

In the Undercover Policing Inquiry

First Witness Statement of Piers Richard Corbyn

Dated 22 April 2020

Personal Background

1. I was born in Chippenham in 1947 (dob.10.3.47), and am now 73 years old. My father was an electrical engineer and my mother taught science and mathematics at a local Grammar School. When I was 9 years old we moved to Shropshire. I passed my 'O' and 'A' levels and wrote 3 scientific papers when I was 17 and 18, all of which were published. As a result in 1965, aged 18, I was given a place at Imperial College (IC) to study physics for 3 years. After completing my BSc I did postgraduate research into solid state physics (superconductivity).
2. I became politically engaged upon arriving in London. The first march I went on was in fact a Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) march. I was interested in the early Vietnam protest movements, and supported the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC). I was active in the Vietnam protests and demonstrations along with many thousands of others. This was the main issue of the day in my student

years. I went on both the March and October 1968 demonstrations and wrote about them in the Student Newspaper 'Felix'.

3. I was President of the IC Students' Union 1969-70 and I met the Queen in that capacity in October 1969. At that time we had some lively campaigns against the Rector, Sir William Penney (d.1991). He led the British delegation on the "Manhattan Project" which produced the first atomic bomb. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed on his recommendation. He was instrumental in producing the first British atomic bomb in 1952, and later the first hydrogen bomb. I spoke to him about this.
4. There was another campaign against Lord Sheffield (d.1996), Chair of the Governors (1962-74), former Chair of the Atomic Energy Authority and a former investment banker with strong links to apartheid South Africa. I was involved in campaigning against chemical and biological warfare research being conducted at Imperial College. We prevented Dow Chemical (manufacturers of the 'Agent Orange' defoliant used in Vietnam) from being able to openly recruit there.
5. I was the editor of the University of London Union newspaper 'Sennet' during 1970-71, and was in contact with members of the International Marxist Group (IMG). The IMG had been active in the VSC and I had been on those demonstrations. I was active in the campaign in defence of student union autonomy which was then under threat.

6. In 1970 while still at Imperial College I joined the 'Spartacus League,' a sort of IMG youth/probationary organisation, and became a full IMG member in 1971 or 1972. I hosted meetings of the SL in my home in Rendle Street, W11. I became the organiser of the Notting Hill IMG branch.
7. I became active in the squatting movement from about 1972. The IMG set up the Squatters Action Council to make the London Federation more effective. Later we set up the London Squatters Union. I was active in the Elgin Avenue and Huntley Street squats in the 1970s and remain interested and active in housing issues
8. I was active to some extent in the Irish Solidarity Campaign and Anti-Internment League, and later the Troops Out Movement. I also joined in anti-racist demonstrations and demonstrations in support of strikes and occupations. As a result of being rehoused by the Greater London Council, after the squatters' victory at Elgin Avenue, I moved to south London. I stood unsuccessfully as the IMG candidate for Lambeth in the Greater London Council elections in May 1977. I left the IMG after about 11 years in 1982.
9. I had begun postgraduate studies at Imperial College in 1969-72, but I was not allowed to complete my PhD. I was offered an MPhil to leave but refused; nevertheless, having won the appeal to prevent my expulsion, the Professor would still not convert my MPhil research into a PhD; this was all due to my political involvement - and there were arguments between Physics Professors about this. My SRC grant ran out in 1974 so I had to leave.

10. In 1980 I started a 2 year part-time MSc in astrophysics at Queen Mary College. Following this I published papers on the 'string loop' theory of galaxy formation, and on "*Mean matter density of the universe and an estimate of neutrino mass*".
11. In 1982 I left the IMG and then I joined the Labour Party, and the following year my brother Jeremy was elected as MP for Islington North. In 1986 I became a Labour Party councillor in Southwark for 4 years. I was active in the 'Fare Fight' Campaigns against massive fare increases in the 1980s (there had been a similar campaign in 1977 that I was also involved in).
12. From 1983 I began research into long range weather forecasting, based on my research into solar activity. I then set up Weather Plan Services Ltd in 1987, which later became Weather Action in 1990; this provides long range weather forecasting mainly to farmers and energy companies, mostly in Britain and Ireland, but later this was extended to Europe and the USA. We were on London Stock Exchange for 2 years until de-listed. I now live on the State Pension, with a small income from Weather Action Ltd of which I remain a Director.

Preamble

13. I make this Statement pursuant to a request made under Rule 9 Inquiries Act dated 16 December 2019. I received the Request and the accompanying Witness Pack on 23 December 2020.
14. I note that the contents of the Witness Pack consists of 53 Special Branch (SB) Intelligence Reports dated between 2 September 1971 and 13 November 1990 in

which my name is mentioned. These are reports based on activity of officers of the Metropolitan Police Special Branch unit called the "Special Demonstration Squad" (SDS) set up in 1968 (albeit then called the "Special Operations Squad"). I note that my SB 'Registry File' ('RF') references is given as 402/69/699 which I presume to mean a file was opened on me in 1969 when I was President of the Imperial College Union. I note that the reporting on me by SDS appears to stop in 1981, but then there is a report again in 1990. I presume that routine (non-SDS) Special Branch surveillance nevertheless continued during the 1980s and possibly thereafter.

15. I believe that the reports disclosed to me in this Public Inquiry are only a fraction of the full 'Registry File' held on me by MI5 and Special Branch. The Inquiry has not disclosed to me any of the witness statements made by any of the SDS officers who spied on me, nor any statements from managers or an appropriate officer who could provide evidence on behalf of the 2 deceased officers. There are no photographs provided of any officer. This makes it all but impossible to provide any useful evidence about the activities of SDS and its effect on my private life - something I thought the Inquiry was here to investigate. This is why I sought status as a Core Participant several years ago in 2015.

16. The undercover officers disclosed to me by the Inquiry who spied on me appear to be as follows: (a) HN294 (unknown officer now deceased, deployed 1968-69 becoming Chief Inspector and head of SDS in 1971), (b) HN340 'Alan Nixon' aka 'Andy Bailey' (1969-72), (c) HN338 (1970-71, unknown cover name, now deceased), (d) HN299/342 'David Hughes' (1971-76), (e) HN298 'Michael Scott

(1971-76), (f) HN353 'Gary Roberts' (1974-78), (g) HN80 'Colin Clark' (1977-82), (h) HN155 'Phil Cooper' (1979-83). I think I do recall the names 'David Hughes' and 'Alan Nixon', and 'Phil Cooper' sounds familiar, but not the others. No photographs or witness statements have been provided of any of these officers.

17. There is also mention of a Chief Inspector TN00038 who I presume was not deployed but played a 'back-office' role. Similarly, HN332, another anonymous SDS Chief Inspector. The only name of an SDS Chief Inspector given is that of DCI Geoffrey Craft (1976-77). There are SB Detective Chief Superintendents mentioned, only one has a cypher, TN0035 (1971). All the reports appear to have been sent as a matter of routine to MI5.

18. I understand that SDS was set up in July 1968 (then called SOS, the Special Operations Squad) explicitly to spy on the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. I note that none of the Intelligence Reports that mention me relate to that organisation. I would like to know why SDS was able to continue to operate as a covert unit to spy on me, the IMG and other groups I was involved in.

19. In the absence of a single witness statement from any of the SDS officers who spied on me, or any Opening Statement from the Home Office or Metropolitan Police, I have to draw my own conclusions about what their positions are. I am guided by the Rule 9 questions that I have been asked, which appear to turn the Inquiry away from a focus on the police and into a dissection of my political beliefs, and whether or not I, and the organisations I was part of, presented a serious threat, or any threat of serious, or any, violence, to members of the public or to the

interests of the British State (whatever those interests might be). In so far as the Inquiry goes along with this agenda then the outcome will be a whitewash of SDS activity, and the mass surveillance State. I hope this will not happen.

20. In so far as any State agencies will represent that there was a threat of violence from the individuals and/or groups put under surveillance by undercover officers, I profoundly disagree with (a) the notion that I, or the IMG, threatened violence, especially serious violence, including the notion that we might have provoked public disorder; (b) the notion that I or the IMG should have been targeted because although opposed to violence, infiltration would allow the police to monitor others (ie the argument that 'collateral intrusion' is justified); (c) the notion that even the threat of relatively mild disorder would justify the gross invasion of privacy that undercover infiltration entailed (i.e. it was a tactic that was grossly disproportionate to its aims).

21. It is my belief that there is no justification for the gross intrusion by the police into people's private lives on the basis that a person's, or group's politics is frowned upon by the State, unless there is a real, not fanciful, threat of serious violence or serious crime. I believe that the European Convention of Human Rights concerning respect for privacy, private and family life, as well as other fundamental rights, should be read back into the situation existing between 1971-1990.

22. I do not believe that any thought, or any real thought, was given back in 1968 and thereafter, to balancing the rights of the individual against those of the State. I believe that the State and its security apparatus, the Security Services (MI5 etc),

the Metropolitan Police (Special Branch etc), the Home Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Cabinet Office, were all part of a 'right-wing' culture which deemed anybody with different, i.e. 'left-wing' values as subversives, and as such were legitimate targets. I believe that this allowed the State, especially from 1968, to increase not just the extent of surveillance, but allow it to become increasingly intrusive. It was not so much "out of control" as Stella Rimington, former Director General of MI5 ('the Security Service') has suggested; it was in fact a well integrated mass-surveillance State with a well-defined hierarchy and lines of command.

23. SDS itself did not start as a secret unit, it was a tactical arm of Special Branch, that later became 'S' Squad. As its operatives went into longer, 5 year, deployments, layers of secrecy increased so that their names disappeared from the routine SB reports, and even their cover names were listed as though they were targets; later it appears that SB/MI5 even opened dummy files on their own operatives.

24. Was SDS effective? This is difficult to answer. Certainly hundreds of groups and individuals were spied on, but to what purpose? One can only think it was not just to gather intelligence but to sow division within political organisations. I do not believe any public disorder was ever prevented by SDS. What did the SDS officers who were in my home do with the information gathered? And will they tell us the truth now after all these years?

25. In contrast to the clandestine and secretive nature of the British Security Services, I have always been open about my politics. I would like to see all the material that is now in possession of the Inquiry released to the public in the same way that the STASI files were opened to the public after the collapse of the German Democratic Republic in 1989. This would mean that everyone can see their own files.

RULE 9 REQUEST QUESTIONS ANSWERED

PERSONAL DETAILS

26. Q 1. Full name and date of birth.

27. A: Piers Richard Corbyn, date of birth 10th March 1947.

POLITICAL ACTIVISM - INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

28. Q 2. Please outline your political activities as a member of the International Marxist Group and the Spartacist League:

Q 2.1: Is the Inquiry correct to understand that you were a primarily involved in the West London branch(es) of the IMG?

2.2 How did you become involved in the IMG?

2.3 Did you hold any positions of responsibility in the IMG?

29. A: It was never called the "Spartacist League it was called the 'Spartacus League' (SL) named after the famous leader of the Slave revolt of 70BC against the Roman Empire. I was living in Notting Hill from about 1970, renting a flat in Rendle Street, W10 near Portobello Road, and so was in the Notting Hill branch of the SL and I also attended the West London branch of the IMG.

30. My involvement with the IMG began when I was at Imperial College - we set up a 'Red Circle' discussion group in Notting Hill. I actively supported the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC) which was founded in 1966 and had many IMG members active in it. I read *Black Dwarf*, edited by Tariq Ali (an IMG member) which began publication in May 1968 (at the time of the student unrest in Paris). *Black Dwarf* took its name from the 19th-century radical paper of that name which was first published in Britain in 1817.
31. My only formal role for the IMG was as the Branch organiser for the Notting Hill Spartacus League from 1971, and the organiser of the IMG Squatting 'Fraction' 1972-75. I became the IMG candidate for National Union of Students (NUS) President in 1972, and was also IMG candidate for the elections to the Greater London Council (GLC).
32. In 1972 I started squatting as we argued for a rent reduction at a rent tribunal and were then served with a Notice to Quit. My brother Andrew was living with me, and we both moved into 19, Elgin Avenue W9. I moved to South London into "short life" housing for a year in October 1975 when the 200 squatters from Elgin Avenue were rehoused. The GLC then rehoused me to my current address . In 1979 the GLC under the Leader, Horace Cutler, and housing chairman, George Tremlett (both of the Conservative Party) rehoused some 10,000 squatters as they were concerned that 30,000 people were living "outside the law."

33. Q.3. What were the aims of the IMG and, in particular, did it seek to overthrow the State as it was in the 1970s?

34. A: We considered ourselves a revolutionary organisation but we had limited perspectives and were a tiny organisation of about 300, possibly it grew to 750 at most. The IMG was the British section of the 4th International and the 'Transitional Program' was supported. There were different tendencies within the IMG. It is worth recalling that both Lenin (in 1920) and Trotsky (in 1936) saw the Labour Party as a mass working class party that socialists should enter, albeit to guide it towards more 'revolutionary' positions. Even the Communist Party of Great Britain only talked of transforming Parliamentary democracy by means of a mass working class movement involving a broad popular alliance. There was not the slightest intention of 'overthrowing' the State in the 1970s, except in so far as we wanted a revolutionary transformation of society as a future goal. We were not anarchists and did not see the abolition of the State as a goal; if we could take over the machinery of government to effect a social transformation then all well and good, but that would be through democratic means. We wanted above all to win the mass of working people to our ideas, to see economic and social democracy established through the leadership of a revolutionary party. Such a party had not yet been established, which is why the IMG named itself merely a 'Group.' We had a long way to go, even at our high point during the 1970s. I think very few other left wing organisations called themselves a "Party" - mainly the Communist Party and the Maoist Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist). Only later did the Socialist Labour League become the Workers Revolutionary Party and the International Socialists become the Socialist Workers Party.

35. Q 3.1 Did the IMG use violence to advance its aims?

36. A: No. We were not a terrorist or insurrectionary group.

37. Q 3.2 Did the IMG foresee a time when violence would, or might be, necessary to realise its aims?

38. A: The question is highly speculative, but no, not in any practical sense. The IMG certainly had no combat organisation or paramilitary wing. We did not do any military training. I think as far as it went the only instruction I can recall was linking arms on a demonstration in self defence against police attack.

39. Q 3.3 Did the IMG believe that revolution would, or might, require the use of force?

40. A: It would entirely depend on the nature and process of the revolution in mind. We would have preferred a peaceful democratic movement, but inevitably there would always be the danger of violence from the counter-revolutionary forces, normally the police, the army and paramilitaries. This is precisely why we would only want a revolution that had mass working class support, so that violence could hopefully be avoided.

41. Q 3.4 Did the IMG believe that force should be used to bring about revolution in 1968-1969?

42. A: No. We recognised the limits of the 'revolutionary forces' in Britain; in particular we wanted to see more working class involvement in our group, as opposed to just students - to that extent the events of May 1968 in France, with the mass general strike and factory occupations, supported by students, were the sort of situation we hoped to see in Britain.

43.Q 3.5 Did the IMG vet its members?

44. A: As far as I am aware. there were no background security checks on people.

45.Q 3.6 Did the IMG take other security precautions to keep its plans, tactics or other matters confidential? If so, please explain.

46. A: Other than 'Party names', there were Committee minutes circulated on a restricted basis, which was a fairly normal way of operating.

47. Q 3.7 Are you surprised that the police deployed undercover officers to report on the activities of the IMG? Please explain your answer.

48. A: In left wing circles, we all assumed that some form of monitoring or surveillance of our activities was likely and we took some elementary, but amateurish, precautions. I am surprised the Security Services and Special Branch thought we were that important. The fact that these undercover officers infiltrated our organisations on a long term basis, and in such an intrusive way, is a shock.

49. Q5. Please outline your political activities as a member of groups concerned with events in Ireland such as the Irish Solidarity Campaign, Troops Out Movement and the Anti-Internment League Forum.

Q 5.1 Is the Inquiry correct to understand that you were involved in each of these groups?

Q 5.2 If so please explain the aims of these groups

Q 5.3 How did you become involved in these groups?

Q 5.4 What methods did they use to advance their aims?

Q 5.5 Did you hold any positions of responsibility in any of these groups?

Q 5.6 Are you surprised that the police deployed undercover officers to report on the activities of these groups? Please explain your answer.

50. A: I did attend some meetings of the groups named above, the Irish Solidarity Campaign (ISC) Registry File 400/72/85, which later merged with the Anti-Internment League (AIL) Registry File 400/72/100, and the Troops Out Movement (TOM). I became involved due to the political situation in Northern Ireland. Briefly, the attacks on the civil rights marchers and the catholic/nationalist community had got so bad that British Army troops had been deployed in 1969 by the Labour government of PM Harold Wilson. However, the situation soon deteriorated and Internment was introduced in August 1971 by the Conservative and Unionist government led by Edward Heath. Internment was the mass incarceration without trial of those suspected to be members of the Irish Republican Army, the armed wing of Sinn Fein, the Party established in 1905 who desired a united Ireland. Over 300 people were rounded up and imprisoned in an operation that began on 9 August 1971; days of rioting followed and the result was a huge boost in recruitment to the Provisional IRA (PIRA). The

brutality of the British Army was quite shocking at this time, only matched by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Young people were killed by rubber bullets, and the British Army later adopted a "shoot-to-kill" policy against PIRA members. The RUC Special Branch had provided the intelligence to the Army on who to seize for internment, but much of this intelligence was faulty.

51. The aim of the ISC was to provide a solidarity network in Britain for the civil rights and catholic/nationalist community who were under attack. The ISC eventually joined up with the AIL which was set up to oppose Internment. Internment was so counter-productive that eventually the British government stopped it in 1975. If only they had listened to us sooner. The TOM was only set up in 1973, as by this time the British Army had become the main force in support of the sectarian (Protestant) Statelet of Ulster ("the Six Counties"). The aim was the withdrawal of British Troops from Ireland, and politically TOM supported a united Ireland. The methods all three groups used to advance their aims were meetings, demonstrations and rallies in support of their aims. I did not hold any positions of responsibility in any of these groups. I am not surprised that the groups were under surveillance as this was accepted as normal. I did not suspect long term infiltration however by undercover officers.

52. There are five reports that mention my involvement in these groups, as follows:

Tab 1 is a report by a Special Branch DS, 'Alan Nixon' HN340, submitted by Chief Inspector Saunders, and signed off by the Chief Superintendent [name redacted but given the cypher TN35, presumably head of 'C' Squad, 'Domestic Extremism'] concerning a meeting of 25 people in the General Picton pub in Killick Street, London N1 on 27 August 1971. The meeting was held to discuss Internment which had begun

earlier that month. I understand that we were also watched from a pub across the other side of the road and the police filmed people attending.

53. **Tab 4** is a report of a meeting of the West London ISC (400/71/253) held in the Labour Party Rooms in Shepherds Bush on 16 March 1972. It is authored by HN338, a DC in SDS whose cover name is unknown, signed off by Chief Inspector HN294 [cover name unknown] and Chief Superintendent 'C' Squad, A Dickinson. There were only 5 people present, all of whom are named, so the SDS officer must have been well known to them. It is not clear why in this instance all the RF references have been redacted, unless one of the names is the undercover officer?

54. **Tab 16** is a report by Chief Inspector HN294 and Chief Superintendent A Dickinson which is simply a long list of 56 names of people present at the meeting in Conway Hall on 9 August 1972 (the first anniversary of Internment) of the AIL. I note that there is no trace of a 'Kevin Doherty' and I wonder if that is in fact the cover name of an SDS officer. He is the only one so listed. Almost every other person has a RF reference, some going back to the 1950s.

55. **Tab 22** is a report by HN298 'Michael Scott' (deployed 1971-76 in the Young Liberals, Anti Apartheid Movement and the Workers Revolutionary Party) dated 18 March 1974, concerning an AIL [RF 400/73/110] meeting of about 30 people at the General Picton pub held on 8 March 1974. It is signed off by the Chief Superintendent [name redacted] and submitted by a Chief Inspector whose signature appears (R. Pearce?) but whose name is not given. The theme of the meeting was the forthcoming General Election of 1974 (at which the Labour Party were elected) and its bearing on

Ireland. 15 names are given but the RF references are redacted. The Inquiry Chairman's Minded To Note in relation to this officer reads as follows:

HN298 is in his 70s. He was deployed against two groups between 1971 and 1976, one of which was involved in the anti-apartheid campaign. In the course of his deployment he was arrested at a demonstration against the British Lions rugby tour to South Africa on 12 May 1972 for obstruction of the highway and of a police officer. He was prosecuted in summary proceedings in his cover name. He was convicted of both offences and fined and made the subject of a conditional discharge. His actions were approved by his line management. Not long after his deployment, he left the police service, since when he has had nothing to do with the police. It is possible that, if his cover name is published, members of the groups against whom he was deployed will remember him and be able to give evidence about him. For that to happen, it is not necessary that his real name should be published. He has politely declined to cooperate with the Metropolitan Police risk assessor. In consequence, the Inquiry does not know whether he wishes to protect his real name. If he were to do so, and no new information adverse to him were to emerge, the interference with right to respect for his private life under Article 8(2) of the European Convention which would be occasioned by publication of his real name would not be justified. For the time being, on the application of the Metropolitan Police Service, his real name should not be published. This decision will be reviewed when he has made his own position clear.

56. **Tab 48** is a report dated 4 September 1979 about a demonstration or rally at Speaker's Corner on 12 August 1979 organised by the National League of Young Liberals [RF 400/76/70] in connection with the 10th anniversary of British troops being sent to Northern Ireland. There is an impressively long list of no less than 136

attendees with the RF references blacked out, obviously in order to protect the name(s) of the SDS officer(s) - in this instance one of them is 'Colin Clark' who I presume is listed as 'no trace.' He has been given the cypher HN80, and is said to have infiltrated the IS/SWP/ANL "in the late 1970s for several years (1977-82). " The Met Police applied for his cover name to be kept secret, but this was refused by the Inquiry in the following terms:

HN80 is a septuagenarian. HN80 was deployed as an undercover officer against one group in the late 1970s and early 1980s and encountered and reported on many others. The deployment is of significant interest to the Inquiry because of its length and range and because, according to HN80, it involved a good deal of self-tasking. Publication of the cover name of HN80 may prompt information or evidence from those who encountered HN80 during the deployment. Publication of the real name of HN80 is not necessary to permit the Inquiry to fulfil its terms of reference and would interfere with the right of HN80 to respect for private and family life. HN80 has expressed fears, which do not appear to be objectively justified, about the risk of violence posed by former targets and their associates. I am prepared to accept that the fears are genuinely held. On the basis of what is at present known, it would be neither proportionate nor justified under article 8(2) of the European Convention to override those fears by refusing to make a restriction order in respect of the real name.

57. What is interesting here is the device of listing the cover name of the officer in the Special Branch report itself, as though he was himself a target. There must have been an operational change in the mid-1970s as the names of the authors of these reports have vanished, and they are now submitted by the Chief Inspector of SDS based upon "a reliable source." This was secrecy of a high order, one wonders for what purpose,

as only Special Branch and MI5 got to see the reports. Did Special Branch not trust MI5, or did they not trust other police officers? It is a shame we have no witness statement from this officer as I may be able to recall more if I see this. However I was not active in the IS/SWP.

58. Q 6. Did you use an alias or aliases in relation to any of your political activity? If so, what was it/what were they and why did you use an alias?

Q 6.1 Please consider the report at UCPI0000017744, tab 38 which appears to suggest you went by the party name 'Annual'. Is this correct?

59. A: Yes, I sometimes was referred to by the IMG 'party name' Annual' in the minutes of meetings. Everyone in the IMG had one, I believe it was supposed to confuse those who had us under surveillance. It was not taken too seriously as we didn't stick rigidly to it and used real names and initials as well.

60. We assumed that we were monitored by agencies of the State, whether MI5 or Special Branch. I note that this report dated 15 February 1977 is an SDS report signed by G.T.M. Craft, a Chief Inspector (who has not been allocated an HN number), and is counter-signed by HN332, the Chief Superintendent of Special Branch 'C' Squad ('Domestic Extremism'), whose identity is still being kept secret. I presume the source of the information is another, deployed, SDS officer whose identity is also kept secret for unknown reasons, and that the information was being passed to MI5 for them to use as they saw fit. Can the Inquiry tell me more about this, and what purpose the information served, who it went to, who collected this intelligence and why? This

obsessive secrecy serves no public interest, only the interest of the Metropolitan police and the Security Service.

INTELLIGENCE REPORTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

61. Q 7. Please consider the intelligence reports which the Inquiry has obtained and included in your witness bundle. You are named in each one of the enclosed reports (in some cases in the redacted lists at the end of the report). Are the details that have been recorded accurate? If not, please identify any inaccurate reports and set out the respects in which the report is inaccurate.

62. Tab 1 [MPS-0738288]: I have dealt with at Q5 (above).

63. Tab 2 [MPS-0732360]: This is a report from HN338 (cover name unknown) on a meeting of the Notting Hill Spartacus League (Registry File 400/71/1(32) held at my flat at 17a Rendle Street on 21 January 1972. The meeting itself has nothing of importance that could possibly justify it being spied upon. There were only 8 of us present so HN338 must have joined the SL previously. The report is signed off by the SDS Chief Inspector HN332 whose real identity is restricted, despite the fact that he was Head of SDS, presumably after Conrad Dixon had moved on. The Chairman's Note says this:

He served in the Special Operations Squad/Special Demonstration Squad in a managerial capacity in the 1970's. He was the signatory of a significant memorandum dated 17 December 1971. But for his age and health, I would have refused the application for a restriction order in respect of his real name, on the basis that a senior public servant should be willing and, if not, required, to account for his actions publicly.

For the reasons explained, no useful purpose would be served by adopting that course; and to do so would risk impairing the peace of mind and even health of a man in his twilight years. I would like to know what the significant memo was. As he was not deployed undercover I am surprised that his name cannot be known. At what level of seniority are SB officers not entitled to secrecy? I would have thought that we ought to know the names of the Head of SDS and the Head of 'C' Squad, and above, at all stages from 1968-2008. Here, the Chief Superintendent of 'C' Division also has his name redacted.

64. By this time MI5 and Special Branch had a file open on me for up to three years - 1969, 1970 and 1971. I wonder what all those intelligence reports have to say. I should have a right to see what information is held on me, otherwise it makes a mockery of the Freedom of Information Act and the General Data Protection Regulations. It is shocking to think that there was a police officer present and spying on me in my own home, and that only as a result of this Public Inquiry can I see this report. Hundreds of other individuals will never get to see their files, as they probably do not even know about the Inquiry.

65. **Tab 3 [UCPI0000007940]:** This is dealt with below in my answer to Q8.

66. **Tab 4 [UCPI0000008286]:** I have dealt with this report in my answer to Q5 above.

67. **Tab 5 [UCPI0000008948]:** I have dealt with this in my answer to Q9 below.

68. **Tab 6 [UCPI000008950]**: This is another report (copied to MI5) by the SDS officer, HN338, of a meeting of the West London and Notting Hill (RF 400/71/187) branches of the IMG on 5 April 1972 held in the Imperial College Union. It is signed off by an SDS Inspector HN294 and submitted by the Chief Superintendent of 'C' Squad. The contents of the report show that both groups had agreed to work together and to set up a 'caucus' group on issues concerning Ireland - 'Bloody Sunday' had taken place in January 1972, and so Irish issues were of significant concern at the time.

69. **Tab 7 [UCPI000008129]**: This is a report dated 26 April 1972 concerning a meeting of the IMG (RF 400/71/127) on 16 April 1972 at Toynbee Hall with 50 people present - of whom 39 have Special Branch files. Unusually, of the Intelligence reports disclosed to me, this document has redacted all the names of those present in the report - but not in the Appendix, which lists the names but redacts the Registry file references. I would like to know if the name of the SDS officer is listed in the report, as this appears to have become standard operating procedure at some point, along with the reference "no trace" where the RF file should be. I ask this as the Inquiry do not know the cover name of the officer HN338. The report is signed off by HN294, Chief Inspector SDS whose name is secret. In terms of the content of the meeting, I note this compliment by HN338: *"The meeting began with a very long speech from John Ross on IMG ideology and policies. An excellent and articulate speaker, having a very good command of the English language, Ross is one of the leading lights of the IMG theoreticians; on this occasion he held the complete attention of all."*

70. **Tab 8 [UCPI000008954]**: Yet another report by HN338 (signed off by Chief Inspector SDS HN294, and submitted by the Chief Superintendent, copy to MI5) on a

Notting Hill IMG meeting held at Imperial College Student Union on 10 May 1972. Unfortunately the document is almost entirely illegible.

71. **Tab 9 [UCPI000008797]**: This is a report dated 25 June 1972 by HN338 (signed off by Chief Inspector SDS HN294, and submitted by the Chief Superintendent, copy to MI5) about a meeting in Hammersmith on 21 June 1972 of 8 people of the West London International Communist League (this was formerly the West London IMG, but has been given a new Registry file reference 400/72/91). The names are given of 7 people present but not the eighth person. The missing person may be "Paul Pearsall".

72. **Tab 10 [UCPI000008798]**: This is a report dated 26 June 1972 by HN338 (signed off by Chief Inspector SDS HN294, and submitted by the Chief Superintendent, copy to MI5) concerning a leaflet produced by me for the Notting Hill IMG about the 'Metro Youth' anti-racist demonstration (RF 400/71/120) held on 5 June 1972. Leaflets and posters had been distributed beforehand but turnout was poor on the day. Organisation for the demonstration was done by the 'Red Defence Group', which was not an IMG group, but had IMG members involved in it.

73. **Tab 11 [UCPI0000015694]**: This is a report dated 29 June 1972 about the 3 day IMG conference from 27-29 May 1972 held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square in London and attended by up to 500 people. The undercover officers present were HN338 and HN299/342 'David Hughes'; the report was submitted by HN294 the Chief Inspector of SDS, signed also by the Chief Superintendent [name redacted], to MI5. The Registry File reference given is 346/72/15 which I presume is a specific reference to this conference (?). New references have now been given to the IMG (400/72/91)

and to the Spartacus League (400/71/132). There were some 'closed' sessions the the undercover officers appear to have attended, so I assume both were actual members of the IMG.

74. **Tab 12 [UCPI0000008799]:** This report dated 3 July 1972 is of a Notting Hill IMG branch meeting of 11 people at my flat in Rendle Street on 28 June 1972. The names of 6 of us are listed. It is said that I gave a report on the Stanmore engineering factory occupation. I had been to the factory and spoken to workers there, I do remember them saying yes they did think the student occupations had shown them a good example. Two days earlier on 26 June the Court ruled the occupation had to end. This was in the summer of '72 when there was a wave of factory occupations and national strikes by builders, dockers and miners. Between 1972 and 1974 there were some 200 such occupations, mainly by steel and engineering workers, against closures and redundancies. In 1972 a General Strike was going to be called by the TUC over the imprisonment of the 5 dockers ('The Pentonville Five') who had refused a court order (made under new labour laws) to stop picketing the Midland Cold Storage facility, but the men were released. The report is produced by HN338, signed off again by the Chief Inspector HN294 and submitted to MI5 by the Chief Superintendent. There is some information available online about the Stanmore occupation at www.marxists.org which has a copy of '*The Worker*' for July 1972, printed by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist). It appears that some of the workers were only being paid £15 a week for skilled work. It would appear from the Special Branch report that we decided to go on the demonstration in support of the engineering workers on 1 July 1972.

75. **Tab 13 [UCPI000008130]**: This report dated 6 July 1972 is of the meeting of the 'London Aggregate' of the IMG at the Student Union building in Imperial College held on 1 July 1972, the same day as the Stanmore demonstration. About 60 people attended, 19 of whom were identified in the report. It is unfortunate that the document disclosed to me does not attach the organisational plan, but I note that this was largely to turn towards more work in the trade unions, in particular the engineering, local government, building trades and the Post Office workers' unions. The report is by HN338, signed off by Chief Inspector HN294, and submitted to MI5 by the Chief Superintendent. The words 'Secret' have been redacted at top and bottom of each page.

76. **Tab 14 [UCPI000008808]**: This report dated 24 July 1972 is of the West London IMG meeting in Hammersmith on 19 July 1972. Twenty people were present, including no doubt HN338 who signs the report, submitted by Chief Inspector HN294 and the Chief Superintendent to MI5. Again the words 'Secret' appear to be redacted. 10 individuals are identified but the RF references are redacted. There is mention of the dockers strike; shortly after this meeting, on 28 July 1972 a national dockers strike of 40,000 men began against plans to make 2,500 dockers redundant. Some 80,000 jobs had been lost over the previous decade. On 4 August the Conservative government of Edward Heath proclaimed a 'state of emergency' and an official end to the strike was proclaimed by the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) on 17 August (with an agreement that there be no redundancies) although unofficial strikes continued at 8 ports. The London docks were finally closed down under Margaret Thatcher in 1980. It should be noted that I was not present at this meeting.

77. **Tab 15 [UCPI000008202]:** This is a report dated 7 August 1972 about an effort to recruit Paul Pearsall (no trace RF) who had complained at my leadership of the Notting Hill group. I do remember him very well as argumentative, he came from Imperial College, and took personal dislike to people. I don't recall what happened to him. I do remember him boasting about his female conquests from within our political milieu.

78. **Tab 16 [MPS-0739282]:** This report dated 10 August 1972 concerns a meeting of the Anti-Internment League held at Conway Hall, London the day before to mark the first anniversary of Internment. It is signed by an Inspector and a Chief Inspector, both given the cypher HN294 - I presume this is an error in the redaction process. The Chief Superintendent's name is given as A Dickinson. I have already referred to this report above in my answer to Q5.

79. **Tab 17 [UCPI000008813]:** This report from 7 September 1972 is largely illegible, but concerns a meeting in Hammersmith of the West London IMG, with 18 people in attendance. It is authored by HN338, submitted by HN294 and the Chief Superintendent [now redacted again] with a copy to MI5. Various stamps and no doubt the word 'SECRET' have been redacted.

80. **Tab 18 [UCPI000008815]:** This report dated 19 September 1972 relates to another meeting of the West London IMG held on 13 September 1972 in Hammersmith, 18 people were again present, with the names of 9 listed. It is written by HN338 and submitted by Chief Inspector HN294, and the Chief Superintendent [name redacted]. The report details some criticism of me by a West London member

for "lack of leadership", although I was supported by the Notting Hill branch members. The thrust the criticism is that I had invited someone outside the IMG who appeared sympathetic to our meetings.

81. **Tab 19 [UCPI0000008814]:** This is a report dated 25 September 1972 of a meeting of the Notting Hill IMG held at 29 Elgin Crescent on 20 September 1972 - but this was not my house, I lived at 19 Elgin Avenue. Only 6 of us were present - 5 names are listed including mine. I presume the sixth was the undercover officer, HN338. I am sure that the sixth man would have been "Paul Pearsall." The report is submitted in the usual way by HN294 and the Chief Superintendent. The report says I had "*a regular habit of upsetting people*" and relates a personality clash between myself and another IMG member. I would like to know what role the undercover officer played in the debate between what he says are "two factions." I recall that 'Paul Pearsall' displayed a lack of erudition when it came to Marxism.

82. **Tab 20 [UCPI0000008131]:** This report dated 20 December 1972 concerns the London IMG meeting of 94 people on 10 December 1972 held in a pub in central London. The majority of IMG members adopted a position of supporting the Labour candidate in the event of a General Election. The demise of the paper '*Red Mole*' was announced; it shortly after became '*Red Weekly*.' I note that Red Mole has its own RF file, 347/70/13. The names of 26 IMG members are listed with their RF file numbers, and a redacted strip down the side. This is another report by HN338, submitted in the usual way by HN294 and the Chief Superintendent to MI5.

83. **Tab 21 [MPS-0729047]:** This report dated 1 June 1973 relates to the IMG annual conference held in Beaver Hall, EC1 over 21-23 April 1973 with up to 500 people in attendance. The Registry File reference given is 346/73/8. This is a very extensive and detailed 12 page report from "a reliable source", in this instance the same SDS officer as before, HN338. It is submitted by Chief Inspector HN294, and signed by the Chief Superintendent (this time unredacted) possibly R Watts (?). There is a 4 page list of 111 names supplied, most with Special Branch files, only 20 without. No less than 29 documents were originally appended to the report as can be seen from the index. The SDS report is well-written but exhibits a real sense of boredom with his work. I note the discussions on Britain's proposed entry into the Common Market (which the IMG opposed), Ireland, Indochina, and the Trade Union movement, but with the bulk of the time taken up with internal debate about the orientation of the IMG in the coming year; this was left unresolved. I am not recorded as speaking at the conference. It is hard to see how any of this could justify infiltration by the undercover officers, or Special Branch.

84. **Tab 22 [UCPI0000015710]:** I have dealt with this at my answer to Q5 above.

85. **Tab 23 [UCPI0000015032]:** This report dated 23 December 1974 concerns an evening party organised by Wandsworth IMG (400/74/175) on 14 December 1974 from 8pm-4am with about 70 people attending; entry was by ticket (75p). It was open to "persons of all political beliefs" according to the report, and was held in a house at 8 Falcon Road, SW11. The report is submitted by TN0038 [name and rank unknown] who has signed for the Chief Superintendent. There is mention in the report of solicitor

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and a local councillor, even someone from the

Mayday Theatre Group. The report is stamped with 'SDS' at top right, the first time I have seen this - so I assume this was to inform those higher up the chain of command of the origin of the "secret and reliable source." The name of the deployed SDS officer who infiltrated the party, with his 75p ticket, is not given. This report was sent to Box 500, MI5. One wonders what use was made of this material?

86. **Tab 24 [UCPI0000006997]:** This is a report of people who were on an anti-National Front demonstration in Islington on 25 March 1975. The demonstration has its own RF reference 346/75/6. It is submitted to MI5 by an unknown Chief Inspector and the Chief Superintendent. The reports now have the name of the deployed officer redacted but do have SDS stamped on the top right. I presume this relates to the formalisation of the role of SDS within Special Branch, with its own designation as 'S' Squad. There is a new layer of secrecy as the deployed officers names now vanish from the reports - except in so far as their cover names might appear as one of their 'targets' in the list of names. This might be recorded as 'no trace', or with a real or fake Registry reference. In so far as operational methods will remain secret despite this 'public' Inquiry, we may never know the reasoning. What is most striking about this document is that the list of names is entirely redacted, in peculiar contrast to all the other documents that have been supplied to me. I am said to be one of no less than 117 people on the secret list. Why the redactions, is it because the names of anonymous undercover names appear on the list as well as the targets? We shall never know. It would appear that even the stamp "SECRET" has been redacted.

87. **Tab 25 [UCPI0000012767]:** This is a report dated 7 July 1975 concerning a "Troops Out Movement" demonstration against the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)

in Kilburn on 5 July 1975. My name appears at the top of a list (in alphabetical order) of 13 people who attended. The Registry file references are backed out. The report is stamped SDS and submitted to MI5 by Chief Superintendent TN0038. The Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1974 had numerous draconian provisions that were supposed to address the problem of terrorism in Northern Ireland. The Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, warned at the time that *"the powers... are Draconian. In combination they are unprecedented in peacetime."* Thousands of people were detained over the years. The Act was renewable annually but insufficient scrutiny had been given to it at the outset and no attention was given to Human Rights. Suspects could be held for seven days without the need to bring them before a judge. During this period suspects were routinely tortured by police officers. Juries were abolished for serious offences. The Act was passed in the wake of the Birmingham pub bombings in which 21 people died and 184 were injured. The convictions of the 6 men arrested ("the Birmingham Six") were overturned in 1991. Unsurprisingly this brought the whole British system of justice into disrepute, not least the activity of the police for extorting false confessions. As a further twist, in 1994 the Director of Public Prosecutions ordered the investigation files sealed for 75 years until 2069. A campaign for justice (*"Justice for the 21"*) on behalf of the victims believes the reason may be that there was a British undercover agent in the PIRA active service unit responsible for the bombings. My presence on the demonstration in 1975 was against the renewal of the PTA. This Act had also had the effect of simply prolonging the war by acting as a further recruiting tool for the IRA.

88. **Tab 26-28.** *I will deal with these reports concerning squatting and the Campaign against the Criminal Trespass Law (CACTL) below.*

89. **Tab 29 [UCPI0000008229]**: This report dated 8 February 1976 relates to a London IMG meeting held in Islington library on 6-7 February 1976. It states that attendance varied from 40-120 out of an estimated London membership of 225 (and a national membership I believe of over 500). The report, stamped SDS, is submitted to MI5 by SDS Chief Inspector G.T.M. Craft and a redacted Chief Superintendent. There is the normal long list of names attached, here 60 people, mainly with existing SB files. There are the normal large redactions alongside the RF references. The meeting began with a discussion of the thesis prepared by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, then located in Brussels, concerning the way ahead for the IMG. It was a fractious meeting, but no interventions were made by me. The summary is well written, but I wonder what was the need to have undercover officers present to listen to such dry political discourse? The report attaches a 6 page document '*Proposals for Improving the London Organisation.*' Who was the spy in the room? I am not told.

90. [**Tab 30: As for Tabs 26-28 above**].

91. **Tab 31 [UCPI0000012232]**: This report, stamped SDS, dated 10 March 1976 relates to a picket outside Camden Town Hall on 6 March 1976; it is submitted to MI5 by the Chief Inspector (signature unredacted) and the Chief Superintendent (name redacted). There is a list of 22 names, including mine. This time the Registry file references are blacked out entirely. Who was the spy in the room? I am not told.

92. **Tab 32 [UCPI0000012237]**: This is a report, stamped SDS, dated 11 March 1976 about an IMG meeting in St Pancras addressed by Ernest Mandel (1923-95), the

prominent Belgian Marxist and Trotskyist, author of over 20 books, including the classic *'Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory'* (1968) which sold over half a million copies, and *'Late Capitalism'* (English translation, 1975). As a member of the Belgian Resistance in World War 2, and editor of an underground newspaper, he was imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp, but survived. He was elected onto the leadership of the Fourth International in 1946, and so was, for IMG members, our most important contemporary theoretician. He was a regular contributor to *New Left Review*. I was fortunate to be able to listen to him at this meeting. He has a Special Branch Registry file 408/63/1. The report is signed by the Chief Inspector and the Chief Superintendent.

93. **Tab 33 [UCPI0000021343]**: This 55 page report dated 3 August 1976 concerns the national conference of the IMG which took place from 29 May to 1 June 1976 in Greenford. There were about 450 people present. The Registry file 346/76/12 is specific to the event. This report is a comprehensive piece of work that describes the different political currents and tendencies within the IMG and summarises the debates that took place. My name is not mentioned as being prominent in any of these. One of the first issues for discussion was the Portuguese 'Carnation' revolution (25 April 1974) that had ended the dictatorship of the Salazar regime, and was notable for being a peaceful revolution. A socialist government had just been elected earlier that year, 1976. There was debate over the role of the MFA (the Armed Forces Movement) and the Revolutionary Council and the Constituent Assembly, as well as the political orientation of the Socialist Party. [I later travelled to Portugal to inform myself about the widespread land seizures conducted by rural workers in the countryside]. In Spain, the fascist dictator Franco had died the year before, so this was also a subject of

interest to us. Pierre Franck from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International spoke, as did Tariq Ali. Most of time was spent on debating the IMG's orientation towards the Labour Party and the trade union movement. However there was also discussion of the rise in popularity of the Scottish National Party (SNP) and the call for a Scottish Assembly, due to the perception that Scotland could become a "Scandinavian-type oil rich community" and due to the financing of the SNP by merchant bankers.

94. The report is signed by the SDS Chief Inspector G.T.M.Craft. There are 6 pages of 142 names with RF references given alongside a blacked out strip from top to bottom. There is an interesting breakdown of IMG membership, listed at 647 (down 10 from the year before) by occupation and union membership. And a breakdown of the finances of the IMG.

95. **[Tab 34.** *As for Tabs 26-28 above.*

96. **Tab 35 [UCPI0000021355]:** This report, stamped 'SDS' and signed by Chief Inspector G.T.M.Craft is dated 16 September 1976 and concerns an anti-racism demonstration held in Blackburn on 11 September 1976. It contains a list of names: 30 IMG members, 11 members of the International Communist League, 21 members of 'Big Flame' and 1 member of the Association of Communist Workers, and 5 others.

97. **Tab 36 [UCPI0000021485]:** This report, stamped 'SDS', submitted to MI5 by Chief Inspector G.T.M.Craft is dated 18 October 1976 and concerns 'Fare Fight' which was a campaign against a 26% increase in bus fares, which came only 6 months after

London Transport fares had been increased by the Greater London Council by 30%. In this document every single name over 3 pages has been redacted. The report attaches a contact list dated 27 July 1976 which includes me as providing liaison with other campaigns against the cuts and left groups, and as convenor of the troubleshooting group. We used to meet every Thursday in Rising Free Bookshop in Drummond Street, Euston. The list has the names and addresses and phone numbers of 64 people. One wonders what use MI5 made of this. The main contact address was that of Jim Paton of Privacy

98. **Tab 37 [UCPI0000017725]:** I have dealt with this in my answer to Q13 below.

99. **Tab 38 [UCPI0000017744]:** I have dealt with this in my answer to Q6 above.

100. **Tab 39 [UCPI0000017814]:** I have dealt with this in my answer to Q13 below.

101. **Tab 40 [UCPI0000017335]:** I have dealt with this in my answer to Q13 below.

102. **Tab 41 [UCPI0000017379]:** This report, stamped 'SDS', is dated 15 May 1977 relates to a 'Day of Action' against the closure of the Weir Maternity Hospital, Balham, on 28 April 1977; there was a picket of the hospital, a march to St George's Hospital in Tooting where a meeting was held of 160 people. There was some support for the idea of occupying the hospital to prevent its closure. Ultimately we failed, and the hospital was closed. The names of 23 people are listed as present, with RF references. The National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) has its own file 400/75/45, as does the 'Save Our Hospitals Campaign' (400/77/35). It is amazing to think that a campaign

like this was spied on by undercover officers. The report is signed by Chief Inspector Geoffrey Craft, and by R Wilson, Chief Superintendent of Special Branch 'C' Squad, and author of the history of Special Branch.

103. **Tab 42 [UCPI0000010944]:** This report, stamped 'SDS' and dated 31 August 1977 concerns a public meeting at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, on 2 August 1971 to discuss "The British Road to Socialism" as advocated by the Communist Party of Britain. 45 people attended. There was a debate between the CPB speaker George Anthony (RF402/53/1240) and Tariq Ali (RF402/65/440) for the IMG. There is a surprisingly short list of names - just myself and one other. The report is signed by Chief Inspector G.T.M. Craft, but the signature of the Chief Superintendent is redacted.

104. **Tab 43 [UCPI0000011367]:** This report, stamped SDS, is dated 14 August 1978 and concerns the anti-National Front demonstration at Brick Lane, E1 on 30 July 1978. The file reference is "*Racialist Incidents at Brick Lane 348/78/3 Pt 1.*" This report to MI5 is only signed by the Chief Superintendent. It contains a list of 53 names with RF references.

105. **Tab 44 [UCPI0000021215]:** This report to MI5, stamped SDS, signed by the Chief Superintendent is dated 27 April 1979, and concerns the "People's Commission" held at Conway Hall on 30 March 1979. This followed a similar meeting held on 6 March 1979. The plan was to organise a national demonstration against the police. Another meeting was to be held on 29 April 1979. The groups represented were as follows:

Anarchist Black Cross (400/68/141)

Friends of Astrid Proll (400/78/174)
London Workers Group (400/78/183).
Gay Activists Alliance (4 references).
'SUS' Campaign (400/78/18).
Persons Unknown (400/78/123).
Huntley Street Squatters Campaign (400/77/45).
York Student Anarchists (No Trace).
Islington Campaign against Rac[ial]ism and Fascism (400/78/41).
Balham Law Centre (Several mentions).
"Police the Police" (No Trace).

106. Dave Morris ((402/75/747) acted as spokesman for the Persons Unknown group and I acted as spokesman for the Huntley Street Squatters Campaign. I agreed to assist Dave Morris in formulating a letter to various groups to explain what the People's Commission was hoping to achieve. Besides myself and Dave Morris, 10 other people are identified as present in the report, 8 with existing SB files.

107. **Tab 45 [UCPI0000021269]**: This report, stamped 'SDS', dated 23 May 1979, and signed for the Chief Superintendent, concerned an anti-racist demonstration on 29 April 1979 from Shoreditch Park, N1 to St Mary's Park E1. It was called by an ad-hoc group styled "The April 29th Co-ordinating Committee" (RF 348/79/3). 25 names are listed, including mine. None of the groups who participated are listed.

108. **Tab 46 [UCPI0000021270]**: See my answer to Q19 below.

109. **Tab 47 [UCPI0000021024]**: I have dealt with this in my answer to Q13 below.

110. **Tab 48 [UCPI0000013324]**: I have dealt with this in my answer to Q23 below.

111. **Tab 49 [UCPI0000013961]**: See my answer to Q19 below.

112. **Tab 50 [UCPI0000013986]**: See my answer to Q24 below.

113. [**Tab 51. As for Tabs 26-28 above**].

114. **Tab 52 [UCPI0000016503]**: I have dealt with this in my answer to Q14 below.

115. **Tab 53 [UCPI0000019759]**: This is a report some 9 and a half years after the last SDS report in which I am mentioned. I presume this is because I let the IMG around 1981/82. The report dated 13 November 1990 concerns a meeting entitled "Russian Socialists Speak Out" to be held at Lambeth Town hall on 15 November 1990. The report submitted by the operational head of SDS, Detective Chief Inspector 'HN51,' says that the meeting was largely organised by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and this meeting is given the reference 400/90/93. Other speakers were Chris Harman, editor of '*Socialist Worker*' and Alison Higgs, a Lambeth Councillor. I am listed as one of 8 sponsors of the meeting in my capacity as a former Southwark Councillor. The leaflet attached to the report offers this reason for the meeting: "*With the welcome collapse of the old order in Eastern Europe, the Socialist Party of the USSR respond by not following Thatcher and the market, but by trying to build a genuine socialist movement. Come along and join in the discussion.*"

116. The main speaker was Oleg Voronin from the Socialist Party of what was still then the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). With the fall of the Berlin Wall a year earlier in November 1989, the Communist regimes had collapsed in most countries of what had been known as the 'Eastern Block.' In the USSR Gorbachev was still the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and had become its first President. The CPSU had relinquished its monopoly of power by this point and Gorbachev proposed a new policy of "humane socialism." This gave space to new political parties to develop. Voronin is said to be "a former high ranking official" of SOTSPROF, founded the year before as an Association of Socialist Trade Unions. I do not know what happened to Oleg Voronin and I do not know if the Association survived the economic collapse that followed Yeltsin's "free market" shock reforms. The report does not indicate which, if any, SDS officer provided the information, but these leaflets would have been handed out in the street. It was a public meeting. As for HN51 the Chairman's Note says this: "*HN51 performed a back office role in the Special Demonstration Squad between 1981 and 1983. He was the Detective Chief Inspector in operational charge of the Special Demonstration Squad from November 1988 to July 1991. The evidence which he provided to Operation Herne, in particular about his time as Detective Chief Inspector, is of significant interest to the Inquiry.*" I note that "SDS" is stamped on the report top right, so by this time SDS reports may all have been so marked to confirm the origin of the information.

117. [**Tab 54.** As for Tabs 26-28 above].

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118. Q 8. Tab 3. You are recorded as advocating a militant policy towards the miners strike in the report dated 31 January 1972.

Q 8.1 is this description of your view accurate? If not, why not?

Q 8.2 Within paragraph 9 of this report there is a request recorded for volunteers to assist with a task which involved breaking the law. To the best of your memory is this an accurate record of the events of these meetings?

Q 8.3 Did you volunteer for this task?

Q 8.4 If so, what happened?

Q 8.5 To the best of your memory were plans which involved breaking the law commonly discussed at meetings of this nature?

Q 8.6 Was it considered that breaking any laws was justified or necessary to advance the causes being supported? If so, which laws and for what purposes?

119. This report is dated 31 January 1972, the day after the horrific massacre of bloody Sunday by British Troops in Derry. It is signed off by then Chief Inspector 'HN332' whose name the Inquiry has decided to keep secret following an application by the Metropolitan Police. It concerns 2 meetings held at the London School of Economics over 2 days, 21-22 January 1972 by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Student Unions (LCDSU), and then by the IMG/SL. Members of the International Socialists (IS) and "various anarchists" are said to have been present at the LCDSU meeting which was called in advance of the student demonstration to be held on Sunday 23 January 1972. At this time the Conservative government of Prime Minister Edward Heath had drawn up plans to limit the application of Student Union finance; Margaret Thatcher was Minister for Education. It is very difficult to recall my attendance all these years

ago at the LCDSU meeting, I presume I was a committee member. I am sure that along with other IMG members I would have supported the view that the demonstration should show solidarity with the striking miners by marching to the headquarters of the National Coal Board (NCB). Whether that can properly be characterised as "militant" I don't know, perhaps. It was the height of the miners strike. I note that the IS were approvingly described in the report as "*distinctly more liberal and decidedly less militant*" as they had disagreed with the IMG suggestion to march on the NCB headquarters. I am aware that IS was heavily infiltrated by the police (SDS) in the 1970s and it would be helpful to know whether any SDS officer present put forward the 'liberal' line in order to help divide the LCDSU. Equally, whether HN299/342 'David Hughes' advocated a 'militant' policy or not. The absence of any Witness Statement from this officer means the Inquiry will not necessarily be able to understand what is going on in these meetings.

120. Regarding the separate IMG/SL meeting of 45 people I cannot recall this. I do not think I was one of the volunteers called for to take part in "a special task that would involve breaking the law." I suspect this would be no more than planting a flag on the NCB office, or something fairly minor. It was stated that any fines would be paid, so I assume it would be something non-imprisonable. It is noteworthy that the report concludes: "*At none of the meetings, however, was any call made for physical violence.*" I do not recall "plans for breaking the law" to be commonly discussed at political meetings of the IMG. In any event, I assume that the Inquiry has the full IMG Registry File, so the Inquiry will be able to consider any such reports. It is striking that if the IMG is said by the Metropolitan Police or the Home Office to be a 'violent'

organisation' or one that encouraged breaking the law as routine, that this appears to be the only reference in all the reports disclosed to me.

121. In so far as "breaking the law" was concerned, it is axiomatic that an unjust law will inevitably be broken. This is part of basic political philosophy. For instance if strikes had been outlawed, they would have broken out anyway and we would have supported the strikers in breaking such a law. If 'establishment' figures from within the Security Services, business, right-wing groups etc had organised a coup against an elected Labour Prime Minister (as was indeed contemplated in 1968) and declared martial law, then we would have supported breaking the law, by calling for demonstrations and resistance to the new power.

122. Q 9 Within a meeting of the Notting Hill IMG, details of which are contained in a report dated 4 April 1972 (UCPI0000008948, tab 5), you are recorded as having used various coded initials within a document to 'confuse the identification of persons if the document happened to fall into the hands of Special Branch.'

Q 9.1 Is this description accurate?

Q 9.2 Was the IMG concerned about infiltration by the Police or others? If so please explain why.

123. A: This appears to be a report by 'HN338', an SDS officer (DC) now deceased with an unknown cover name. It is signed off by another SDS officer, a Chief Inspector, HN294, also deceased, again with an unknown cover name when he was previously

deployed in 1968-9 as one of the first SDS officers. The name of the Chief Superintendent of 'C' Squad ('Domestic Extremism') remains secret.

124. I find it unfair for the Inquiry to ask me to comment about meetings in my own home at 17a Rendle Street in March 1972 without providing me with any information about which SDS officer was there and why, and what he got up to. No photographs are provided to assist me. Only 6 persons are said to be present and he names me and 4 others. I can only assume that HN338 was number 6. But if he was an IMG member, what was his 'Party name'?

125. I note that the Notting Hill IMG has its own Registry File reference 400/71/187. As for the document produced by me, the SDS report says it was apparent that it was "hurriedly produced" which is probably true and may explain some of the use of initials or short form rather than full names being given. I have used 'Leonora', 'Booth', 'Robert', 'Mc.R.B' - anyone at the meeting would know who these were, and also I suspect for the initials, albeit using surname first, eg CP = Corbyn, Piers. I do not recall the meeting or if I said, or anyone suggested, it was "to confuse Special Branch" - although it is a fairly poor attempt. In fact the SDS officer gives a useful appendix listing all the initials. For instance 'IC' is Imperial College, 'PA' is the People's Association, 'Red 0' is the Red Circle, 'TU' is Trade Union, 'WL' is West London, 'SL' is Spartacus League, 'ISC' is Irish Solidarity Campaign.

126. I am not sure what point the Inquiry question is driving at - that we were some secret clandestine group engaged in highly secret activity designed to violently

overthrown the British State in 1972? I would say it is quite apparent from the secret police reports that our perspectives were far less ambitious.

127. Q 10. You are described as the 'organiser' of the Notting Hill branch of the IMG within a report dated 7 August 1972 (UCPI0000008202,tab 15).

Q 10.1 Is this description accurate?

Q10.2 If so, please explain what this role entailed?

128. A: Yes I was the organiser of the Notting Hill branch of the IMG. I hosted meetings at my home, took the lead in discussions, I might chair a meeting, I would often take notes (although someone else would take minutes). I would have to report back to the leadership committee.

129. Q 11. Within the report dated 19 September 1972 (UCPI0000008815, tab 18) a description is given of a meeting of the West London IMG which suggests there was potentially a split between the Notting Hill branch and others over a lack of leadership.

Q 11.1 To the best of your memory is this an accurate description of what was going on [in] the group at the time?

Q 11.2 Please describe in your own words what was occurring within the group at this time.

130. A: I note that this report shows that the West London IMG had its own Registry File 400/72/91, and a copy of this report was sent to MI5. Leonora (Lloyd) chaired this meeting of 18 people, 8 of us regulars I see are named as present by the SDS officer

'HN338.' As I recall the Notting Hill group was supportive of me, but there was criticism of me for inviting [Privacy] to 'cadre school' who had been to Maoist meetings. He had been to our branch meetings and the Marxist Study Group. This concern was a political issue, not a security issue. The leaflet 'Contact Work in West London' makes that clear.

131. Q 12 You will see within your witness pack that there are various reports produced by an officer known by the cypher HN338 throughout 1972. These reports concern meetings of the IMG or closely related groups. This officer is now deceased and the Inquiry is unaware of any cover name used by him during his deployment. Having viewed the reports authored by this officer, are you able to recall what name he was known by?

132. A: I believe this may have been "Paul Pearsall," but MI5 may have more information in their files. A photograph would help. The other way would be to find the minutes of the 1972 branch meetings in any IMG archives (held at Warwick University, or at the London School of Economics), as these may list names, initials or 'Party names' that could give a clue. If the Inquiry have all the files for this officer, then it may be that he was close to particular individuals within the IMG, if so I might be able to assist in finding such people. The Met Police application says this: "*HN338 is deceased. A significant period of time has lapsed since HN338's deployment, which was itself for a relatively short duration. There is no evidence that N338 used a deceased child's identity. There is no evidence that N338 engaged in misconduct.*" The Chairman's Minded To Note says this: "*This officer is deceased. He belonged to the Special Demonstration Squad for an unknown period in 1970 and/or 1971. If he*

was deployed as an undercover officer, the identity of the group or groups against which he was deployed is unknown, as is any cover name which he may have used."

I would say that it is obvious he was deployed into the IMG as he is in my home with only 5 or 6 other people in March 1972. The Note itself refers to deployment in 1970/71 but not 1972. One wonders how accurate the Met Police applications were when applying for anonymity for these officers.

133. Q 13. Within the reports dated 8 February 1977 (UCPI00000017725, tab 37), 25 March 1977 (UCPI00000017814, tab39) and 2 May 1977 (UCPI00000017335,tab 40) concerning IMG meetings, your campaign to stand as a candidate for a seat on the Greater London Council for Lambeth is reported on. In a further report dated 29 June 1979 (UCPI00000021024,tab 47) reference is made to a separate election in which you stand as a candidate in 1978. Are you surprised to learn that information of this nature was being reported as a result of undercover police deployment? Please explain your answer.

134. A: The first report is of a meeting of 14 people at the LSE on 27 January 1977, for student members of the IMG. The report lists the IMG student presence as two members each at LSE, UCL, NLP, three at Middlesex Polytechnic, and only one each at Thames Polytechnic and the Institute of Education. When you think how small the IMG was its amazing to think we were a target for undercover policing. The report mentions that I was an IMG candidate for the Greater London Council (GLC), standing in Lambeth where I lived. The report is by Chief inspector SDS G.T.M.Craft and signed off by Chief Superintendent Ray Wilson, author of the book 'Special Branch'. The second report is of a meeting on 10 March 1977 of 30 members of the South London

branch of the IMG. Twenty of them are recorded by name, 17 including myself with existing Registry Files. The report is signed by Chief Inspector SDS Geoffrey Craft, with a copy to MI5. The source of these reports is not disclosed to me - the SDS undercover officer's identity is still being kept secret from me. At the meeting it was agreed to adopt me as one of the 4 candidates for the GLC election. I was not present at either of these meetings.

135. The next report is of a meeting of 35 people on 21 April 1977 at the local library to discuss the GLC election. The IMG members helped distribute my manifesto for the election. The meeting mentions an anti-fascist demonstration in Haringey and a NUPE picket against the closure of a hospital in Balham. I was present at this meeting. The report is signed off by Chief Inspector Craft and signed by HN332 who is now Superintendent of, I presume, 'C' Squad ('Domestic Extremism'), which shows that previously deployed undercover officers rose up the ranks to become senior officers later in their careers. A copy of this report was of course again sent to MI5 at 'Box 500', as can be seen from the partially redacted stamp on bottom left. A phone number for my electoral agent was given on the report, presumably so that MI5 could tap the phone. The report says that a copy of my manifesto is attached, can I please be provided with a copy?

136. The election took place on 5 May 1977. The IMG got 1930 votes. None of our 4 candidates were elected. By contrast the National Front (with 91 candidates) got 119,060, but no seats. The Conservatives 1,177,390 and Labour 737,194.

137. The last report from 1979 refers to my involvement in squatting which I will comment on in a supplementary statement.

138. Q 14. Please consider the report dated 5 March 1981 (UCPI00000016503, tab 52). Did you author the document titled '*Youth perspectives: Irish solidarity work in the IMG and Revo youth*' which is contained within pages 5-7 of the appended documentation?

Q 14.1 If so, please briefly explain what your involvement was within the youth section of the IMG.

139. A: I see that on 5 March 1981 the Chief Superintendent [name redacted] of 'C' Squad of the Special Branch submitted a report to MI5 under the Registry File reference 400/81/23 'International Marxist Group' which attaches an IMG internal bulletin from the 'Irish Fraction' of the IMG. This was in anticipation of the meeting of the 'Fraction' on 1 March 1981, in particular to discuss the hunger strike. In 1976 the British government had withdrawn 'Special Category Status', granted to what were seen as "prisoners of war" and so began a series of protests inside the jails, notoriously the 'dirty blanket' protest and then the hunger strikes, for that status to be re-instated. The hunger strike of 1981 was a strike to the death, and 10 men died, including the elected Member of Parliament, Bobby Sands. 100,000 people attended his funeral and Sinn Fein was rejuvenated as a political force - the long term results of which eventually forced the British State into a compromise under the Good Friday Agreement.

140. I was not part of this 'Irish Fraction' and I do not think I authored the document. I was not active in Bristol. By this time I was ready to leave the IMG and was not part of the 'Revo Youth' Section. I had been a member of the 'Spartacus League', the IMG Youth section, in the early 1970s before I became a full IMG member.

141. I note the documents and their authors are listed as follows:

- a) Ireland and Social Democracy: "Marlowe".
- b) Youth Perspectives: Irish solidarity work in Britain: "Piers".
- c) Perspectives for Irish Work in Britain: "Noel and Stock".
- d) Additions to Irish solidarity work paper: "Ruth".
- e) Ireland the deepening crisis of British rule: "Maclean".

142. The first paper is a suggestion for a more comprehensive program to be adopted as a way forward than simply the slogan, "troops out now" a set of 'transitional demands' to include amnesties, disbanding of the Ulster Defence Regiment, repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, repeal of restrictive legislation on abortion and homosexuality, more funding for Northern Ireland, all with a view to a 32 county 'constituent assembly' being set up in the future. It took a further 17 years of bloody war until a temporary settlement was achieved in 1999 with the Good Friday Agreement.

143. The second document is a critique of the lack of work on Ireland done by the IMG youth section "Revolution Youth", normally called by us "Revo Youth." The document is a poor copy and quite difficult to read. It is authored by "*Piers. Bristol Revo/IMG.*"

144. The third and fourth documents discuss the increasing left wing drift of the Labour Party (under Michael Foot) and the new openness to discussion on Ireland such that the LP called for British withdrawal at the LP conference in 1980. It outlines a reorientation of the IMG away from the Troops Out Movement towards the Labour Party and Trade Unions. This was an attempt to broaden support for Irish self-determination amongst the British working class.

145. The last document is not included in my Witness Pack.

146. Q 15 To what extent was the information contained in the intelligence reports in your witness pack that relate to the IMG a matter of public knowledge?

147. A: The information is not all "public knowledge" but the IMG was not a covert organisation. Imagine the situation of a company like 'Cadbury's' the chocolate manufacturers. It would be public knowledge that they existed, that they made chocolate, the names of the products could be more or less familiar, the contents would be listed on the bars of chocolate; they would file returns at Companies House, and one could track their share price. But the public would not have access to all the Board Minutes or, if they were not Shareholders, to the Shareholders reports; nor would they know the exact process by which the ingredients were combined to make such delicious chocolate. They would not know where the CEO lived and what car s/he drove and who his/her friends were. Imagine the situation of the Conservative and Unionist Party - to what extent are all their discussions behind closed doors matters of public knowledge? Only what is reported by journalists, and what is not leaked by junior ministers! All organisations have restrictions on the circulation of

information out of necessity. This does not mean that they are clandestine organisations.

148. What was *not* public knowledge was the huge extent of Security Service surveillance of left wing groups, and its hugely intrusive nature. The very existence of SDS was a closely guarded secret - and for good reason - it was operating with impunity in fundamental breach of people's human rights - quite unnecessary in a democratic society.

149. **Q 19. You are reported as attending demonstrations concerning the death of Blair Peach within reports dated 23 May 1979 (UCPI00000021270, tab 46) and 12 May 1980 (UCPI00000013961, tab 49).**

Q 19.1 Please explain what your involvement was in these demonstrations and the issue to which they related.

Q 19.2 Were the people concerned worried about infiltration by the police or others? If so, please explain why?

Q 19.3 Are you surprised that the police deployed undercover officers to report on these demonstrations? Please explain your answer.

150. A: The 1970s saw the rise of the far right National Front (NF) and in 1979 they decided to hold their St George's Day election campaign meeting in Southall Town Hall on 23 April. Southall was a part of London that had a large Asian population, and so the meeting was seen as a deliberate provocation. A demonstration was called by the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) in response. It would be interesting to hear the evidence of the SDS officers who were deployed into the NF at this time - if there were any. And

also the evidence of the undercover officers who were deployed into the ANL at the time - what did they see? Was their evidence suppressed by the Met Police when the investigation took place into the killing?

151. The NF meeting was protected by the police and there were confrontations between demonstrators and police. It is now indisputable that one or other of 6 police officers from the Metropolitan Police Commissioner's 'Special Patrol Group' (SPG) killed Blair Peach, a primary school teacher, by hitting him over the head with a cosh or a truncheon. It was well known at the time that the SPG in particular, carried unauthorised weapons to cause serious injury, over and above what could be caused by a truncheon. It was a completely unprovoked attack that killed him. All 6 officers conspired together to say nothing, so no officer was ever charged with, let alone convicted of the killing. This was what the Metropolitan Police was like in those days - police had also killed a Warwick University student, Kevin Gately, on a previous anti-fascist demonstration in Red Lion Square in 1974.

152. I was not at Southall on 23 April 1979, but I attended the demonstration in relation to Blair Peach's death one month later, organised by the Indian Workers Association and the ANL. I also attended the memorial demonstration the following year on 27 April 1980.

153. I do not recall being particularly concerned about police infiltrating these 2 demonstrations, our main concern was the indiscriminate use of police violence, particularly by the notorious SPG against demonstrators and strikers. The SPG was made up of 8 'serials' of 30 men under the direct command of the Commissioner. It

was basically a thuggish riot squad that dished out indiscriminate violence. It was deployed to Brixton in April 1981 (Operation Swamp '81) and provoked the Brixton riots. It was eventually disbanded in 1987. If only our demand at the time for the disbandment of the SPG had been listened to earlier the Brixton riots may never have happened. I wonder what the undercover officers who took part in demonstrations as members of various left wing groups have to say about the use of force by uniformed Met Police? I note that 'Colin Clark' was deployed into the ANL at this time, so he may even have been present on the demonstration. Did Special Branch ever reveal that their officers were present in Southall on 23 April 1979?

154. **Tab 46** is a report dated 23 May 1979, listing those on the demonstration on 28 April 1979. The RF reference 400/78/78 is to the Indian Workers Association. It consists of 7 pages of 187 names, mostly with Special Branch file references alongside. The report is submitted by the Chief Superintendent, his signature is present. I note that Blair Peach himself, killed by the police, nevertheless has his own Registry File 402/78/251; ANL is 400/79/43, and the National Front (NF) is 400/79/51. I find that interesting as the NF was set up in 1967, and the ANL in 1977. Was it the case that no Registry File was opened on the NF until 1979? All the undercover officers listed on the Inquiry website deal with infiltration into groups that are to the left of the political spectrum, or trade unions. Were there any undercover officers in right-wing groups, and from when?

155. **Tab 48** is the report dated 12 May 1979 of the anniversary demonstration held in central London on 27 April 1980 [RF146/79/10C]. It simply lists pages of names - some 197, including me, with lists of Special Branch file references alongside (with a

redacted strip down each page from top to bottom). It is quite amazing to see the extent of this spying, to think how many people have MI5 files due to their political views. Barry Moss is the person signing the report, either for or as the Chief Superintendent.

IMPACT

156. Q 20. Do you recall 'Gary Roberts'? If so, please explain what you remember of him and the impact he had upon you and of finding out that he was an undercover officer.

Note: "Gary Roberts" refers to you in his witness statement to the Inquiry in the following terms:

"73. I reported on Piers Corbyn though at the time I don't think he was an elected politician; he may have been a local councillor. I just reported on his attendance at IMG meetings."

Q 20.1 Is this recollection accurate? If not, why not?

157. A; According to the Inquiry website this officer, HN353 was deployed from 1974-78 in the IMG and IS/SWP. The Metropolitan Police applied for a Restriction Order over his real name suggesting that the organisations he spied upon "*have long since dissolved*" - albeit untrue, as IS changed its name to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and continues in existence to this day. The Met Police application was made on "public interest" grounds and to protect his human rights: "*A restriction order protecting HN353's identity is required in order for the Inquiry to meet its duty under the Human Rights Act 1998 not to act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention right. The Convention right in issue is Article 8.*"

158. The Chairman's Note on the Inquiry website says this about him:

"HN 353 is in his 70s, married and retired. He does not live in the United Kingdom, but has, so far, cooperated with the Inquiry. He was deployed against two left-wing groups between 1974 and 1978. Their names and his cover name will be published. Publication of his cover name will serve to prompt evidence from those whom he encountered while deployed, if they can remember him and have anything to say about his deployment. He does not wish to cause apprehension and worry to his wife and/or to subject both of them to media or other intrusion. His deployments appear to have been unremarkable. There is no known allegation of misconduct against him. In those circumstances, the interference in the right to respect for private and family life of him and his wife which would be occasioned by publication of his real name would not be justified under article 8 (2) ECHR."

159. What I find grossly unfair is for the Inquiry to expect me to try and recollect him and his activities without even providing me with a copy of his full witness statement, and then no more than a single paragraph (number 73) which is almost completely useless. If the Inquiry is to have any credibility at all then the SDS officer's witness statements have to be provided to me before I can usefully comment. I can only do so much based on the provision of the Special Branch Intelligence reports.

160. I was indeed a local councillor - I would have thought that this also put me in the category of "an elected politician". What IMG meetings did he attend at which I was present? Is it the case that all the SB Intelligence reports from December 1974 until

August 1978 (tabs 23-43) are based on information from him? Is he the "reliable source" mentioned in the reports?

161. I note that the Inquiry Chairman characterises his deployment as "unremarkable" - but if someone was secretly spying on you, perhaps even in your own home, and pretending to be your friend and comrade, and was paid by the State from taxpayer's money to do so, would you consider this "unremarkable"?

162. Q 21. Do you recall "Alan Nixon" or "Andy Bailey"? If so, please explain what you remember of him and the impact he had upon you and of finding out that he was an undercover officer. In answer to this question you may be assisted by reference to a report authored by him dated 2 September 1971 (MPS-0738288, tab 1) which concerned a meeting you attended.

163. A: 'Alan Nixon' was, according to the Inquiry website deployed from 1969-1972. The Met Police made an application for his real identity to be kept secret: "*HN340 is of advanced age. His fears in relation to disclosure of his real name are set out in the risk assessment at sections 14 and 15 and include anxiety from being named in connection with the Inquiry. It is reasonable to infer that there would be some interest in HN340 by virtue of his role as a former UCO; and the effect of that interest would be more keenly felt by a person in HN340's circumstances.*"

164. The Chairman issued this Note in response:

"HN 340 is a widower in his 70s. He was deployed against one group between 1969

and 1972 and reported on others. There is no known allegation of misconduct against him. In the unlikely event that any member of any of the groups or any other member of the public can be prompted to give evidence about his deployment, publication of his cover name will serve that purpose. Publication of his real name will not and is not necessary to permit the Inquiry to fulfil its terms of reference. It would interfere with his right to respect for his private life and would not be justified under article 8 (2) ECHR.”

165. From the single report authored by him on 2 September 1971 all I know is that he was a DS from Special Branch who was at an evening meeting of the Irish Solidarity Campaign in a pub in Kings Cross on 27 August 1971 where there was a discussion on Internment in Northern Ireland. I cannot recall ever meeting this undercover officer 'Alan Nixon.' However, a copy of his witness statement may provide information that would allow me more chance of accessing some recollection of him, for instance what other groups did he report on, who was his main target?

166. Q 22. Do you recall “David Hughes”? If so, please explain what you remember of him and the impact that he had upon you and of finding out that he was an undercover officer.

167. A: This undercover officer was a DC of SDS deployed from 1971-75 into three groups, and I presume one of them was the IMG. The Note from the Inquiry Chairman says this:

“N299/342 is a septuagenarian and lives alone in a small community. He was deployed against 3 groups of his own selection between 1971 and 1975. There is nothing to indicate that his deployment was anything other than unremarkable. His

cover name will be published, as will the names of the groups. In the unlikely event that any member of any of the groups can remember him, publication of his cover name, not of his real name, is what is required to prompt information or evidence from them. Publication of his real name would risk unwelcome media attention and the attention of those who may be ill disposed towards him within his small community. It would not assist fulfilment of the terms of reference of the Inquiry. The interference with his right to respect for his private life which it would risk would not be justified under Article 8(2) ECHR.”

168. I too am a septuagenarian, so I presume he was around my age when he was spying on me. I can only find 2 reports disclosed to me that mention him, namely his report of 31 January 1972 (tab 3) about the Student demonstration, and he was the joint author with HN338 of the lengthy report (tab 11) into the IMG conference at Conway Hall later that year in May 1972. It may be that he knows the cover name of HN338. This latter was a meeting of 300-500 people, so I have no idea if I ever came across him. What might prompt me to recall him (and thereby provide useful evidence to the Inquiry) would be a full witness statement detailing his activities and referencing his reports.

169. In so far as his deployment is said to be “*unremarkable*” I would say that all the SDS deployments into the IMG are remarkable for the fact that they existed at all. If he was simply a regular SB officer just taking notes, I might find that “*unremarkable*.” This is how I understand it was prior to 1968.

170. Q 23. Do you recall "Colin Clark"? If so, please explain what you remember of him and the impact that he had upon you and of finding out that he was an undercover officer. In answer to this question you may be assisted by reference to a demonstration at which you were both in attendance (UCPI00000013324, tab 48) reported on 4 September 1980.

171. A: This report is of a demonstration organised by the Young Liberals that took place at Speakers Corner on 12 August 1979 against the presence of British troops in Northern Ireland - it was the tenth anniversary of their deployment. I note that the Registry had a file on the Young Liberals: 400/76/70. The spy list includes 147 names, including my own - and of course 'Colin Clark.' Interestingly, here the Registry File references are redacted - did SDS create 'dummy files' for their own operatives? And why did they place their own operatives' cover names in the list - was it to deliberately mislead future historians - so that 100, 200 years in the future their past secret activity would not be exposed? It is laughable that the Metropolitan Police are so paranoid about the verdict of history!

172. 'Colin Clark' is listed on the Inquiry website with the cypher HN80 (deployed 1977-82 into the ANL and SWP/IS). The Met applied for this cover name to remain secret, but this application was refused in the following terms:

HN80 is a septuagenarian. HN80 was deployed as an undercover officer against one group in the late 1970s and early 1980s and encountered and reported on many others. The deployment is of significant interest to the Inquiry because of its length and range and because, according to HN80, it involved a good deal of self-tasking. Publication of the cover name of HN80 may prompt information or evidence from those

who encountered HN80 during the deployment. Publication of the real name of HN80 is not necessary to permit the Inquiry to fulfil its terms of reference and would interfere with the right of HN80 to respect for private and family life. HN80 has expressed fears, which do not appear to be objectively justified, about the risk of violence posed by former targets and their associates. I am prepared to accept that the fears are genuinely held. On the basis of what is at present known, it would be neither proportionate nor justified under article 8(2) of the European Convention to override those fears by refusing to make a restriction order in respect of the real

173. I do now recall 'Colin Clark,' he had long auburn hair, about 5'11", I remember him selling 'Red Mole' every Saturday morning on Portobello Road not far from where I lived. We used to go quite often to a café afterwards, he was good conversationalist and appeared quite smart, albeit not fully up on Marxism. He was reliable and turned up to meetings and events. I do not recall him mixing with Phil Cooper, I think they kept apart. I cannot remember if he had a girlfriend.

174. Q 24. Do you recall "Phil Cooper"? If so, please explain what you remember of him and the impact that he had upon you and of finding out that he was an undercover officer. In answer to this question you may be assisted by reference to a demonstration at which you were both in attendance (UCPI00000013986) [tab 50] which was reported on 30 May 1980.

175. A: I do now recall 'Phil Cooper', he was friendly with me like 'Colin Clarke'. Again I do not recall if he had a girlfriend. He was a bit of a joker, he had a good sense of humour. He did not appear particularly intellectual. He was reliable and always turned

up to meetings and events, and newspaper selling. He was dark haired and shorter than me. The report at Tab 50 was of a Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council rally on Clapham Common on 14 May 1980 as part of the TUC's 'Day of Action' against the economic policy of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government (the start of what later became 'neo-liberalism'). I note that even this TUC 'Day of Action' has its own separate Registry File, 346/80/3. The rally coincided with the steelworkers strike. As a result of the failure of that strike and later the 1984-5 miners strike Britain was largely de-industrialised and jobs moved into the service sector; London became pre-eminent in the UK for jobs, in the finance and service sectors which led to lopsided regional economic development and mass unemployment in the old industrial areas. But in 1980 we were all being spied on by Special Branch as 'Domestic Extremists' when it was obvious to all of us, on the left wing of the political spectrum, that the real extremists were those right wing interests, in and out of government, who wanted to rip up the supposed "post-war consensus" and declare war on the unions and the welfare State. But here was "Phil Cooper" spying on me and others. I look at the 55 names, mine included, and see beside their names the long list of Registry File references, and the fact that this whole list went to MI5, as a matter of routine.

176. The list contains the names of Alf Dubbs, then an MP, now a member of the House of Lords, and Ted Knight former Leader of Lambeth Council, plus members of the Labour Party, and - "*Phil Cooper - "no trace."*" The Inquiry website lists him as HN155 (deployed into the SWP/IS 1979/80-83) and the Chairman's Note says this: *HN155 is in his 60s and married. His wife knows the fact of his deployment, but not its details. He was deployed against one left-wing group between 1980 and 1983. His deployment is of interest to the Inquiry because it included regular contact with a*

Member of Parliament (who cannot be identified with confidence because his recollection of the identity of the MP is unclear). Publication of his cover name, which will occur, may prompt members of the group or others to provide evidence about his activities during the deployment. The threat posed to his physical safety by former members of the group and/or sympathisers is nil or negligible. He will, however, inevitably be the subject of unwelcome media attention and is understandably concerned about the impact which that will have on his wife. Publication of his real name by the Inquiry is not necessary to permit it to fulfil its terms of reference.

RULE 9 Questions - SQUATTING

Background

177. I began squatting in 1972 as a consequence of being evicted by a private landlord when I was living in Notting Hill. I had a furnished tenancy that I shared with my older brother Andrew. This was in, what was then, a quite run-down area of west London, and the most well-known landlord was the notorious Peter Rachman. I took our landlord to a Rent Tribunal with the result that the rent was ordered to be halved. This surprising victory unfortunately led to our landlord evicting us, and we were left homeless. I should explain that under the law at the time, because ours was a furnished tenancy, there was no security of tenure.

178. Fortunately, nearby, there was a whole street of houses in Elgin Avenue that had been left empty for several years, and were due for demolition and redevelopment by the Greater London Council (GLC), then under Conservative Party control. They were perfectly good houses structurally speaking, and could have been repaired, but it was

fashionable then to demolish such houses, and replace with modernist blocks. It was actually my brother Andrew who persuaded me to squat, and we moved into one of the empty houses at 19 Elgin Avenue, W9. Soon there was a whole community of some 200 squatters, some were part of Short-Life Community Housing (SCH) who occupied the houses on official 'short-life' "licences" which gave no security of tenure. The rest, like us, were simple "squatters."

179. As a member of the International Marxist Group (IMG) I became organiser of the newly formed IMG squatting "fraction," a small grouping, of no more than half a dozen people, within the IMG concerned with the political implications of squatting. As IMG members, we clearly saw the problem of homelessness as a political issue, and we explained to people that this single issue could not be separated from the wider social and political context. Squatting became an issue during the late 1960s and 1970s as a product of the housing crisis; there were around 100,000 vacant properties owned by local authorities or private landlords, and 189,000 people on the waiting list of the GLC alone.

180. The first protracted and bitter squatting struggle of the period took place in Redbridge in 1968 (see Ron Bailey, *The Squatters*, Penguin, 1970). This was mainly connected to the lack of provision for homeless families. But soon enough young people began to look for places to live, partially due to a lack of money, but many were also looking to create a new type of community. Politically I would say that many of the younger people had an anarchistic outlook, but perhaps most were largely apolitical and just wanted somewhere to live. The Elgin Avenue squatters were happy to let me represent them, and my IMG membership was of no great importance to

them, occasionally some were hostile, but most were supportive as I threw a lot of energy into defending the community politically. I also wrote and published (1972-75) our community paper, 'Easy' - this stood for "Elgin Avenue Struggles? Yes!" There were over 100 issues of 'Easy!' printed.

Political Activism - Squatting

181. Q4. Please outline your political activities within the squatting movement.

4.1 Is the Inquiry correct to understand that you were involved in the Huntley Street Squatters Campaign, the Squatters Action Council and the London Squatters Union?

4.2 If so, please explain the aims of these groups.

4.3 How did you become involved with these groups and the squatting movement more generally?

4.4 What methods did these groups use to advance their aims?

4.5 Did you hold any positions of responsibility within any of these groups or the movement?

4.6 Are you surprised that the police deployed undercover officers to report on the activities of the squatting movement? Please explain your answer.

182. A: I was involved in all three of the groups named above. The Squatters Action Council (SAC) was an initiative of the former Elgin Avenue squatters and the IMG, and was set up in 1976 as the All London Squatters Federation had, in our view become

ineffective. We wanted to have a delegate organisation so that it was representative, although this was opposed by anarchists who wanted a less formalised structure. I would say that the SAC was effective as we were able to help people and coordinate efforts and help develop campaigns. We also organised squats, our most successful initiative being the "Jubilee" squats, of which there were about 10, in 1977. The Huntley Street squat was just one of the "Jubilee" squats, but the most prominent, about which see more below in my answer to Q18.

183. The London Squatters Union (LSU) was born out of an agreement between the anarchists and the SAC in 1979. This was to be a membership organisation, an attempt to make it more democratic and lessen the perceived influence of the IMG (even though I think this was overestimated). The LSU seemed to me to function well, but became a victim of its own success when the head of the Tory GLC, Horace Cutler, decided to rehouse 10,000 squatters and given everyone licences and tenancies. This broke the back of the organisation as it was instantly drained of thousands of supporters. But in a sense it had achieved its main aim - it had exerted real political pressure such that 10,000 people were housed.

184. I was active, I would say prominent, in all three organisations listed above. Although I was a spokesperson or a delegate for the various squatter's organisations, I had no formal role. I remained interested in housing issues long after I left the IMG, and I am proud to have played an active part in the campaign against homelessness. We showed what direct action could achieve.

185. I note from the disclosure given in the Witness Pack that Tab 27 is a Special Branch report dated 6 January 1976 in connection with the London Squatters Campaign (RF400/75/118) attaching a copy of the Maida Hill Squatters and Tenants Association news sheet ('Easy 111') from 21 October 1975. The news sheet deals mainly with the successful squatting campaign we ran in Elgin Avenue, W11. I note that my name is mentioned along with many others, including my brother Andrew, Heathcote Williams, and Lord Tony Gifford (RF405/67/506). The headline was "We Won!" And it reported that all 200 squatters had successfully been offered rehousing by the GLC. We campaigned hard for months to get the backing of the Westminster Trades Council, Paddington Tenants Federation and a good part of the local Labour Party membership, in particular Arthur Latham MP who said we could make his support publicly known. We held frequent open meetings ("Street Meets") and took democratic decisions to plan strategy and tactics against eviction. Ultimately we had to be ready for physical resistance so as not to lose our homes. I was surprised at the readiness of people for this, but such was the desperation at the lack of housing, they were prepared to do it, and duly erected barricades made from corrugated iron. This determination allowed us to win. Barricades had been erected earlier in January 1975 at Canal Flats off the Harrow Road which were due for demolition by Westminster Council, and that resistance from Irish families gained a lot of local support. Prior to that, in late 1974, the squatters in Terminus Road, Brighton had turned back the bailiffs due to physical resistance.

186. The news sheet contains a history of the 3 year struggle of Elgin Avenue beginning with the compulsory purchase of the street by the GLC in 1971. A fuller account is given by me in "Squatting, the real story," Chapter 11: "We won, you should

fight them too” at pp130-140. The resistance at Canal Flats and Terminus Road was also reported in the news sheet.

187. Our overall vision was decent housing for all under democratic control. The Squatters Action Council (SAC) was an umbrella group for all squatters in London. If the Inquiry wishes to investigate our aims and methods then it could do worse than read the accompanying news sheet which proposes activity by organisations such as meetings and leafleting, and an inquiry into the London housing crisis. Of course the crisis has simply got much worse, especially in London, with the abolition of rent controls, the mass sale of council houses (from 1980) and the failure to build adequate housing. The housing charity Shelter now reports (2019) that there are 280,000 homeless in the UK, with 170,000 in London.

Intelligence Reports

188. Q16. Within a report on the Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law you are described as a ‘squatters leader’ (UCPI0000009615, tab 28). Is this an accurate description?

16.1 Please describe what involvement you had with this particular campaign?

16.2 What were its aims or objectives?

16.3 What methods did it use to try and achieve the aims?

16.4 Within a report dated 10 December 1975 (UCPI0000009501, tab 26) you are reported as warning that people could be arrested for their activities. Did this campaign consider breaking the law as necessary to achieve its aims?

189. A: **Tab 28** is a Special Branch report from Chief Inspector G. T. M. Craft of SDS to MI5 dated 10 February 1976 concerning a dozen "Libertarian Communists" from the 'Anarchist Workers Group' and 'Social Revolution' who met every Wednesday in the Lee Centre in Lewisham. They had invited me to speak at a public meeting on 15 February 1976. One of their regular attendees I see was Terry Liddle (1948-2012) (RF402/64/896) who was the founder member of 'Republic' the campaigning group. As to whether the SDS officer is correct as describing me as "the squatters' leader" I was certainly a prominent figure, but had no formal role.

190. **Tab 26** is a report to MI5 dated 10 December 1975 about the Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law (CACTL) (RF400/75/12) which was started in 1975 due to a concern that a new law would criminalise squatters, as well as students engaged in sit-ins and workers occupying factories. I note that the Campaign was the subject of a Registry file 400/75/18 and Special Branch reports were sent as a matter of routine to MI5.

191. The report concerns a meeting at the Friends (Quaker) Meeting House on Euston Road on 3 December 1975. This was public meeting with about 70 people attending. I spoke as a representative of Elgin Avenue squatters, alongside a barrister David Watkinson and others from the National Union of Students and other trade unions, and the Lambeth Self-Help Group (the CACTL office was at 6 Bowden Street, Lambeth, SE11). The report, submitted by the Chief Inspector of SDS and the Chief Superintendent of 'C' Squad ('Domestic Extremism') has the names of these senior officers redacted, and the name of the officer who spied on us is not given by the Inquiry.

192. The meeting itself was called to advertise the national demonstration to take place on 28 February 1976, a march from County Hall (then the headquarters of the GLC) to Trafalgar Square. A copy of the flyer is produced, as is a copy of a leaflet explaining why we opposed what was eventually to become the Criminal Law Act 1977.

193. I spoke at the meeting to warn that the proposed new law could lead to squatters being arrested as criminals for trespass. The government of the day was Labour, but the Conservative Party wanted the bill to go further and criminalise all occupation by squatters of residential property (this was eventually achieved under the Coalition government of David Cameron in September 2012).

194. The question at 16.4 above is framed by the Inquiry to imply that my warning about possible arrests somehow imparts the notion that I was, or we were, setting out to break the law. At the time trespass on land was a civil matter and this had been the case since the time of the Peasant's Revolt of 1381. The Statutes of Forcible Entry 1381 (5 Ric 2 St 1 c 7) gave statutory protection to occupiers from those who tried to violently evict them from land: *"Et Auxint le Roi defende q nully desore face entree en aucunes tres & teñz sinoun en cas ou entree est done p la loy, & en cell cas nemye a forte main ne a multitude des gentz, einz tantsoulement en [lisible & aisee] mane, et si nully desore face a contraire & ent soit convict duement soit puniz p emprisonment de son corps & dilloeqs reint a la voluntee le Roy."* However, it was well known that the police tended to take the side of landlords, and so squatters always faced the

possibility of arrest, regardless of the criminal law. If I had advised people to commit criminal offences I am sure SDS officers would have reported this.

195. The Campaign was formed to coordinate opposition to the Law Commission's proposals which were seen as creating a broader range of criminal offences. CACTL members included trade unionists, squatters, tenants, students and lawyers, with support from the National Union of Students, Trades Councils and the Gypsy Council. The methods adopted were those normal in a democratic society, namely meetings, leafleting and publicity, and demonstrations. I went to many meetings to speak on behalf of squatters and to oppose the legislation. As to whether I was a "squatters' leader" I think some people would object to that term as we were determinedly non-hierarchical, but I was a spokesperson both for the Elgin Avenue squatters and on behalf of squatters more generally.

196. **Tab 30** is a report to MI5 from the Chief Inspector SDS and Chief Superintendent C Squad dated 10 March 1976 listing those 23 people (including myself) that the police had identified as being on the national demonstration against the Criminal Trespass Bill. The march went to Trafalgar Square and I spoke there alongside others. I am surprised that was not reported on by SDS. As far as I recall it was a completely peaceful demonstration.

197. **Q17. Within a report dated 12 August 1976 (UCPI0000010850, tab 34, at p4) it is recorded that the general attitude of the squatting movement towards the police was 'one of complete non-cooperation.'**

17.1 Is this an accurate description?

17.2 Please explain to the best of your memory, what your attitude was towards interaction with the police.

17.3 On the final page of this report it is recorded that a squat provides and atmosphere where people are at liberty to break every law that they want with impunity.' Is this an accurate description?

17.3.1 Please explain in your own words what attitude was generally taken towards breaking the law within the squatting movement and associated groups.

17.4 Was the movement or any of the groups concerned with it, concerned about infiltration by the Police or others? If so, please explain your answer.

198. A: **Tab 34** is a fascinating report to MI5 of such apparent importance that it is signed off by the Deputy Assistant Commissioner, in other words the Head of Special Branch himself. However, it must come from an unknown SDS officer as it is said to be "based on 12 months acquaintance with the squatting field in London." The report mentions 3 organisations: the Squatters Action Council (SAC), Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS, a Core Participant in this Inquiry), and CACTL. I note that SAC is mentioned in no less than 6 Registry Files, and ASS in three. What I find surprising is that there were also Registry Files (meaning that there was MI5/Special Branch surveillance) in relation to: Islington Gutter Press (RF 347/74/7), Time Out (RF 347/74/21), BIT information service (RF 400/71/64), Short-Life Community Housing (RF 400/72/99), Release (RF 400/67/150) and Interaction (RF 402/69/?).

199. The report is in the style of a 'Daily Mail' exposé of the "evils of squatting." The disdain for the target group is self-evident. What is the value of this report to MI5? I

can only imagine that the information was used by the gutter press to tarnish squatting activity. The only antidote to this is to read in full: 'The Squatters' by Ron Bailey (Penguin Books, 1973), and 'Squatting, the real story" by numerous authors including myself (Bay Leaf Books, 1980).

200. I am mentioned as the leader of SAC, due to my effective work on behalf of the Elgin Avenue squatters. The political orientation of many squatters is given as anarchist, even though I was a member of the IMG. I would however say that people's politics was largely due to their experience of homelessness, and this would tend to alienate them from the traditional political parties. The ability to create their own space in an empty house did lead to more communal living, and this was an experience people enjoyed and did not want to give up. The idea of direct action to take over an unoccupied building (just as 'demobbed' soldiers and families had done after the Second World War) was more in keeping with anarchist philosophy, so naturally attracted people of that political persuasion. When people were offered homes (by the GLC or local councils) they normally took them - this was the case with the 200 Elgin Avenue squatters.

201. As to the attitude to police, this largely depended on the actions of the police themselves. For years they had engaged in illegal evictions or turned a blind eye to them when conducted by bailiffs or private landlords, regardless of the supposed protections of the Forcible Entry Act 1381. But for my part I was generally happy to talk to the police if they were polite and reasonable. On the other hand, if they were to be used as brute force to evict a squatting community, then we would announce a decision to defend our homes against such an attack. This threat often led to

rehousing. I do recall once cooperating with police after we had ejected a squatter for anti-social behaviour. In contrast to this, sometimes police would force their way into squats and evict people regardless of the law.

202. As for the idea that squatted houses were places where people could break the law with impunity, this is nonsense. Squatters were, in my view, much more vulnerable to police action due to their more legally precarious existence. "Impunity" in the face of the law is normally the result of what position or function one occupies in the social hierarchy; the old adage, 'one law for the rich, one for the poor' is well known. If the police believed that drugs was only an issue within the squatting community they were wrong; squatters were simply a section of wider society, drug use was widespread, particularly amongst young people, rich and poor alike.

203. **Tab 47** is a report dated 29 June 1979 and concerns a member of the London Squatters Council who "first came to the notice of Special Branch when he was mentioned in the SAC News Sheet no 28 dated 9.5.77 (ref:400/77/95)." I find it surprising that this is all it takes to get the attention of Special Branch. He later is said to have acted as agent for me when I unsuccessfully stood as a local councillor on the "Decent Homes for All" platform in 1978.

204. **Tab 51** is a report to MI5 dated 14 January 1981, the subject being the London Squatters Union (RF400/80/162) and the eviction from Kilner House, SE11. There were up to 150 people in occupation of the block at one time, but eventually most of the families were rehoused by the GLC. For that reason we regarded the action of squatting the building as a success. Concerning the attitude to the police, I see that

the report says this, at paragraph 6: *"the prevailing attitude towards dealings with the police [600 officers were assembled to evict Kilner House] is that, once the barricades have been breached, only passive resistance should be offered."*

Recollection of Events

205. Q18. Please provide a factual account of your eviction from the Huntley Street squat in 1978 and the resulting trial (in doing so please do not include any information which is subject to legal professional privilege). In answer to this please consider p.95 of 'Squatting, the real story' (a book to which you contributed) (UCPI0000031653, tab 54) which details how 'police officers posing as a homeless couple - Nigel Wildman and Mary McClosky - moved in as squatters.' Do you have any memory of this? If so please provide an account which includes this aspect of the eviction.

206. A: In February 1977 the Squatters Action Council organised the occupation of 5 blocks of flats in Huntley Street in central London. This was part of our "Jubilee" squats campaign. The 54 flats had been empty for 4 years. We eventually housed 160 people, including 30 children. One block was allocated to women and children, and we had an office and a meeting space in two of the flats. We were again successful in being able to negotiate rehousing for all the residents.

207. Notwithstanding this, at a cost of £50,000, the Metropolitan Police gathered 650 officers (armed with riot shields and grappling hooks and backed up by 4 bulldozers) and stormed the barricades with the Special Patrol Group and steel-helmeted bailiffs

in the lead. I was arrested along with 12 others for "resisting the sheriff," contrary to s10 Criminal Law Act 1977 (the law I had opposed). I had in fact thrown some water over the Under Sheriff of London, Michael Harris.

208. I defended myself at the trial before the Stipendiary Magistrate in Marylebone Magistrates' Court the following year. I was convicted and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment, while the other 12 were discharged.

209. During the trial I found out that 2 people in the building had been undercover police officers. I cross-examined the Under Sheriff, and simply asked him: "*Who are Nigel and Mary?*" His reply was: "*They worked for me.*" I had already established that Nigel and Mary, who had turned up in the last week of the squat, had offered a surprising amount of assistance to us. Indeed, they had come with a van and they went round London collecting the corrugated iron for barricades. So when you see the pictures from 1978, it is worth remembering that this barricades were actually constructed with the invaluable assistance of the Metropolitan Police, at taxpayers' expense. The Stipendiary veritably exploded when he heard this. It was an unforgettable moment.

210. As the Inquiry has not disclosed to me any Special Branch intelligence reports on Huntley Street, I presume that 'Nigel and Mary' were officers from a squad other than SDS. Given that intelligence was supplied by Special Branch to the commander of the eviction, it might be helpful to see the briefing and see what these officers reported. As to our stance, it was essentially to offer passive resistance once the barricades had been breached. This basically involved us being carried out from the

premises. The bucket of water was my initiative for which I paid the price. Fortunately, on appeal, my sentence was reduced to 200 hours community service, which I much enjoyed as I was able to work in the Self-help Housing Research Library of North London Polytechnic, under the supervision of the librarian, a former anarchist squatter.

OTHER

211. Q 24. Is there anything else you wish to add that may be of assistance to the work of Inquiry?

212. I hope to be able to answer some of the Rule 9 questions more fully if and when I am provided with copies of the witness statements of these undercover officers, and contemporary photographs of them, if available.

213. I wish to add that I often had recourse to law during my political career, and I can give the following examples. I frequently appeared in court as a "McKenzie" adviser or in my own right for Squatters or related campaigns from 1972 to 1979 and a few times since then. We won a number of stays of eviction and instances where judges and campaign action forced concessions from landlords such as Westminster City Council, the GLC, the Church Commissioners of England, the London Boroughs of Camden, Southwark and others, and the Commissioners for the Great Exhibition of 1851.

214. In 1974 I was involved in an "Electricity For All" campaign of court cases in which we fought attempts to cut off squatters' electricity in Walterton Rd, London, W9 and Hilldrop Crescent, Islington, by the GLC, and the London Electricity Board (LEB). We occupied the LEB showrooms in Notting Hill which led to 26 people being arrested.

The GLC and LEB were forced to concede our right to electricity and Tony Benn, MP, in Parliament stated on behalf of the government that electricity and gas had to be supplied to applicants regardless of their legal rights of occupation.

215. In October 1974 I was the principal witness on behalf of the Elgin Avenue squatters (Jenkins being one of them), represented by Lord Tony Gifford, in our appeal: *GLC v Jenkins* [1975] 1 W.L.R. 155 and [1975]1 All E. R. 354. We won the appeal, largely based on my evidence, which showed we had permission to remain in the premises at the time the GLC initiated court proceedings, and so the High Court Order 113 for possession was invalid. The GLC then re-commenced proceedings leading to a second High Court case. We subpoenaed the previous and current lead GLC councillors for the matter, Gladys Dimpson and Richard Balfe, and I think the GLC Housing Director Lancelot Hogbin. The judge, in granting the possession order, advised the council to "organise a phased withdrawal in conjunction with Mr Corbyn". I think this hearing was on October 8th 1975, and one week later on 15 October all 200 occupants were rehoused. I made a speech thanking all who had helped get us there including the local Paddington Tenants federation, Westminster Trades Council, the Labour Party and MP Arthur Latham, the Young Liberals and support from Student/Short Life Community Housing (SCH).

216. I was also involved in two court cases around the "Fare Fight" campaigns. One in, I believe, 1976, in which I was again the principle witness in the test case which was taken on appeal to the High Court, Queen's Bench Division, see *Corbyn v Saunders* [1978] 1 W.L.R 400. We lost the appeal despite the London Transport barrister having declared, "My Lords, I give up". The offence was "travelling on the

tube (or train) without having paid the sum due, and with intent to avoid payment thereof". We argued that we didn't intend to avoid payment because we handed in "Deferred Payment Slips" (on tubes, trains and buses) with our 10p tickets which we purchased rather than the extortionate new full fares. The "Deferred Payment Slips" stated: *"If you wish to recover the sum due contact [name and address supplied]*". The Court held that the Regulation of Railways Act 1889 s5(3) should be interpreted as if there was no comma present and so the offence was intent to avoid payment *while travelling*. The effect of this ruling was that nobody could travel and pay at the other end in circumstances where ticket offices were closed. This meant that London Transport then had to put up notices everywhere giving people specific authority to travel to pay at the end of journey (before leaving the exit barrier). A number of stations also installed "Excess Fare" windows *before* the exit barriers which are there to this day.

217. The second "Fare Fight" court case, in about 1982, also involved the use of "Deferred Payment Slips", but the judge ruled that process was invalid in light of the original appeal decision. As far as I recall we were either not allowed to, or advised against, appeal in this case.

218. In none of these activities did I or the IMG seek violent confrontation but sought, with backing from the broad housing and labour movements, peaceful legitimate solutions.

DOCUMENTS

219. Q 26. Do you have any documents that may be potentially relevant to the work of the Inquiry, eg photographs, diaries, or other contemporary documents?

220. A: I may have some old material (IMG minutes of meetings, copies of newspapers etc) from the 1970s in boxes in my flat, but I do not have the time to go through them all myself. There is an IMG archive collection at Warwick University in Coventry, and another archive in the London School of Economics.

221. In relation to squatting, there is some material available to the Inquiry that may assist in relation to squatting, and the issues raised:

- (i) *'The Squatters'* by Ron Bailey (Penguin Books, 1973).
- (ii) *'Squatting, the real story'* by numerous authors including myself (Bay Leaf Books, 1980).
- (iii) *"Squatters: Myth and Fact"* (1977, London Self-Help Housing Resource Centre).
- (iv) *"Squatting: What's It All About?"* Squatters Action Council (1976).
- (v) *"Housing, Squatting & the Urban Crisis Developments & the way forward"* (1975, International Marxist Group).

222. There is an archive of 18 boxes of squatting material in the Bishopsgate Institute, 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QH. This was deposited by the Advisory Service for Squatters and includes material related to Elgin Avenue and Huntley Street, and various squatting organisations. It was catalogued in 2014 and I attach the index to

the archive. See in particular ASS/8 (CACTL), ASS/10 (SAC), ASS/13 (Elgin Avenue and EASY), ASS/17 (squatters' campaigns), ASS/22 (Kilner House etc), ASS/24 (Elgin Ave), ASS/26 SAC newsletters.

DIVERSITY INFORMATION


223. Q 16. What is your racial origin?

224. A: White British.

225. Q 17. What is your gender?

226. A: Male.

I believe the contents of this statement to be true.

Signed 

Piers Richard Corbyn

Dated 22 April 2020