
**DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THE FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT
OF CELIA STUBBS**

1. The Cass Report, 14 September 1979 (front page and conclusions)
2. The Blair Peach Case: Licence to Kill, David Ransom (extracts)

METROPOLITAN POLICE

Subject
Death of Clement
Blair PEACH at
Southall
23.04.79

Complaints Investigation Bureau (2)
New Scotland Yard

CONFIDENTIAL 14th day of September 1979

Reference to Papers
OG1/79/2234

SECOND REPORT - DEATH OF BLAIR PEACH

Director C.I.B.

237. Further to my first report dated 12th July, 1979, concerning enquiries into the death of Clement Blair PEACH. No additional evidence of great significance has emerged in relation to the death.

IDENTIFICATION PARADE

238. A number of identification parades have since been held in connection with the death, but no positive identification of any officer has been made.

239. Identification parades were also held in connection with other incidents that had occurred in the vicinity at about the same time. At identification parades held on the 1st August, 1979, at Wembley Police Station, Officer I ***** and Officer 38 ***** were put up as

CONCLUSIONS

293. Despite extensive enquiries made into the death of Blair PEACH and the surrounding circumstances, it has not been possible to establish exactly what caused the injury or who struck the fatal blow.

294. It is not possible to state with certainty whether the death resulted from an unlawful act. As pointed out in the FIRST report there are a number of witnesses who say that they saw PEACH struck by a police officer and there is no evidence to show that he received the injury to the side of his head in any other way. No police officer says that he saw PEACH or admits to striking anyone at the time and place the fatal injury was sustained. There is the possibility that the injury may have been caused accidentally or unwittingly but officers' accounts do not encourage that line of thinking. In the absence of other evidence it is therefore a matter of consideration as to whether the death was unlawful, there being little evidence from any source that criminal acts were being committed by the demonstrators at the time of the death, but immediate pursuit of the rebellious crowd from the top of the road needs to be given full consideration.

298. Whilst it can reasonably be concluded that a police officer struck the fatal blow, and that that officer came from carrier U.11, I am sure that it will be agreed that the present situation is far from satisfactory and disturbing. The attitude and untruthfulness of some of the officers involved is a contributory factor.

299. It is understandable that because of the events of the day officers were confused, or made mistakes, but one would expect a better recall of events by trained police officers. However, there are cases where the evidence shows that certain officers have clearly not told the truth.

300. It is now clear that U.11 was at the scene and almost certainly the officer who struck the blow had come from that carrier. It will be appreciated that the explanation given by the crew of the carrier would be of paramount importance to the investigation.

301. It can be clearly seen from the various statements and records of interviews with these officers that their explanations were seriously lacking and in the case of Officer E, Officer F and Officer H, there

305. When interviewed, under caution, on the 6th June, 1979, he said that he drove the carrier straight down Beechcroft and stopped just into the junction of Orchard Avenue where Officer E, Officer H, Officer I and Officer F got out of the carrier and pushed the demonstrators round the corner.

306. During the interview the officer marked on a plan (Exhibit LS/1) 'A' - where he stopped the carrier and 'B' where he said a group of demonstrators were standing and confirmed that Officer E went towards these demonstrators with the other officers. From this Plan it will be appreciated that Officer E and the officers named were at the immediate location where witnesses say PEACH was struck down. This aspect was also later confirmed by Officer D on a similar plan.

307. In that interview Officer F was very much more forthright in his explanation of events leading up to his carrier's arrival at Beechcroft Avenue junction with Orchard Avenue. This prompted

Officer E

309. In his self prepared statement of the 24th April, 1979, Officer E said that having arrived at Beechcroft Avenue he saw ***** and his men chasing missile throwing demonstrators down the road, some of his officers and himself got out of the carrier at that point and ran after the 3 Unit officers to the junction of Orchard Avenue where he saw Officer D struggling with a violent prisoner. Attention is also drawn to the Form A.8/19 submitted by Officer E when going off duty.

310. In a statement of 17th May, 1979, he said officers on the carrier with him were Officer J, Officer I, Officer H and Officer G and that the carrier went straight down Beechcroft and pulled up sharply at the junction of Orchard Avenue. There he saw Officer D struggling on the ground with a prisoner. Officer D and a 3 Unit officer put the prisoner on board the carrier and his officers were now off the carrier. He then had the impression they were in Orchard Avenue ahead of him.

Officer H

314. This Officer was questioned by Officer 92 on 24th April, 1979, he said that "We got out of the carrier in Beechcroft Avenue and they ran off and we ran after them". He said he ran down the left hand pavement of Beechcroft and when he got to the junction of Orchard Avenue there was a Police Constable with an Asian prisoner and he and the officer with the prisoner got out of his carrier at that location and went to the end of Orchard Avenue. He said that when he got out of the carrier in Beechcroft Avenue he saw Officer E and Officer 45 there.

315. In his statement of 27th April, 1979, he said that the carrier stopped in the side road (Beechcroft Avenue) just by the main junction (Broadway) and everyone except the driver got out. He said he chased a bunch of demonstrators down the road and stopped to help a P.C. to put a Pakistani prisoner on the carrier driven by Officer F. The carrier was then parked in Beechcroft Avenue at the junction with Orchard Avenue. He said that he

way of conference.

319. Earlier I touched on the general behaviour of the officers. In addition to the fatal injury to PEACH, there were various persons who received injuries at about the same time. They have been included in this report in order to give a more comprehensive account of the incident and could not properly be dealt with in isolation. Basically the same arguments apply regarding justification as in relation to Blair PEACH.

RECOMMENDATIONS

320. At this stage there is insufficient evidence to support proceedings against any person mentioned in this report regarding the death of Blair PEACH and I recommend accordingly.

321. There are nevertheless, the other matters which have been discovered during the investigation, some touching on the death of PEACH and others unconnected.

322. The most serious aspect of this case has, without doubt, been the obstruction of the investigating officer in the execution of their duty. Under 'conclusion'

Harvey SHARP 3726 CR APP R 122 & R.V. FIELD & WHETHER (1965) 1 Q.B. 402 48 CR APP R 335.

325. Furthermore, it will be seen that the false statements made by Officer E, Officer H and Officer F, are all of the same content. A strong inference that can be drawn from this is that they have conspired together to obstruct police.

326. The conduct of these officers made it more difficult to carry out the investigation and arrive at a proper conclusion. Consequently, I strongly recommend that proceedings be taken against Officer E, Officer H and Officer F for obstructing police in the execution of their duty, conspiring to do so, and attempting or conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

327. I will now deal with other matters occurring on the day of 23rd April, 1979, regarding the alleged assault on Person U at the rear of 82, Orchard Avenue. Whilst the outcome of investigations is unsatisfactory there is no evidence to support proceedings against any person mentioned in this report and I recommend accordingly.

331. It will be recalled that a search of the Special Patrol Group officers' personal lockers at Barnes Police Station revealed various items. The possession of these weapons and tools by the various officers and in particular Officer F is viewed with grave concern. There is the inference that he could have had the cosh (offensive weapon) in a public place.

Officer 61 was in possession of keys which raises the question of him going equipped to steal. However, I feel there is insufficient evidence to justify criminal proceedings in respect of those matters.

332. I ask that this report be forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutors for his consideration and decision.

John CASS
Commander

The Blair Peach Case:



**LICENCE
TO
KILL**

by David Ransom
for the Friends of Blair Peach Committee

The Special Patrol Group

In his statement to the House of Commons on 27th June 1979 Mr. Whitelaw did not see fit to express even the slightest regret at the death of Blair Peach. He was clearly one of those 'outside agitators' who were 'determined to bring about a confrontation with the police'.

Instead, he declared loftily: 'It has been and will remain the Commissioner's policy, which I fully support, that defensive containment by numbers of police on foot is more likely to be successful, and is certainly more with our traditions, than deliberate, offensive tactics by smaller groups equipped in the style of some foreign police forces'. The fact of the matter is that 'deliberate, offensive tactics by smaller groups equipped in the style of some foreign police forces' is an almost exact description of the SPG. So we have *both*.

The immediate response of the Labour Government to Southall was instructive. Merlyn Rees announced, before the death of Blair Peach was known, that the 'riots' had been caused by 'outside agitators'. It seemed that the poor London bobby had been caught off his guard and subjected to an unexpected assault. There was, however, an unfortunate inference: were the police in some way losing control? Of course not. Merlyn Rees hurried to reassure the public that he had seen the Commissioner and 'told him of my confidence in the ability of the Metropolitan Police to maintain public order.' Meanwhile, Deputy Assistant Commissioner David Helm, who was responsible for public order and the Southall operation, 'made it clear that, far from backing off and presenting a low profile at political demonstrations which threaten to turn bloody, we see its duty as providing a strong presence.'

Most of the attention since has focussed on the SPG, which was involved in all the worst violence in Southall. The overall strategy of the police has been somewhat obscured. However, it is clear that small as their numbers were the SPG played a vital role in this overall strategy, and without them such a strategy would probably never have been contemplated.

'The Observer' of 29th April published Scotland Yard's own account of the SPG. It was the only specialist unit in the Metropolitan Police Force. Vacancies were generally oversubscribed, so that something like 50% of applicants failed on vetting. There was a 25% annual turnover and a 'full tour' lasted three years. A 'Scotland Yard spokesman' emphasised that the SPG had no room in its ranks for the 'headstrong type or those who are liable to over-react to any difficult situation'.

It is quite untrue that the SPG is the only 'specialist unit' in the Metropolitan Police. There exists, for a start, the Diplomatic Protec-

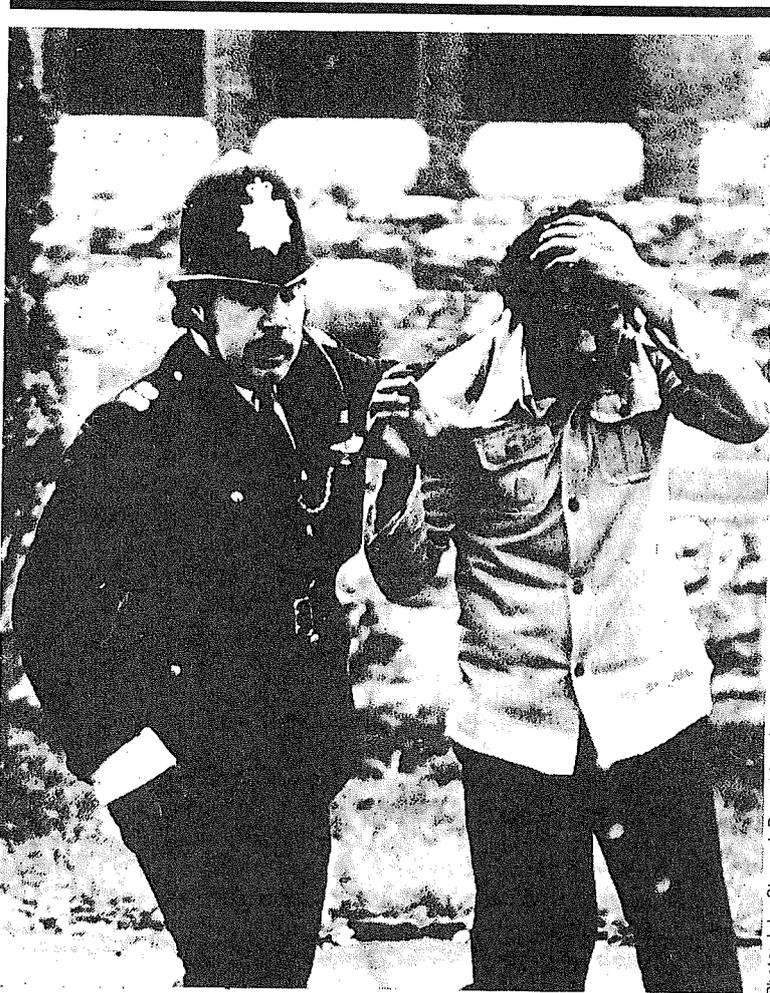


Photo: John Sturrock Report London

PC Graham Henry Woodcock, CO660, Number 3 Unit SPG, seen here arresting Mr Bhachu who was charged with assault and obstruction, but acquitted on both charges. Mr Bhachu said PC Woodcock hit him on the head with the brick. Also the photographer, John Sturrock had testified that Woodcock hit Bhachu but Woodcock said, at the inquest, 'The photographer said I hit him with my right hand but not using the brick.'

Stephen Sedley, counsel for the Peach family, asked, 'You had the brick in your right hand?' Woodcock replied, 'Yes.' A search of Woodcock's locker revealed a 'souvenir' American police nightstick, two knives and a bunch of assorted keys.

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Photo: John Sturrock Report London

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tion Group and Special Branch; and there are additional specialist units dealing with such things as immigration. Indeed, for some years the police had been emphasising the need to combat 'modern' crime with specialist units.

As for the rigorous vetting procedures, how is one to account for the presence of the likes of PC Bint? If these vetting procedures really do exist, and really are effective, then surely they add a degree of positive approval for Bint's 'hobby'. It should not be forgotten either than police officers were seen to draw 'NF' signs in the condensation on the windows of police coaches, and many people testified to the racist abuse handed out by the police.

As for the absence in the SPG of officers of the 'headstrong type', how is one to account for the presence of the like of PC Woodcock? PC Woodcock, it will be remembered, 'compared notes' with PC White about his weapons. He had made an arrest, we were told, in Park View Road, had been struck on the head by his prisoner, and then taken this prisoner away from Southall. The inquest was told that at the trial the prisoner claimed it was he who had been hit on the head by PC Woodcock. It just so happened that a photographer was present and recorded a part of the incident. His photograph showed PC Woodcock holding a brick in his right hand and the cowering prisoner, trying to protect his head, in his left hand. The photographer also said that he had seen PC Woodcock strike the prisoner with his right hand. Yes, said PC Woodcock, he did have the brick in his right hand, and yes, he did strike the prisoner with his right hand, but no-one had said that he struck the prisoner with the brick!

'You hit a man on his unprotected head', commented Stephen Sedley. 'You could have caused great damage. Your Unit and you seem to have a great propensity for possessing dangerous weapons and not considering the ordinary safety and well being of the public'.

Most seriously of all, however, the inquest revealed that the purportedly rigorous controls over the SPG in reality had never existed at all. At least seven of the SPG officers who gave evidence to the inquest had been there for more than four years; one for eight years and two virtually since the SPG was founded in 1965—one of these two was PC 'Chalkie' White, the 'magpie' of Unit 1 and the driver of Uniform 1/1 in Southall on 23rd April 1979. He had been a member of one of the four SPG units dispatched to Anguilla in 1969.

It is quite impossible to reconcile the existence of even one SPG officer with 14 years in the SPG with the image presented by the Metropolitan Police of a strictly controlled force with a constantly changing membership, thereby prevented from becoming an 'elite' force. On what possible grounds, and for what possible purpose, could PC White have been permitted to stay in the SPG for 14 years?

We were then to discover that the 'internal examination' of the role

of the SPG, recommending a 4 year limit to stay, would result in more than half its officers having to be transferred. This, of course, could not take place immediately for 'practical' reasons.

In any event, our objections to the SPG would remain, even if the SPG had conformed to its image. Its influence on policing methods is not confined to its relatively small numbers; over the years a very much larger number of police officers gain experience of its methods. If its members are supposed to be 'the best', then presumably membership is something that every officer should aspire to. Rather, the events in Southall provide a classic example of the 'options' open to the police if a force like the SPG exists.

Despite all the evidence of the true nature of the SPG, Mr. Whitelaw uses every opportunity to defend it and Sir David McNee constantly refers to it as 'my support unit'.

Whitelaw told the House of Commons on 27th June 1979: 'It is said that the Special Patrol Group should not have been deployed in Southall. The commissioner does not accept this. Nor do I. They formed only a part, and that a very small part, of the deployment in Southall. As the Commissioner made clear in his recent report, the Special Patrol Group is used on a wide variety of tasks including crime and traffic, as well as public order. Indeed, most of their arrests in 1978 were crime arrests. A mobile reserve has considerable tactical value, but its work needs to be kept under review and the Commissioner has asked the Deputy Commissioner to conduct an examination of the Group'.

Of course, one cannot detect any reason at all for this 'examination' in Mr. Whitelaw's statement. On a radio interview on 7th October 1979 the Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers, trying to quell indignation at the refusal to prosecute for the killing of Blair Peach, said: 'One is always slightly frightened about any elitist force. They may get a blank wall when one conducts an investigation'. So, when it comes to refusing to prosecute one may bewail the existence of an 'elitist' force; when it comes to getting rid of such a force, it does not exist.

'The Sunday Times' of 1st June 1980 published an interview with Inspector Alan Murray, following his resignation from the police. Presumably Murray intended this interview as a vindication of himself and of the SPG. It is all the more disquieting for that. He recounts how on the afternoon of 23rd April 1979 he had addressed Unit 1 about how the 'loony left' were going to be present in Southall and how it promised to be a 'tasty one'. He described the 'elan' that had been built up in his unit, and how they had the habit of arriving on duty to the tune of 'The Dam Busters'. The Unit was proud to be known as 'The Cowboys'. 'When I was out with my unit I was my own boss to a large extent', said Murray. 'Before acting I didn't have

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to ring up and say, 'Guvnor, do you think this is right?' I followed my own experience to do what was expected'.

'Believing also that it was necessary to damp down potential violence as quickly as possible, it was his policy to remove ring leaders from the crowd, and he was sure he could identify who they were. 'It isn't hard to pick out the real nasties. They're the one who come for trouble, the ones who send prickles up your neck'.

One can only presume that this was exactly what Inspector Murray and his Unit 1 were doing when they drove through the crowds in Beechcroft Avenue and stopped at exactly the spot where Blair Peach was standing.

So long as the police and their political 'masters' go on insisting on the need for a 'support unit', dedicated to the intimidation and physical abuse of black people, of those who exercise their democratic rights and refuse to stay off the streets of London, and of those who organise to make their industrial action effective on picket lines, then these same people will continue to call for the disbandment of the SPG and state what is no more than a demonstrable truth, that the SPG killed Blair Peach and that with the cover-up a repetition is inevitable, sooner rather than later.

If anyone is tempted to believe that the 'review' of the SPG has changed its nature, then let them reflect upon the fact that in July 1980 PC 'Chalkie' White was reinstated, and not just into the Metropolitan Police but into the SPG itself.