

Core participants

Ruling 41

Bruce Kent/Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

1. Bruce Kent applied to be designated as a core participant on 2 August 2016. Consideration of his application was deferred. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament ('CND') applied on 8 April 2021.
2. The CND was infiltrated at national level between early 1981 and the end of 1984 by HN65. It was infiltrated at local level, in East London, between early 1985 and the end of 1986 by HN88. The Inquiry has found nothing to indicate that it was infiltrated at other times or by any other undercover officer, although its activities do feature in reports on other groups.
3. One of the issues which the Inquiry must investigate is why an organisation which invariably cooperated with the Metropolitan Police Service when staging public demonstrations in London was infiltrated by two Special Demonstration Squad undercover officers. This can better be done if the organisation or its chairman in the relevant period is designated as a core participant. When the cover name of HN65 was released, the Inquiry approached Bruce Kent to ask if he remembered him. His response was that he did not. If the CND is designated as a core participant, it is to be hoped that someone who played a significant part in its national affairs will be able to remember him and can be identified by those currently responsible for the organisation. They and/or Bruce Kent may also be able to comment on the accuracy of the intelligence reports generated by HN65.
4. For those reasons, even though the application of the CND is very late, I am minded to designate the CND as a core participant in Category [K], rather than Bruce Kent as an individual. I express the hope that he will cooperate with the CND and invite their solicitor and his to agree how information and evidence relevant to the infiltration of the CND between 1981 and 1986 can best be provided and given.
5. Because the period during which the CND was infiltrated is limited and will be covered exclusively in Tranches Two and Six, I propose to limit their designation as a core participant to those tranches and to limit the search for documents relating to them to those created between 1980 (to allow for the likelihood that consideration of infiltration of the CND occurred before it began in 1981) and 1986.

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Jane Hickman and Rebecca Johnson

6. Jane Hickman and Rebecca Johnson applied to be designated as core participants on 25 and 27 May 2021 respectively. Both were active organisers and participants in the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp and Jane Hickman was an active and prominent member of a small London group called Lambeth Women for Peace. Both groups were infiltrated by HN33 between 1983 and 1986. Both Jane Hickman and Rebecca Johnson knew and now remember HN33. Both are willing to provide and give evidence about her and about the groups to which they belonged.
7. Their evidence is of significant interest to the Inquiry, for at least two reasons: it is likely to assist investigation of a significant issue – for what reason a group which posed no threat to public order in London and did not fall within the “Harris” definition of “subversive” was the subject of a Special Demonstration Squad deployment; and they can provide information and evidence about HN33 and the accuracy of her reporting. Each has a significant interest in the subject matter of the Inquiry.
8. For those reasons, I will designate both Jane Hickman and Rebecca Johnson as core participants in Category [K].
9. Both have indicated that they undertook political activity in a variety of causes after the deployment of HN33 ended. With one exception, I have no reason to believe that the groups in which that activity was conducted were the subject of infiltration by the Special Demonstration Squad or the undercover unit of the National Public Order Intelligence Unit. The single possible exception is “Faslane 365”, upon which there was some reporting. Because this group was concerned with demonstrations outside England and Wales, investigation of its activities is outside the terms of reference of the Inquiry.
10. Because the period during which the two groups in which they were active were infiltrated occurred in Tranche Two only I will limit their designation as core participants to Tranches Two and Six. The documents which will be disclosed to them will also be limited to those created between 1982 and 1986.

Lynn Sawyer

11. Lynn Sawyer applied to be designated as a core participant on 18 May 2021. The basis of her application is that she was an active participant in Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty and, thereafter, in other animal rights groups which she believes were or may have been infiltrated by undercover officers. She did participate in one event, described in contemporaneous documents which the

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Inquiry has obtained, about which evidence will be sought. It is likely that the Inquiry will invite Lynn Sawyer to provide information and/or evidence about it.

12. Lynn Sawyer has an interest in the subject matter of the Inquiry, but it is one which is replicated by other core participants who applied to be designated in good time. On 20 April 2021, the Inquiry referred her to its guidance to those applying to be designated as core participants, which explains the need to justify late applications. Despite that, she has provided no explanation or justification for the delay. Her interest in the subject matter of the Inquiry is not of such significance as to require that she be designated late as a core participant.

Bernadette McAliskey and Eamonn McCann

13. Bernadette McAliskey and Eamonn McCann applied on 26 April 2021 to be designated as core participants. Both had previously made the conscious decision not to apply, because they believed that most reporting about them by undercover officers concerned public events which they attended or arrangements for them to speak at such events. Their perception was correct. Although, as Counsel to the Inquiry identified in his opening remarks in Tranche One Phase Two, there was one occasion on which an undercover officer (HN340) reported on a private conversation between them about a political matter, that was a rare occurrence.
14. One of the topics which the Inquiry must address is why Special Demonstration Squad undercover officers reported on the activities of Members of Parliament and on arrangements made by others for them to participate in public events - in the case of Bernadette McAliskey, between April 1969 and February 1974. The evidence on this topic in her case has already been given in Tranche One Phase Two and the reporting documents disclosed to her. Although she clearly has an interest in this issue, it is not now of such significance as to require that she be designated as a core participant after the evidence has been given.
15. The application made on behalf of Eamonn McCann does not identify any ground upon which he should be designated as a core participant beyond the fact of reporting on him. It is not a significant interest in the subject matter of the Inquiry.
16. The reasons given, I will not designate Bernadette McAliskey or Eamonn McCann as core participants.

Sally Beggs

17. By a letter from her solicitor dated 24 June 2021 Sally Beggs applies to be designated as a core participant. The basis of her application is that in 1983 – 1984 she was an activist in the South-East Animal Liberation League ('SEALL') and participated in the incursion by activists into the Wickham research laboratories on 28 October 1984, in consequence of which a number of them, including her, were arrested and prosecuted. Her then partner, later husband, was a leading member (in fact, president of the executive committee) of the British Union Against Vivisection, a generally law-abiding group.
18. The letter does not indicate that she has a significant interest in the subject matter of the Inquiry; nor does it state expressly what, if any, information or evidence she can provide which would assist the Inquiry to get the truth about undercover policing. Instead, it contains the following, curiously worded, statement. "Naturally, without disclosure, acceptance as a core participant and recognition that some of what she might be kept confidential, (she) is reluctant at this initial stage of interest in the Inquiry to volunteer a lot of further information..."
19. The application is also very late and does not explain the reason for the delay. This has a practical consequence. The task of collating and tagging intelligence reports provided by Special Demonstration Squad undercover officers in Tranche Two has already been substantially completed. The belated identification of copies of the intelligence reports in which late applicants are named and submission of them through the process of redaction for public interest and privacy purposes is time-consuming and disruptive. It is not a task which can sensibly be undertaken except for very good reason.
20. There is none in this case. SEALL was infiltrated by HN11 (Chitty) from its inaugural meeting on 11 December 1983 until it ceased to function. No written reporting by HN11 of the plans for the Wickham incursion has been retrieved. If, as is likely, HN10 did report on the plans, no written report by him has been retrieved. No document so far retrieved establishes that he participated in it, and Sally Beggs does not suggest that he did. In 1984, HN10 infiltrated and reported on North London activist groups. If, as may have been the case, he learnt from them about the intended incursion and reported what he knew orally, it is very unlikely that his report could have given rise to a possible miscarriage of justice.
21. For the reasons given, I will not designate Sally Beggs as a core participant.

Charlotte Baggins

22. By letter from her solicitor dated 2 July 2021 Charlotte Baggins applies to be designated as a core participant. The basis of her application is that she was an active participant in a number of anarchist groups in the 1970s and early 1980s which featured in the Special Demonstration Squad annual reports and was the subject of personal reporting by one Special Demonstration Squad undercover officer, HN304.
23. Her objectives in applying are said to be:
- “(a) to know what intelligence was gathered on her
 - (b) then to be in a position to decide whether to comment on the accuracy and supposed justification for recording, sharing and retaining that information
 - (c) to make wider comments on the supposed justification of the surveillance and its impact on her, her family, her political activity.”

She may also wish to comment on the evidence of HN304.

24. Although her solicitor indicated her interest in the documents disclosed which relate to HN304 and HN300 in the hearing bundle for Tranche One Phase Two before those hearings began, this application has not been made until after they have finished and after HN304 has given live evidence. Her wish to have collated and disclosed to her every intelligence report in which she has been named gives rise to the same difficulties as those identified in paragraph 19 above, plus one further significant difficulty. All of the documents which may refer to her during the period of her activity exist, in their original form, only as hard copies or on microfiche. Her name was not tagged when the documents were loaded onto the Inquiry's computer system. Some documents in which she was named have been identified for other purposes namely, to provide to those representing the interests of core participants also named in them, but it is not now practicable to conduct an electronic search of the documents with an acceptable degree of precision to identify all those which name her. The human and computer resources of the Inquiry are limited and are now devoted to subsequent tranches and phases of the Inquiry. Their diversion to an exercise which might permit her to decide whether to comment on the accuracy of the information and on the justification for recording, sharing and retaining it would not be a justified expenditure of Inquiry and taxpayer resources.

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25. Although Charlotte Baggins has a legitimate interest in the subject matter of the Inquiry it is not of such significance as to justify designating her now as a core participant.

20 July 2021

Sir John Mitting
Chairman, Undercover Policing Inquiry