be found in his frequent references to his preparedness to go back to his former undercover associates. This involved a simple but subtle shift from reality. He was keen to make the threat but at same time to obscure the truth that he had already gone back. By this time his appearance had reverted to his old field persona. The writer was alerted to a possible ongoing sympathy with his old lifestyle

11 health
pension
"tactics"??



when he found a 'Man' newsletter at the officer's home address. ('Man' being a cult, ageing hippy Welsh rock band, who have a very small following amongst whom 'Mike Blake' was prominent in the mid 1980s). In discussion the writer pointed out to DS Chitty that if he went, as he was suggesting, to a 'Man' gig in South London he would run the risk of bumping into former undercover associates. 'So what' came the truculent reply, the full significance sadly lost on the listener at the time.

4.10. The writer continues to be disappointed that so many of DS Chitty's former SDS colleagues failed to visit him during this two year period. He was pretty well left to rot. Even convicted murderers are allowed visitors. Besides, as will become clear, there was a collective need to preserve what sympathy the officer might still have for the SDS. (There seems to be a prevailing attitude within the Branch that association with colleagues under investigation is some sort of contamination. Such an unenlightened view ill becomes an intelligent and sophisticated workforce.)

4.11. However, since service of the discipline papers (truly a massive bundle of statements, dealing with, inter alia, interviews with petrol station attendants and hotel managers in Wiltshire) DS Chitty has embarked on a desperate, if calculated, course of action aimed at avoiding a discipline hearing and with a view to securing an ill health pension rather than the sack. In essence, this has meant revealing some details of the secret double life he has been leading in the hope that it might be





interpreted sympathetically rather than leading to further disciplinary or criminal proceedings.

4.12. This, of course, would be a gamble but he had reason to be hopeful, having taken advice from former Detective Sergeant

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HN155 (a disgraced former SDS officer who, similarly, in 1985, showed a willingness to jeopardize the safe running of the SDS operation) and also, by virtue of having apparently, already convinced his NHS psychiatrist, Dr. [REDACTED], at [REDACTED] Hospital that he was suffering from 'Stockholm Syndrome', rather than, say, merely calculated, selfish and devious behaviour.

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4.13. In the circumstances one needed to be alive to all possibilities: not least of all, that the whole story of a second 'double life' was an elaborate fiction. Suffice to say, the writer carefully examined all the evidence and was able to report on its authenticity beyond any reasonable doubt.

4.14. However, the writer has seen no documentary evidence or other corroboration concerning the activities of 'Mike Blake' for the periods in 1992 which relate to the specific discipline charges he faces. He has admitted privately that he would often drive back from his protection post in Wiltshire in the evening (when he later claimed lodging allowance for being OMPD), change out of his 'protection' clothes and, swapping to his 'cover' vehicle, drive off to meet friends who knew him as 'Mike Blake'.

38A

Privacy



[REDACTED]

Privacy

There is a suggestion that he may be keeping current, or recent, Blake relationships to himself in order to preserve their long term viability. One thing is clear: DS Chitty had, by 1992, enjoyed leading a secret double life for over two years without being found out by his employers or his wife and nothing at all - until a fateful day in Mr. Harper's office in June 1992 - had happened to inhibit his unprofessional behaviour.

5. RATIONALISATION

5.1. Faced then, in February 1994, with details of the charges and evidence against him for the first time he elected to write to the Commissioner setting out details of his career and alluding to the fact that he had returned to his undercover role. While preparing this letter he went missing from home for a week causing much distress to his wife. Some of the time, he admits, he was in [REDACTED], discussing his plight with fellow renegade

61A

61 [REDACTED] HN155 [REDACTED] When challenged as to the propriety of seeking such counsel he countered colourfully: 'who the hell else am I supposed to talk to when the whole fucking organisation is out to screw my arse to the floor?'

5.2. Reported missing to police he was subsequently found in Worthing having abandoned his car on the sea front in circumstances which led to an air and sea rescue search. (The


writer's reports, dealing with his disappearance and conversations concerning his double life, together with a copy of his letter to the Commissioner are attached at Appendix A).

5.3. Whatever the depth of his scheming during that week, and no doubt in part because of it, the writer is left with an abiding memory of DS Chitty's manner and demeanour in an interview room at Worthing Police Station: distracted, almost haunted, a broken man obsessed by persecution and his own professional guilt (not the guilt of betrayal of animal activists but of letting down the SDS). As the wise old duty officer observed, 'he's not a well man, is he'.

5.4. His letter to the Commissioner is well written and, in parts, persuasive in its agenda. Others may accept its central theme of betrayal and guilt but the writer sees this as a subsequent rationalisation of unprofessional behaviour the officer is acutely ashamed of. One should remember that the DS Chitty of old built his whole reputation within police circles around the premise that he was a cynical, shrewd, sensibly unenergetic and wily operator. Exactly the kind of officer who would (and did!) scoff at the weaknesses or misfortunes of colleagues who might, from time to time, let their hearts rule their heads. Thus he had been hoisted by his own petard: exposed as the overly sensitive and weak man he really is.

5.5. In conversation then, rather than face his own shortcomings, he continued to rant and rave about the personal

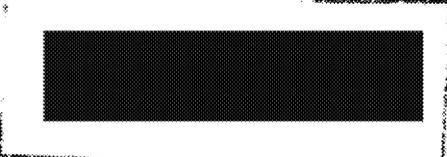
all health
tension

Threat to expose
SBS

- LC

HN155

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vendetta of Mr. Harper and the treachery of former colleagues on A Squad. Then, literally in the next breath, he would switch to a persona only marginally closer to reality, to talk about his disillusionment with all aspects of Chitty's life and the release afforded by the activities of Blake.

5.6. Insofar as money has played an important part in the lifestyles of Chitty and Blake it is not surprising that his response to the service of disciplinary charges should be aimed at securing a medical discharge from the service (and thereby an ill health pension) rather than face a discipline board where he would, quite rightly, face the sack. Thus his letter seeks sympathy, not blame, for what he has done. Implicit is the message: does Special Branch really want my secret, dirty washing aired in open forum?

5.7. Equally, the letter contains a barely veiled threat along the lines: if I go down, I'll take as many people as possible with me, SDS in particular. (The hand of  HN155  here....) 65

While this may not be an idle threat it is not one he wants to carry out because - at least insofar as it relates to the SDS - to do so would effectively signal the end of 'Mike Blake'.

5.8. Again, it has to be said, the psychological implications of the case are outside the scope of this report. It is seriously suggested, however, that DCI Edmondson (recently taken over the running of the SDS) and the writer should be allowed access to the views and comments of those doctors assessing DS Chitty so



that they may have the best possible understanding of the case and be in a position to weigh the implications. Similarly, there may be a need for a psychiatrist to have objective background information on the case rather than the sole account of the patient himself.

5.9. DS Chitty developed his theme of betrayal and guilt when he visited Dr. Johnson at Wellington House in April 1994. He appeared to speak to the doctor in a measured manner, in fairness, in content too, in exactly the way the writer had grown accustomed to over the last two years. Disarmingly, he told the doctor, 'my psychiatrist tells me I'm not mentally ill, I know I'm not, I've just got a syndrome, Stockholm syndrome....'. Again, not surprisingly, he offered the doctor a slightly sanitised view of his secret double life, one that was based around his attachment to a group of animal rights activists and their cause, rather than his predilection for cannabis, a carefree lifestyle, heavy rock music and laid back women.

5.10. There are certain factual errors in DS Chitty's letter to the Commissioner which the writer is qualified to correct. On page five he outlines incidents during his (official) undercover tour where he faced assault and arrest. Most are accurate but where he describes the threat of attack from hunt supporters his recollection is hazy: like most SLAM members, he never took part in hunt sabotage. Similarly, he implies that he was involved in the manufacture and/or planting of incendiary devices on behalf of the ALF: as explained earlier he was only ever involved in

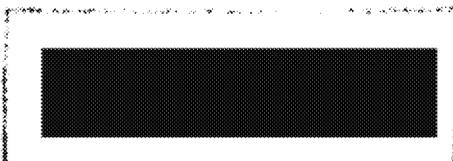




moderate, generally peaceful animal rights campaigning - at the shallow end of the animal liberation pool.

5.11. The paragraph on page two (marked 'A') of his letter also deserves comment. He suggests that at the end of his tour of duty on the SDS he received no counselling and was unable to unburden himself of 'guilt' feelings having betrayed his former comrades. This begs the question: how exactly did he betray them? For four years he contributed wholeheartedly to the social and legitimate campaigning activities of a South London animal rights group without ever once providing intelligence that lead to the arrest of any of their activists or the disruption of any of their activities. The fact that he wrote reports about Privacy, 38A and friends, holding ineffectual meetings in Streatham Library once a fortnight, which were filed briefly in Special Branch records (until their value was assessed) hardly constitutes 'betrayal'.

5.12. As for being unable to unburden himself after his tour of duty, the writer has to question whether he really wanted to. Ironically, at that time, DS Chitty was one of the principle upholders of the inhibiting 'macho environment' he later complains about in his letter. Yes, he is right, SDS managers do need to encourage a healthy environment in which field officers feel safe to talk about inevitable emotional ties to their target groups. But to suggest that he ever seriously contemplated pursuing such a counselling service is wrong. The writer shared the same supervisors as DS Chitty and always found





them ready to listen to welfare problems both during and after the undercover tour of duty. One can see that DS Chitty was actively contemplating a return to his cover identity and the last thing he would want to do is 'unburdon himself' to his managers.

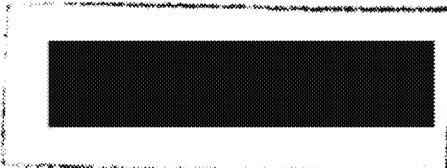
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5.13. DS Chitty is right in claiming that a more formal system of 'aftercare' was subsequently introduced. More recently still, DCI HN86 introduced a formal mentoring scheme that was aimed, in part, at targeting people like Chitty who seek to evade the welfare services on offer. In reality an SDS officer on completion of a tour of duty deals with culture shock by recourse to an informal network of ex SDS officers who provide an excellent form of self-help counselling and rehabilitation. Contemporaries recall how DS Chitty would generally fail to take advantage of such offers ('You can take a horse to water but you can't make it drink' as one old hand put it to the writer recently.)

5.14. To further invalidate this 'lack of counselling' claim one contemporary recalls how shortly after his tour of duty DS Chitty was invited to discuss his rehabilitation with the then SDS management. At the same time he was asked - as ex hairies often are - to advise on the selection of new recruits. Always regarded as a shrewd judge of character he was able to feel part of 'the team' and took the opportunity to advise that one DC  (now retired and working as a lumberjack in Canada) would 'never make an SDS officer as long as he had a hole in his arse'. So

69A





much for irony.

5.15. Where DS Chitty's rationalisation falls down completely is in his ridiculous claim that all the while he was leading a secret double life he was still maintaining the highest professional standards. That he would see Privacy and friends 38A in exactly the same appearance and on the same days as he would attend police offices in Putney and at Scotland Yard defies comprehension and certainly gives the lie to his irrational claims. Furthermore, he was placing former SDS colleagues at risk whenever he met them in a public place. Even the writer, chastised kindly by some colleagues for his compassionate stance towards the officer, is unable to forgive certain specific lapses in this respect, details of which he need not go into in this report.

5.16. Where, instead, sympathy should, perhaps, be extended to DS Chitty is in regard to the two years he spent off sick at home awaiting the outcome of an investigation into criminal and/or disciplinary offences. This would be an uncomfortable, probably stressful, experience for any police officer. Presumably, for one who had been leading a secret double life for some years - for whatever reason - it would be especially burdensome. To blame the delay in the investigation on the obstructive attitude of the officer is disingenuous. The prosecution of the case has been tardy, imposing unnecessary strains on the officer's family.





6. DAMAGE LIMITATION and RISK MANAGEMENT

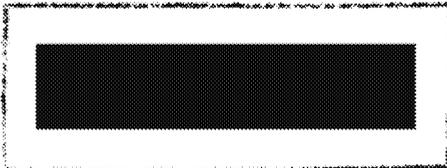
6.1. Eager during April 1994 to convince 'the powers that be' that he had returned to the heart of animal rights activity, DS Chitty has been in close contact with one Robin Lane. One time ALF press officer and still a committed and respected animal rights campaigner, Lane first met Mike Blake when they were both members of SLAM in 1983. By informing the writer of his plans and assuming (correctly) that Lane might still be monitored by the SDS, DS Chitty sought to create a certain impression about the nature of 'Mike Blake's' activities. In truth, Lane only ever knew Blake socially, through SLAM, and would never have discussed ALF business with him. This is not said to diminish the friendship that certainly existed between them between 1983 -87 (and possibly later) based at was on a common interest in illegal herbal substances and heavy metal music.

6.2. In the event a current SDS field officer (who had not seen DS Chitty before) saw Blake in action on Saturday 16th April 1994. In the afternoon Lane and a group of friends, including some old SLAM activists, met at a restaurant in Streatham to say goodbye to [Privacy] (ex SLAM) who had been in England on holiday and was due to return home to Canada. Blake attended with

38A [Privacy]

[Privacy] It was apparent that Lane and most present, [Privacy], had not seen Blake for a long time. Blake was heard to say that he had returned from





America just three weeks ago. Whether Lane had last seen him in 1987, '89, '91 or '92 it was not possible to say. Blake appeared to enjoy himself although the current field officer discerned an underlying tension in his performance.

6.3. Privacy (another former SLAM activist Privacy

38A Privacy 40

Privacy was present but so drunk that the current field officer could not gauge when she had last seen Blake. He did, however, overhear, 38A Privacy

Privacy telling Privacy that Blake 'was always coming and going', 'away for long periods then he would just turn up again'. At another stage in increasingly drunken proceedings Blake asked Privacy if she fancied going out with a famous racing driver (ie him); she laughed indulgently and encouragingly....

6.4. Throughout the meeting it was clear that no one present had any idea of Mike Blake's true identity. At the end of a pleasant meal for ten (Blake offered to pay half the bill...) the parties left the restaurant. Blake drove 38A Privacy in his new 'cover' car (details obtained) apparently to a destination where they could 'smoke some dope'. The driver, it was noted, had drunk five or six bottles of strong lager and was in no fit state to drive.

6.5. Four days later en route to Dr. Johnson at Wellington House, DS Chitty was arrested by British Transport Police at



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HN155

Scutt



[REDACTED]

Victoria Station for improper use of an invalid travel pass. Not in possession of his warrant card he explained that he was on undercover police duties and eventually gave names of colleagues that could be checked out. He was released but not before London Transport staff had decided to lodge a complaint about his abusive behaviour. Subsequently, the writer was able to explain to the aggrieved parties that the officer was not engaged on undercover duties, that he was long term sick and probably not intentionally rude. The vicarious apology was accepted and that particular matter rests.

6.6. Against this backdrop senior management, aided by medical advice, is obliged to weigh the merits of proceeding with disciplinary proceedings or recommending a medical discharge. Naturally, by this stage, there is no question of DS Chitty ever returning to work.

6.7. A few words should be said here about an understandable reluctance on the part of senior management to give in to threats of exposure from former SDS field officers. Three cases in the last ten years ⁷⁷ [REDACTED] HN155 ⁷⁷ [REDACTED], Stefan Scutt and [REDACTED] have given rise to the in-house shorthand term 'playing the SDS card' which basically denotes a current or former SDS officer who seeks to extricate himself from disciplinary and/or criminal proceedings by claiming he was adversely effected by his experience as an undercover police officer. Fact often succumbs to legend and it may well be worth briefly examining each case to better place DS Chitty's in its proper context.

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6.8. In 1985 Detective Sergeant ~~HN155~~ having completed his SDS tour of duty some two years earlier, was dismissed from the police service for assault. Immediately thereafter he wrote a letter to Commander Operations threatening to expose the SDS operation to the press if the decision was not overturned. Subsequently, the decision was reversed on appeal and DS ~~HN155~~ left the service with an ill health pension. (He is now a

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79A

~~HN155~~) To this day old hands in the Police Federation marvel at the successful outcome of his appeal. Like Chitty, contemporaries recall how unsuited to the undercover role DS ~~HN155~~ was: selfish, arrogant, disloyal both professionally and domestically. The writer can think of no redeeming features in the officer and the case represents the lowest point in the twenty five year history of the SDS.

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6.9. In 1988 Detective Constable Scutt was abruptly taken off SDS duties when his managers deemed his operation was unsound. The officer reacted badly to the decision and went missing from home before being found wandering abroad in York and was subsequently placed in the care of the force psychiatrist at Hendon. During an investigation by (then) DCI ~~HN337~~ Scutt made a threat, again, to expose the SDS operation to the press. DCI ~~HN337~~ called his bluff and threatened him, in return, with prosecution under the Official Secrets Act if should dare do such a thing.

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6.10. In the event DC Scutt did not carry out his threat. That he did not, the writer ventures to suggest, was due in part to


the support he was given by three contemporary field officers. That is to say, DC Scutt was, at all times, and remains to this day, bound by the strong bond of loyalty that arises naturally within the field. As one those three 'welfare' officers and again as DS Chitty's counsellor, the writer is a strong believer in the value of support for renegade officers; at best it helps inhibit further unprofessional behaviour and at the very least it provides access to their schemes and disruptive activity.

6.11. DC Scutt was subsequently discharged from the service with an ill health pension (arising from a personality disorder from which he suffered before joining the SDS). Again, like Chitty and

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HN155 one is forced to observe that under current procedures he would almost certainly not have been selected for SDS duties. (The writer, is suitably contrite having recommended him for the job but remains unrepentant in taking a strongly critical line in respect of management's handling of his dismissal from the field - but that definitely is, as they say, another story...)

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6.12. When in  Detective Superintendent  faced a discipline board following his arrest 

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 he was able to argue successfully that his behaviour - at least in terms of running away from the arresting officer - was a reflex response to his work some ten years earlier on the SDS. Psychiatric evidence apparently supported this contention; he received an ill health pension. Naturally there were critics within and outside the Branch who saw this as another example of an officer unfairly

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evading justice.

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6.13. The [REDACTED] case did not involve direct threats of SDS exposure and the officer was supported by at least one former field colleague who was able to confirm the long term psychological impact of undercover policing.

6.14. Thus, back to the Chitty case, and the need to acknowledge that we are dealing with a far more serious problem than in any of the three previous cases. On balance the writer takes the view that DS Chitty, complex character that he is, is unlikely to carry out his threat to expose the SDS operation whether he is disciplined and sacked or not. Of a variety of inhibiting factors perhaps the most effective is his reluctance to risk exposing his own undercover role. So if that risk is best described as moderate, then it is equally clear that the risk is substantially reduced to low if he is not disciplined and merely discharged on an ill health pension.

6.15. That leaves senior management with one important question: what is the real risk to the SDS operation in the event, however unlikely it may seem, that DS Chitty should expose it? The answer is stark: it would put at risk the safety of former (and possibly current) field officers and their families.

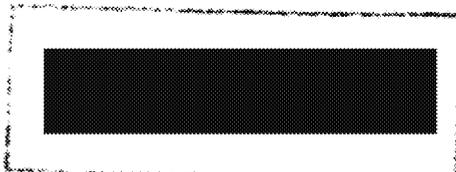
6.16. This specific risk is easily explained. It would take 'Mike Blake' no more than ten minutes to prove to the ALF (through Robin Lane) that certain former highly regarded ALF



activists had in fact been undercover police officers who were responsible for the imprisonment of close comrades and the disruption of large scale ALF criminal activity. No doubt 'Blake' could manage this much without blowing his own cover. Indeed, he could tell a true story that would answer a lot of questions the ALF hierarchy has been asking about infiltration for several years. In the circumstances the very least these officers - and their families - should expect would be postal bombs sent to their home addresses from the aptly named 'Justice Department'.

6.17. There is an increasing instability in DS Chitty's behaviour. What concerns the writer is the prospect not so much that he will carry out his threat (he probably lacks the bottle) but rather that he might inadvertently 'open his heart out' to Robin Lane over several bottles of Stella and under the added influence of cannabis. In other words there may well be a greater risk of exposure through negligence than through intent. In either case the SDS is well placed to monitor his behaviour with Lane, albeit it places an undue burden on current operatives who have enough to worry about without the fear of a rogue former SDS officer queering their pitch.

6.18. In addition to this specific risk there are of course a hundred and one facts about SDS operations that the ALF, its sympathetic lawyers and friendly investigative journalists would be delighted to hear about from 'Mike Blake'. Such disclosure would be seriously damaging to the safe and secure running of the current operation.



[REDACTED]

6.19. In warning current and former field officers in the ALF of the potential threat, managers have not lost sight of a parallel risk to contemporaries of DS Chitty who worked in other fields where physical retribution would be sought. In particular one thinks of DI [REDACTED] HN82 [REDACTED] who would face a current threat of reprisal from Red Action members if they were informed of his undercover role within their security conscious and violent group. If this kind of risk is judged to be less imminent it is only because DS Chitty would find it harder to pass such information convincingly to the target groups.

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6.20. Risks attaching to SDS premises have been fully discussed and are catered for in contingency planning (copy SDS Contingency Plan attached at Appendix B).

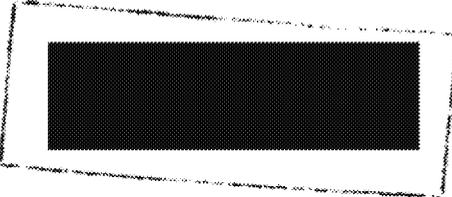
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Lastly, mention should be made of those people without whose valuable support the SDS could not operate such as those who have provided cover employment for officers over the years.

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[REDACTED]



7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1. The latter part of chapter 6 and the whole of this chapter will be updated when the outcome of the discipline case is known.

7.2. At this stage it may be best to be pragmatic: if DS Chitty gets his pension he will in all probability slink away again from areas of interest to the SDS (where he has never been comfortable) and if he still wants to lead the debauched life of 'Mike Blake' it will have no bearing on our secret operations. On the other hand, doctors may cure him of his need to flirt with an alternative lifestyle. Either option is a better prospect than a continuation of his present confrontational, highly volatile behaviour culminating in a contested discipline hearing that would be bound to end in disaster and ignominy for him.

7.3. In summary, the security of the SDS operation must take priority over other less crucial considerations.

7.4. When the case is concluded and the writer is properly able to judge DS Chitty's subsequent behaviour he will expand this chapter to draw out lessons and make recommendations. In the meantime he will start work on Part Two of the paper which he hopes will show the value and viability of the current operation. He therefore takes this opportunity to invite ideas and comments from readers, particularly if they take issue with any of the views put forward so far.



7.5. A final word about ex 'hairies'. The majority return to normal duties within Special Branch without fuss or favour; enlightened if not necessarily enriched by the undercover experience. A significant minority leave the police service to pursue invariably successful careers in areas that offer a personal challenge. Making passing reference to our two most recent departures, who would dare argue against HN8 becoming a successful 106 or John Dines a first rate lawyer? The same determination and creativity that stood them in good stead on the SDS will serve them well as they carve out rewarding new careers.

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7.6. We are left - over a twenty five year period involving more than eighty undercover officers - with the four officers mentioned in this report who have, in different ways, tarnished the professional reputation of the SDS. This can only ever be a matter for serious regret placing an onus on managers to be vigilant and to learn the relevant hard lessons.

