

COVER SHEET

[REDACTED]

1st Witness Statement of Christopher Skey

Date signed: 15 December 2020

IN THE MATTER OF THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UNDERCOVER POLICING

I, Christopher Skey, c/o Designated Lawyers, PO Box 73779, London WC1A 9NL,
WILL SAY AS FOLLOWS:

1. This witness statement is made in response to a Rule 9 request dated 5th November 2020. It provides my full recollection of my deployment within the Special Demonstration Squad (SDS) of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).
2. I am known in this Public Inquiry by the nominal HN308.
3. When I was an officer in the SDS, my rank was Detective Sergeant, and when I retired from the MPS it was Detective Inspector.

Personal details

4. My full name is Christopher Skey. I was born on 1 [REDACTED] 1941.

Police career before and after serving with the Special Demonstration Squad

5. I became a police cadet in 1958, and joined the MPS as a Police Constable in July 1960. I was an officer in the MPS for approximately 30 years, until my retirement in 1990.
6. From 1960 to approximately 1966, I was in uniformed duties at West End Central Police Station. I then moved to 'T' division in Hampton. 'T' was one of the London uniformed areas covering outer west London, and I relocated to that uniformed unit when I moved to Middlesex. When I was in 'T', I recall being on uniformed duty in Grosvenor Square during the large-scale disorder in 1968, and I believe I applied to join Special Branch in that year. I wanted to move out of uniform, and I was more interested in Special Branch than CID. I thought there would have been interesting avenues to pursue in Special Branch, and some of my colleagues from West End Central were already there.
7. I cannot recall the letters of all the Special Branch squads I was part of. Once I joined Special Branch, I was initially part of a team who were dealing with Irish extremism. This role lasted for approximately three years. Looking at MPS-0741677, it appears that I was promoted to Detective Sergeant in 1970 whilst in that role. I was then part of a team who dealt with the extreme left wing groups. I cannot recall the length of time in that role. I also worked for two and a half years on Sir Edward Heath's Protection Team. My recollection is that I joined the SDS in the very late 1970s or in early 1980. I cannot be

[REDACTED]

sure on the precise date. My recollection is that I was part of the SDS for approximately two years.

8. For a brief period of time, no more than a year, following my time in the SDS I was the liaison officer between Special Branch and the uniformed public order unit (A8); I would get information from Special Branch and report to A8 orally on potentially problematic public order events. As this role was subsequent to my posting in the SDS, I believe that the vast majority of the information I relayed in this role must have been from the SDS because the uniformed unit wanted information on demonstrations or potential public order incidents.
9. I later worked within the Anti-Terrorist Branch – in particular I can remember being part of this team during the Brighton bomb incident in 1984. After my time on the Anti-Terrorist Branch, I spent the remainder of my career in Special Branch as a Detective Inspector working around the extreme left-wing scene.
10. I do not believe that I had direct contact with the SDS prior to joining the unit, and I had not done any work in an undercover role before I joined the unit.

Selection for the Special Demonstration Squad

11. I think that I first became aware of the SDS around a year before I joined. I should add that whilst I was aware of the SDS, and there may have been a more general awareness within Special Branch of there being an undercover

[REDACTED]

unit, it was not something that was readily talked about or discussed. It was very much the case at the time that the "need to know" was fully respected – if we did not need to know about it, we did not know about it.

12. I must have been asked to join the SDS. I do not remember applying, and I cannot recall how or by whom I was asked to join. I joined because I was posted to the unit. I think I may have been asked if I would be interested in a role within the unit, and I think it was maybe Angus McIntosh who asked me this.

13. As noted in paragraph 8 above, I think that I joined the SDS in the late 1970s or early 1980s.

Your role

14. I was recruited as a Detective Sergeant. This was a purely administrative back-office role within the SDS. I was not an undercover officer and did not have an undercover name or legend.

15. I remained in this role through my time in the SDS, and was not promoted in the two years I was part of the unit.

Dates of Service

16. I have been asked by the Inquiry about my dates of service, in particular whether it is correct that I served in the SDS between 1980 and 1982. This loosely accords with my recollection, although as I have noted earlier in this

[REDACTED]

statement I cannot be precise on whether it was late 1970s or early 1980. For the purposes of this statement, and given I cannot independently recall the dates, I can say that the suggested time period seems to be the right length, as I was only in the unit for two years, and around the right period of time.

Training and guidance in the Special Demonstration Squad

17. I did not have any formal training. Dick Walker was in the role before me, and I spoke to him before I started the job. I would not describe it as training, it was more of a handover. I do not recall there were any training materials, or manuals, at the time of my service. It follows that I do not believe I would have been shown or provided with any such documents.
18. As I did not receive formal training, there was nothing to repeat or refresh. Any advice, guidance or instruction was on an *ad hoc* basis as needs arose or developed.
19. I did not receive any training on race equality from the Metropolitan Police Service either prior to or during my time with the SDS. I did not receive any training on sex equality from the Metropolitan Police Service either prior to or during my time with the SDS.

Duties

20. The Inquiry have referred me to MPS-0736780, which is a witness statement, signed by me and dated 22nd January 2014, provided voluntarily to Operation Herne. Within that witness statement, I describe my role in the SDS as a back-office Detective Sergeant with a primary function being the processing of expense claims ^{1A} [REDACTED] for the undercover officers (UCOs). This is an accurate description of my role. I also liaised with an officer ² [REDACTED] in the transport department to ensure field officers had suitable vehicles.

21. I am informed that in a witness statement, which I have not seen, Martin Gray (who is said to have been in the SDS from September 1981) notes that I left the SDS approximately 6 months after he started. This chimes with my recollection.

22. I am informed that Martin Gray has asserted that he took over from my role, and that in his role his responsibilities were "dealing with the SDS finance arrangements for all the SDS personnel and providing 'field' officers with material assistance regarding their covert activities," ⁴ [REDACTED]

(describes material assistance)

[REDACTED] This may have been Martin Gray's role, but it is not an accurate assessment of my role. I was, per my signed statement at MPS-0736780 referred to at paragraph 20 above, involved primarily with expenses, in addition to accommodation and transport logistics in the office. I may also

⁵

(describes material assistance)

[REDACTED] for use by the field officers in

[REDACTED]

their undercover identities. My role was primarily a back-office role. I do not recall having any involvement in the ⁶ [REDACTED] (describes material assistance) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] – in my time at the SDS the UCOs did this all themselves. I do note from the annual reports in 1980 (MPS0728962) and 1981 (MPS0728985) that I was the officer responsible for signing off the transport expenses.

23. I had no role in the tasking of SDS undercover officers. I have been shown the intelligence reports at UCPI000001539 and UCPI0000015540, and asked by the Inquiry what consideration was given towards the justification for and proportionality of reporting on social justice campaigns. I had no role in what SDS UCOs were being tasked with and cannot speculate as to what consideration may have been given to issues I had no determining role in relation to. My understanding was that the UCOs were in place to glean information on whether there was going to be criminality, disorder, violence, or violent demonstration in London and reporting that back to the SDS customers who were interested in receiving this information. The information was passed from the UCOs to back-office SDS officers, such as myself, orally or in handwritten notes. We tidied the notes up, without changing the meaning, and sent the UCOs' notes to the Special Branch typing pool. The reports which I have been referred to in my Rule 9 witness pack bear little relation to the form of information that we received from the UCOs, and would not have had the RF or PF references: RF references meant that a person was known to Special Branch, PF references meant that a person was known to the Security Service. When I refer to customers of the SDS, my

[REDACTED]

understanding was that the information was sought by the Security Service, the Home Office, Special Branch and A8 – the uniformed public order unit. I believe that these were the customers because of what I would have absorbed at the time whilst in the office, rather than me being directly involved with any of these customers' requests for information.

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24. [REDACTED] I have no recollection as to what the documents referred to in a letter I have been shown from me to the Security Service are (UCPI0000031550). [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (describes material assistance) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I do not know what the cover letter accompanied. It was never part of my role in the SDS to liaise directly with the Security Service, and I can only speculate that I was asked to send the letter. I have no recollection of this. As far as I was aware, liaison with the Security Service was conducted by people senior to those in the office – that is to say ranks above Detective Chief Inspector. I say this for two reasons: first, I have no recollection of there being liaison with the Security Service by my immediate superiors. Secondly, even when I was a Detective Inspector in Special Branch I did not liaise with the Security Service, so I surmise that any liaison with the Security Service was at a higher rank than that. I believe that officers of that level of seniority would have decided what reports, once typed, went to the Security Service. Returning to UCPI0000031550, where someone has noted leaving a message for me, I do not know why a message was left for

[REDACTED]

me. If it was something of significance, I would expect I would have recalled it.

25. I have been asked if I had a procurement and administrative role in relation to SDS safe houses and cover accommodation. I had a role in sourcing, and looking after the safe houses through an agent that Dick Walker had dealt with previously. I think that the property we referred to as 'West' stayed the same but 'South' was changed. [REDACTED] 8(i) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I cannot be more specific on the locations. I did not have a role in the procurement or administration of cover accommodation – this was done by the UCOs themselves.

26. I have been asked about what role I had in the procurement and administration of SDS vehicles. In 1980 and 1981, I was the officer who compiled the transport costs and expenditure for the year (see MPS-0728962 and MPS-0728985). I can say the following in response to the various questions asked:

- a. I was directly involved in the procurement of the office car.
- b. The vehicles the UCOs used would be found by them, but then I would arrange for them to be inspected to make sure they met police standards.

- [REDACTED]
- c. I understood the UCOs registered their undercover vehicles to their undercover identities – I did not have a role in this.
- d. I did consult with the Transport Branch, G9 (although I cannot recall what this was), and Detective Chief Inspector [REDACTED]¹² (as MPS-072962-11 states). [REDACTED]¹³ was the man who went out to inspect the UCOs' proposed vehicles. Detective Chief Inspector [REDACTED]¹⁵ was a uniformed officer – I assume he had to give authorisation for someone to go and look at the vehicles. I believe he is the [REDACTED]¹⁷ person I refer to at paragraph 20 above. I would imagine that the SDS originally had to go to B10 (transport) to get the necessary permissions to have transport, and use police personnel to check them, but this was before my time in the unit.
- e. Consultation with other branches of the MPS was not part of my regular duties as a Detective Sergeant. Equally, consultation with more senior officers other than those in the SDS back office or elsewhere in Special Branch was not part of my regular duties as a Detective Sergeant. Normally, consultation with other branches of the MPS would be through A8 (uniformed demonstration) which is how information would pass from the SDS to the regular policing unit. The source of the information had to be protected (i.e. the fact that it was from a UCO) so that is why there would be a Special Branch officer as the liaison. I was that officer for a short time (see paragraph 8 above) but I do not know who held that role when I was in the SDS. The only regular liaison that was usual for me as a Detective Sergeant in the SDS was in relation to vehicles.

[REDACTED]

Accommodation did not require liaison. I had occasional contact with the Duty Inspector of Special Branch in the event that urgent information needed to be passed on (i.e. it could not wait for the weekly meeting, and then for a typist to produce a report). I note that one such contact is shown on MPS-0730134-1 – the 'Action' notes that the Duty Officer was informed of the information. I cannot recall the telephone call, but suspect that I would have picked up the phone from the UCO, and because it related to conduct which was happening at that time I would have passed it on to the Duty officer (*"Duty Officer (DI [REDACTED] informed at 1205 hours"*). The date shown is 24 April 1982 which is later than I recall being part of the unit, but the signature on the note is mine.

27. I had a very limited role in the management of UCOs whilst they were deployed. As noted in my statement MPS-0736780 there were regular meetings at one of the flats. Any information would be given to the back-office SDS officers by the UCOs at those meetings. If any of the UCOs went outside the MPS district to another area as part of their group, and where there was a risk of arrest or to their safety, we would have to liaise with the police force in that area. Often, two of the SDS back office staff would go to that area to liaise with the constabulary concerned to ensure that if the UCO happened to be arrested we would be able to deal with the local police immediately. I recall going to Edinburgh twice – in relation to Torness Power Station – and Liverpool once. There was never an incident which required intervention, so I cannot help the Inquiry with what an intervention with the local police force may have looked like. If the UCOs telephoned the office,

[REDACTED]

which they did daily in my time, I might speak to them. These calls would be to report in from a meeting or the like which they had attended the previous evening. I would then pass that information on to more senior officers in the SDS back office. Equally, if there was urgent information (such as that in 26(e)), the officer may have spoken to me. I cannot recall a single instance where a UCO came in to the office whilst deployed. If they needed an urgent meeting, I understood that we would offer to meet outside the office. I cannot recall any specific urgent meetings, but I knew that this was available to UCOs.

28. I was only involved in a very limited way in relation to the welfare of UCOs.

In short, the UCOs knew to let us know if there were problems. The meetings at the safe houses were also an opportunity for any issues to be raised. At the time, I don't think that there were welfare problems. I am pretty sure that no UCO told me that they thought they had been found out by their group, or were in personal trouble. It all seemed to go pretty smoothly when I was there.

29. I have been asked about the writing up of SDS intelligence reports (see paragraph 23 above). Dick Scully had primary responsibility for this, I also helped him with it. The process in general was as follows:

- a. The UCO would provide oral information, written notes, or both to Dick Scully and, occasionally, to me.


- [REDACTED]
- b. We would not add detail to or remove detail from the reporting received from the UCO, we might change the language from something more informal to something more formal, or clear up spelling mistakes, but the content would remain as reported to us (whether verbally or in writing).
 - c. I presume the senior officers in Special Branch – who were separate from those of us in the SDS back office – decided on the level of inclusion of personal detail. The reports in the file look nothing like the reporting that I received from the UCOs (see paragraph 23 above). Personal information was part of the intelligence gathered, and it was gathered because it ensured that in the future should there be any problems with groups then the authorities would be aware of the identities and associations of persons involved. If demonstrations fragmented this could cause real issues, and knowing who was associated with the broader groups was important. It also meant that people would be able to be identified accurately. Government and police departments had a vetting process for which association with certain groups may have been an important consideration. The SDS was a conduit for information, and then at some stage beyond the SDS office reference numbers would be included if those persons were known.
 - d. The reporting received from the UCOs, as amended by Dick Scully or me, was passed by the SDS to the typing pool. I do not think that I ever knew who added the reference numbers, and at what stage they were added.

- [REDACTED]
- e. I did not receive feedback from those to whom reports were supplied. I do not know if more senior officers received feedback.
 - f. I played no part in tasking, instructing, or steering undercover officers about what they should report on or how they should report.
 - g. I have been referred to MPS0730185-9 and MPS0730134-1 and asked how regularly intelligence was communicated orally. These documents are internal MPS Telephone Messages from S Squad to the Commander of Special Branch which contain information "received from a secret and reliable source". The office obviously had a telephone which could have been used for urgent information, and a call would have been made to the office by a UCO in case of emergencies. There would have been calls for urgent information on occasion but I would struggle to recall how much information would have come in by phone. I would only have a role in processing the information if I happened to answer the telephone – it could have been anyone in the office. Intelligence would be communicated orally in person at the weekly meetings.
 - h. I did not decide where intelligence was disseminated: where it went would be dictated by the SDS customer (for example, Special Branch, the Home Office, A8 or the Security Service). Using MPS0730134 as an example, this has not gone to the Security Service but it has been sent to the Special Branch duty officer. The handwriting on the

[REDACTED]

document is not mine. The three locations to which it has been disseminated are: a person in "1817" – I recall that they collated information for the Special Branch annual reports, [REDACTED]²¹ (the duty officer), and 'PA' - this stands for 'put away', which means it has been stored within Special Branch records. The signature is DCI [REDACTED]²², of B squad. This tells me that DCI [REDACTED]²² is the person who has decided where the intelligence is going. The document at MPS0730185 is more complex. I would only have had a role in the first intelligence report from a call. Everything after that would have been dissemination to uniformed departments – I have never seen a report in the format of MPS0730185-7 before, but assume it came from A Division (as it says 'AD'). As noted earlier, A8 was the uniformed branch dealing with public order. The earlier documents in MPS0730185 relate to arrests arising from a Troops Out Movement demonstration. I note that Martin Gray who wrote the report at MPS0730185-2 covered the event. He would be better placed than me to comment on this chain of reports, as I have no independent recollection of this event.

- i. I have been asked about the provision of information to the US Embassy (UCPI0000015602). At the time I was in the SDS, I was not aware of the onward dissemination of reports beyond the SDS's customers, and am not sure that I would be able to help the Inquiry with how the reports got to the Commander of Special Branch or to external agencies. My best guess would be that the Detective Chief Inspector of the SDS would tell Dick Scully who to send information to.

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- j. As far as I was aware, everything which came to the SDS back office was written up, albeit the information we received was not in the format of the typed intelligence reports (see paragraphs 23 and 29(c) above) which I have been shown for the purpose of making this statement. It is possible that the intelligence reports which the Inquiry have, a few of which have been supplied as part of my Rule 9 pack, were amalgamated from several notes submitted by the SDS to the Special Branch typing pool.
- k. I have been referred to UCPI0000015431 and asked how reports with photographs were produced. I have no idea how this report, or any report with a photograph, would be produced. I know Special Branch had a photography section. I assume somehow a photo was obtained, and that the photograph and description were married up. It may be that the picture was from the same event that is being reported, or it may be that the picture was obtained separately. I genuinely do not know. I had never seen an intelligence report with a photograph on it before I saw the witness pack which came with my Rule 9 request. As I have said previously, that is not what a report would look like in my hands.
- l. I have no idea how the subscriber details for a telephone number would have come to be obtained. There would be no editorial control by the back office of SDS in the detail supplied to the typists from which the intelligence reports were then produced.

[REDACTED]

30. I had no role in the assessment and approval of SDS intelligence reports.

The SDS was not its own customer, and I was too junior to sign off formal intelligence reports.

31. My onward dissemination of SDS reports was very limited – it was either to the typing pool, or to the Special Branch duty officer. I had no decision making role beyond that.

32. Intelligence reports would be held in the Special Branch records. The SDS did not have its own records room. It may be that on one of the squads they kept copies of intelligence, but in general they would be kept in Special Branch records and I think that this would have been a room on 18th floor in Scotland Yard, but I cannot be more specific than that.

33. I have been asked about my role in the payment of UCOs, including overtime.

The only payments I made were incidental expenses. The UCOs were all salaried police officers who were paid in the same way as all police officers were. Overtime would have been authorised by the Chief Superintendent, but probably on occasion by the Detective Inspector or Detective Chief Inspector in the office; I had no part in that.

Premises and meetings with other SDS undercover officers

34. There were two 'safe house' properties, as set out in paragraph 25 above.

35. When I was part of the SDS, the office was in a building [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] in Vincent's Square.

36. I have been told by the Inquiry that [REDACTED] HN65 [REDACTED] who served in the SDS towards the end of my tenure, said that there was oral reporting during the bi-weekly meetings. This accords with my recollection. I note that this also accords with the account that I provided in my witness statement at MPS-0736780 where I say that meetings took place twice a week where all of the office supervisors would attend and each of the UCOs could provide updates on their situation.

37. The term "office supervisors" refers to the SDS officers who were not UCOs – those in administrative roles, or supervisory roles based in the office. Usually this would be to Detective Chief Inspector level, occasionally more senior officers may attend. I think that the Deputy Assistant Commissioner came once or twice a year, and the Assistant Commissioner came out once. I have been asked a number of questions in relation to my participation in the meetings:

- a. I did attend the weekly meetings at the safe houses.
- b. My role during these meetings was to check if the UCOs needed anything. In my time, the impression I had was that the UCOs were happy and everything seemed to be fine. The needs the UCOs raised were practical (such as wanting petrol money) rather than welfare

[REDACTED]

related. At the meetings, I would listen to what was being reported and make any notes that I needed to. The meetings were used for welfare in the sense that we would check in to see that their home lives were fine. I can't recall any domestic problems in my time in the SDS.

- c. The meetings were used as an opportunity for officers to provide managers with information, to allow officers to complete notebooks and paperwork, and to raise any welfare issues that had arisen.
- d. Expenses claims were not dealt with at those meetings. They would give me receipts and I would take them back to the office. They would get the money for the expenses the following week at the meeting.
- e. I dealt with expense claims. If there had been an irregular expense I would have referred it to a more senior SDS back-office officer. Petrol, and incidental expenses – such as paper, cardboard and photocopying were the types of expenses I would expect to see.
- f. Intelligence reports were not typed at those meetings. Information would be written by the officers, which would be taken back to the office. Oral conversations would also take place. Intelligence gathered from the group discussions would be collated and then passed on to the typing pool to be reported in the same way as individual officers' reports (see paragraph 23). Questions directed to the UCOs in the meetings would have been to reassure them by asking if they were alright, to see if

[REDACTED]

everything was going well or if they had problems, and to ask if they had information.

SDS Management Structure

38. Derek Kneale, Ken Pryde, Mike Fergusson, Angus McIntosh and Trevor Butler served in management positions during my time in the SDS.

39. Dick Scully, Paul Croyden and Martin Grey served in administrative positions during my time in the SDS.

Individual Managers and Administrators

Michael Ferguson

40. Mike was called 'Gimli', after the character from Lord of the Rings. He was outspoken but a really good man. I think that he served as an SDS UCO, but I do not know what rank he was when he was a field officer, and his priority when I worked for him was looking after the UCOs. He wanted to make sure they were taken care of, and I would describe him as very caring and fair. I do not know if he had a cover name, but I would not expect the Detective Chief Inspector to have a cover name. I didn't know him that well, but we would have been in daily contact when I was at the SDS because the office was one room and we were all there. I cannot be specific as to the tasks he carried out.

[REDACTED]

Barry Moss

41. Barry did not have a cover name. He was quiet, fair and viewed the UCOs as people that should be looked after. We would have been in daily contact when I was at the SDS because the office was one room and we were all there. I cannot be specific as to the tasks he carried out.

Trevor Butler

42. Trevor did not have a cover name. He was quiet, unassuming and very present. He seemed to want to be helpful to the UCOs and to look after the staff in the back office. We would have been in daily contact when I was at the SDS because the office was one room and we were all there. I cannot be specific as to the tasks he carried out.

David Short

43. I don't remember serving with David Short.

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HN68

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44. HN68 did not have a cover name. He was a very outspoken Irishman. I think that he had served undercover and, as he knew what the UCOs were doing, he was concerned with their welfare. 26 [REDACTED] We would have been in daily contact when I was at the SDS because the office was one room and we were all there. I cannot be specific as to the tasks he carried out.

[REDACTED]

Paul Croyden

45. Paul did not have a cover name. I think he took over Dick Scully's role, so he was not strictly speaking a manager as he was not senior to me. He was diligent. We would have been in daily contact when I was at the SDS because the office was one room and we were all there. My duties were different to his, as I was managing expenses and administration and he was more involved in processing the information from UCOs which eventually became the reports. We would both have answered calls and taken messages, and I did assist with processing the information from the UCOs.

Martin Gray

46. Martin did not have a cover name. He took over my role, and I therefore did not see very much of him so cannot comment on his work style. I note that my duties seem to have been slightly different to his as set out in paragraph 22 above.

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[REDACTED] HN45 [REDACTED]

27

47. I did not serve with [REDACTED] HN45 [REDACTED].

Dick Scully

48. Dick did not have a cover name. He was very quiet; he kept himself to himself and got on with his work. I would describe him as the type of man who would not say boo to a goose. His duties were like Paul Croydon's, and I confirm that the description I provided in MPS-0736780 is what I understood his role to be; *"he took the intelligence reports that the [UCOs] submitted and ensured they were disseminated in an appropriate manner to relevant parties which*

[REDACTED]

would often be senior officers back in New Scotland Yard". I believe that the reports would go to typing, and then they must have come back to the office. I think the Detective Chief Inspector would then look at them and Dick Scully would send them on, on the Detective Chief Inspector's instructions.

Dick Walker

49. He was the Detective Sergeant before me and I took over his role. I would imagine his role was the same as mine. I only had a handover from him so had very limited personal interaction with him.

The Chain of Command

50. The chain of command within the MPS, but above the SDS, was: Superintendent; Chief Superintendent; Commander Special Branch; Deputy Assistant Commissioner; Assistant Commissioner; Deputy Commissioner; and Commissioner.

51. I believe the Commissioner in my chain of command whilst I served in the SDS was Sir David McNee.

52. I cannot remember if the Deputy Commissioner was Patrick Kavanagh CBE QPM. I have no independent recollection of who the Deputy Commissioner was, but I assume that records may help the Inquiry in determining who was in that role at the relevant time.



53. I do recall Gilbert Kelland CBE QPM being Assistant Commissioner at the time I was at the SDS. I recall him visiting one of the safe flats once but I cannot be specific on the year at this distance of time.

54. I believe the Deputy Assistant Commissioners at my time would have been R P Bryan and Colin Hewitt – but this is 40 years ago, so I cannot be clear. I recall Colin Hewitt visiting one of the safe flats once, but I cannot be specific on when at this distance of time.

55. I am not sure, but I think that the Commanders of Special Branch in my chain of command whilst I served at the SDS were Phil Saunders and David Bicknell.

56. I believe the Chief Superintendent in my chain of command whilst in the SDS was Derek Kneale when I started. I do not recall if Geoff Craft and Mike Waller followed him in that role.

57. Ken Pryde was the Superintendent I recall being in my chain of command whilst I started in the SDS, I cannot recall who came after him.

Senior managers in the chain of command

58. I have been asked about the involvement of the Superintendents, Chief Superintendents, Commander Special Branch, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner in the running and/or supervision of the SDS. In particular, I

[REDACTED]

am asked how frequently each of those ranking officers were involved and on what business, and how they each discharged their roles.

59. I have no idea what any of the people at these ranks were doing, and what their involvement was with the SDS on a routine basis or otherwise. The Superintendent and the Chief Superintendent were involved in the running of S Squad, which was not only the SDS but also included surveillance, and the photographic unit. I do not know what officers of this rank did on a day-to-day basis. I can help, as set out above, with what people in the same office and of a similar rank were doing, and I have done my best to assist with how those two ranks senior to me interacted with the UCOs and back-office staff, but that is already two ranks above me. I cannot speculate as to what officers of this rank would have done, because I never progressed higher than the rank of Detective Inspector.

60. In my experience I would have known some of the senior people to see, but I would not have expected to have interaction with these ranks, or liaise with them in the regular execution of my duties. I cannot recall any incidents where I interacted with officers of such senior ranks during my time at the SDS, save for the occasional visits to safe houses as described in paragraphs 53-54 above.

[REDACTED]

Undercover officers

61. I have been provided with a list of surnames, cover surnames, and Inquiry ciphers of former SDS officers, and asked whether I served with any of the officers mentioned.

62. I served in the SDS at the same time as:

28

HN20,
HN21,
HN65,
HN80,
HN96,
HN106,
HN124,
HN126,
HN155
and
Pearce

63. I did not serve with:

29

HN12,
HN19,
HN67 or
HN82

64. I do not recall serving with any other UCOs.

65. I have been asked to what extent I interacted with the UCOs serving at the SDS with me. The interaction I had with UCOs was ordinarily at the weekly meetings. The exceptions would be: a) telephone calls, or b) travel outside MPS area. Hypothetically, I could have met them outside these times if there had been a crisis, but I don't recall there being a crisis meeting.

66. During my service with the SDS, it was usual for UCOs to spend time in the back office whilst preparing to deploy. I believe this was for a period of up to 6 months, or as long as it took for the individual to build their history, and identity, and to make arrangements including accommodation and transport prior to beginning work in the field. I was not aware of preparation happening in safe houses.

67. I was not aware of any unhappy working relationships between members of the SDS whilst I was part of the unit.

Special Demonstration Squad – Role & Annual Reports

68. The role of the SDS, when I was there, was to supply information to the agency or agencies who had asked for information or assistance. As far as I was aware, given my junior role, this included A8 and the Security Service,

[REDACTED]

although it is certainly possible that other areas of Special Branch asked the SDS for intelligence.

69. I have been asked about the 1980-1982 Annual Reports (MPS0728962, MPS-0728985, MPS0730904). Specifically:

- a. I am asked why, and for whom, the reports were written. In particular, I am asked whether, as stated at 1(i) of the 1980 Annual Report, they were the basis for asking Home Office approval for the continued existence of the SDS? The Annual Reports were written as part of the Special Branch/Metropolitan Police Service reporting – I believe this was an internal force requirement. I was not instrumental in asking for or drafting the report, so I cannot say for whom it was written. The report appears also to have been submitted as the basis for asking for the Home Office funding for the continued existence of the SDS. It is my understanding that the SDS would not have operated without the funding from the Home Office.
- b. I am asked whether I played a role in their compilation. I played a limited role in the compilation of the reports, by supplying information on the SDS transport which I produced as a summary document and supporting ledgers – an example of this is MPS-0728985-11.
- c. I am asked whether the reports paint a fair and accurate picture of what the SDS was doing at the time, or have they been given a slant or gloss

[REDACTED]

for the audience they were written for? I think that the reports are honest, and give a true reflection of the work of the SDS. In my opinion the field officers did difficult work, and to the best of my recollection this is fairly reported in the report; per MPS-0728985-10 the SDS fulfilled its primary objective, "the supply of intelligence unavailable from other sources, pertaining to public disorder".

70. I have been asked about paragraph 9 of the 1980 Annual Report (MPS-0728962), and the comment made about morale being high in spite of some of the more antisocial working conditions UCOs were required to operate under. I can assist to the following extent:

- a. To my recollection, morale was generally high amongst officers in the time I was at the SDS. There may have been, as with any job, moments of stress but I cannot recall any specific incidents of this.
- b. It is difficult for me to answer a question on the effect that field work had on the health of any officer, as I was not a field officer. In my experience, field work did not outwardly affect the health of the officers. I do not know about how it may have affected them in ways they did not communicate. The meetings we had each week were opportunities to talk with the officers, and to provide relief from their undercover lives.
- c. I did play an active role in supporting officers to the extent that we had the weekly meetings. My supporting role did not go further than that.

- [REDACTED]
- d. To my knowledge, senior officers were involved in a pastoral role to a certain extent. I do not know if the Detective Inspector and Detective Chief Inspector did any more than attend the weekly meeting. The Superintendent and Chief Superintendent, to my knowledge, discharged that role by visiting the flats every 2-3 months.
 - e. I have been asked about paragraph 19 of the 1982 Annual Report (MPS-0730904) which refers to the execution of search warrants against Freedom Collective on 1st April 1982. I have no recollection of this incident, but as I have already stated to the Inquiry my recollection of my dates of service is far from precise.

Questions about Specific Undercover Officers

[30]
HN67 [REDACTED]

[30]

71. It has been suggested to me that [REDACTED] HN67 [REDACTED] served in the SDS between 1982 and 1985, and infiltrated the Socialist Workers Party. I did not serve with him.

[31]

72. I am told that there is an allegation that [REDACTED] HN67 [REDACTED] had a relationship with an activist, and/or that he fathered a child in his undercover identity.

- a. I was not aware of any such allegation.

[REDACTED]

b. I first learned of this when I saw the Rule 9 papers.

c. I did not serve with him, so could not have taken any action as a manager, given I was not aware of this at the time.

d. As I did not serve with him, I do not know if any other manager knew about the alleged activity, and cannot say what (if any) action was taken in relation to it.

[32]

HN126 [REDACTED]

[32]

73. It has been suggested to me that [REDACTED] HN126 [REDACTED] served in the SDS between 1977 and 1982, and infiltrated the Socialist Workers Party. I can confirm that our dates of service in the SDS overlapped.

74. I am told that during his deployment there were two instances of potential compromise.

[33]

75. In relation to the first, I am told that [REDACTED] details of compromise [REDACTED]

[33(i)]

[REDACTED] I am told that [REDACTED] HN126 [REDACTED] was "told by the office that they did not want to just pull me out. They asked if I could move geographical areas, so that is what I did...No other steps were taken by me to avoid a compromise". I was not aware of this incident, therefore I cannot assist the Inquiry with questions on this topic.

[REDACTED]

76. I am told that the second incident of potential compromise occurred when [REDACTED]

[34]

[REDACTED]

details of HN126's second compromise and the
actions he took to avoid being compromised

[REDACTED]

I was not aware of

this incident, therefore I cannot assist the Inquiry with their questions on this topic.

[35]

HN155 [REDACTED]

[35]

77. It has been suggested to me that [REDACTED] HN155 [REDACTED] served in the SDS between 1976 and 1981, and infiltrated the Socialist Workers Party. I can confirm that our dates of service in the SDS overlapped.

78. I am told that in his witness statement he says that he had "*regular contact with the DS's as much as the DCI and the DI, as I would have spoken to them on the phone and in person at SDS meetings*". Answering the various questions asked of me by the Inquiry:

[36]

a. I would have had contact, in person and on the phone, with [REDACTED] HN155 [REDACTED]

b. I cannot recall exactly how frequently this contact would have been, but it would have been regular – at least once a week at the meetings.

- [REDACTED]
- c. This would have been similar to the level of contact I had with most UCOs whilst I was working in the back office as part of the SDS. I cannot recall anyone having an unusually high level of contact with me, although I expect that there were probably some UCOs I spoke to more frequently.

79. I have been referred to the document UCPI0000027446 dated 12 July 1982 which refers to "*serious doubts*" over ^[37]HN155's performance. I can see that the author suggests that ^[37]HN155 had left his cover vehicle outside his home address, and had thereby risked the security of the operation. Answering the questions asked of me:

- a. I was not aware of concerns surrounding his performance.
- b. I had no personal concerns about him.
- c. I think I might have known about his personal problems to a certain extent – in that I think I recall knowing about him getting divorced, but I was unaware of personal issues beyond that.
- d. I did not take any action in relation to him, because I did not have concerns about him.
- e. I did not know of other managers taking action.
- f. I have no idea why he remained in the field until 1984.

[38]

HN80 [REDACTED]

[38]

80. It has been suggested to me that [REDACTED] HN80 [REDACTED] served in the SDS between 1976 and 1982, and infiltrated the Socialist Workers Party. I can confirm that our dates of service in the SDS overlapped.

81. I am told that during his deployment he held significant positions of responsibility at the London and national level within the SWP. I comment as follows:

[39]

- a. I do not know if [REDACTED] HN80 [REDACTED] was specifically tasked to stand for any such positions. I would not expect to remember the tasking of officers as I was not involved in this, but I would not have expected an officer to be told to stand for election for any posts involving responsibility for decision-making. In general, a UCO would not be told to do certain things, as they were given the discretion to act as they saw fit in the role they had adopted for themselves.
- b. Whether or not I would have had concerns about him playing a prominent role would have depended on the nature of that role. However, he was a very switched on and sensible officer, and I am sure that any role he adopted would have been one he had thought through.

- [REDACTED]
- c. I have no recollection of his having a prominent role or position, so I would only be speculating if I was asked to consider whether these roles were beneficial to his deployment.

[40]

82. I am told that [REDACTED] HN80 [REDACTED] has told the Inquiry about an incident in 1980 where, off-duty with his family, he was approached by SWP individuals who addressed him by his cover name. I am told that these individuals were able to establish his real name and his address. I am told that this resulted in [REDACTED]

[40]

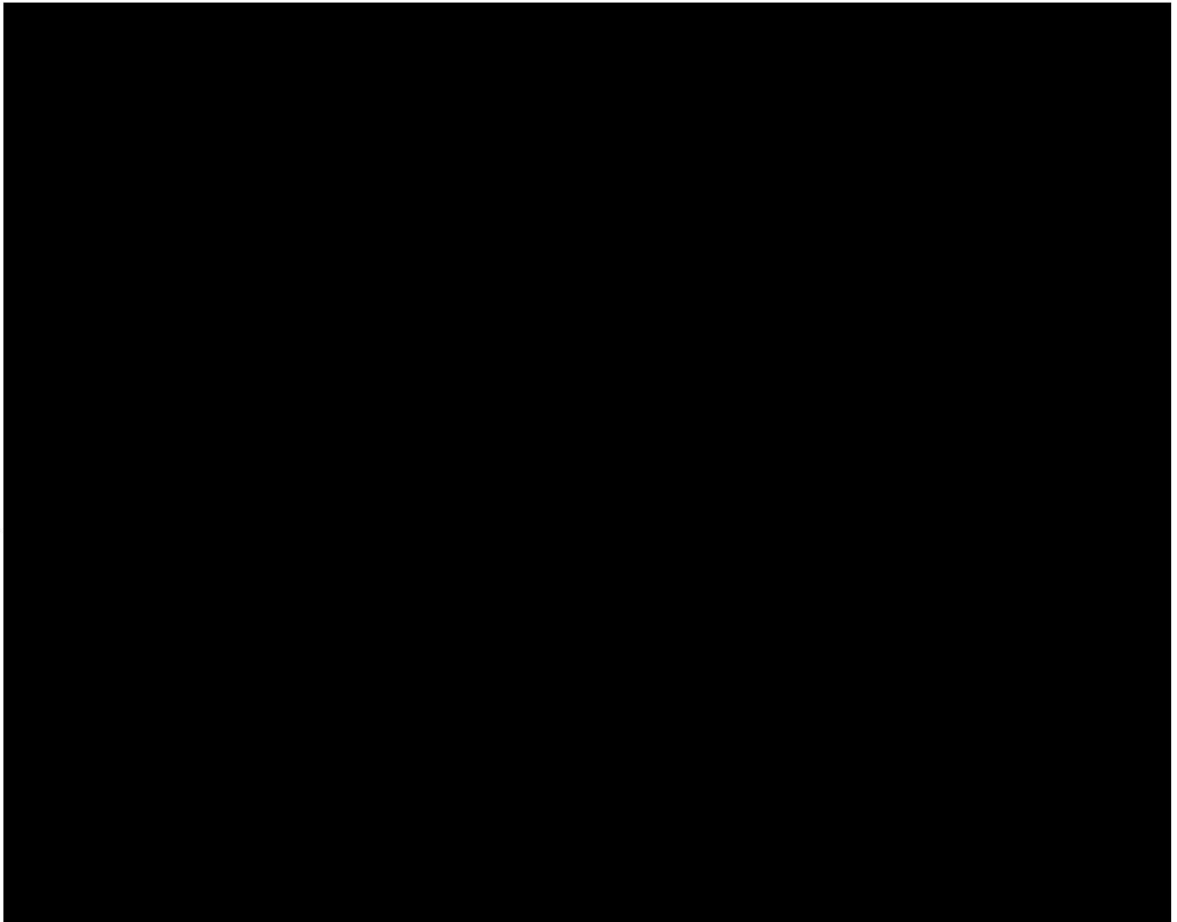
[REDACTED] HN80 [REDACTED] having to live at his cover address for three months until his family could relocate. I am told that this incident was escalated through the MPS hierarchy and his application to live outside the 20-mile limit was unsuccessful. Answering the questions asked of me:

- a. I was not aware of this incident, and therefore cannot say whether or not there was any further action other than that which he has described.
- b. I was not aware of there being a policy in place for the risk assessment of ongoing safety/security following a compromise of officers like that which has been described to me in respect of this officer. I would have thought that he would have immediately communicated this to the Detective Chief Inspector rather than escalating through a weekly meeting, and this is probably why I was not aware of it.

[41]

83

detail regarding an incident during HN80's deployment



- c. I am unaware as to whether or not a risk assessment was carried out in advance of the trip.

- d. If an SDS officer was travelling to operate undercover in another force's area, the other force would be made aware of it in the following circumstances: travel to participate in a demonstration, or other activity where there was a risk of public order disturbance; if presence in the area may have attracted police interest; if there was a risk to the officer's cover being compromised. In that event, the local Special Branch would be contacted, often by me, to let them know that a UCO was going to be present for a purpose. If it was presence alone, and no risk to that

[REDACTED]

person or their cover, then the other force would not be informed or involved.

- e. I do not recall liaison with other forces being very frequent in relation to the presence of UCOs in areas outside of the Metropolitan Police District.

[42]

HN106 [REDACTED]

[42]

84. I have been informed that [REDACTED] HN106 [REDACTED] served in the SDS between 1978 and 1983, and was involved in the Spartacist league and Revolutionary Marxist Tendency.

[43]

85. I am told that in his statement to the Inquiry, [REDACTED] HN106 [REDACTED] says that he formed a new activist group "*as a vehicle to voice disapproval of the manner in which existing groups operated*". I can comment on the questions asked of me as follows:

- a. As far as I was aware, officers were not asked by the SDS to create their own groups. I do not know whether he sought or obtained authorisation for this, but would expect that if he had asked he would have needed to have a senior officer's approval.
- b. I do not recall him being one of a group of three persons, so did not have a view on this at the time. My view of this now is that it could have been problematic, as it is a relatively exposed position for an officer to be in. However, as long as he was able to maintain his cover then I would not

[REDACTED]

have been too concerned had I known of this at the time. I cannot speak for other managers as to what they knew or what their views were.

- c. The formation of such a group would have fitted in with the role and purpose of the SDS if it led to the individual having greater insight as to the activities of other activist groups. However, this is speculation as I was not aware of it at the time.

[44]

86. I did not know of an allegation of [REDACTED] **HN106** [REDACTED] having any sexual relationships with activists in the course of his deployment. I was not aware of an intercepted call during which reference was apparently made to "*Barry's girlfriend's place*". I only heard about this for the first time when I received the Rule 9 papers from the Inquiry.

[45]

HN21 [REDACTED]

[46]

87. I am told that [REDACTED]

HN21 served in the SDS in the late 1970s and early 1980s and reported principally upon one group whilst also providing information on others.

[47]

88. I have been asked about the fact and extent of [REDACTED] **HN21** [REDACTED]'s sexual activity with at least one woman in the course of his deployment:

- a. I was not aware of this. I knew nothing of his alleged sexual relationship at the time of his deployment, and only found out about it from the papers

[REDACTED]

which I was provided with when asked to make a statement in these proceedings. I did not do anything about it at the time, as I was not aware of it.

b. I do not know if my colleagues or managers knew about the sexual relationship; if they did, I didn't hear about it from them. If senior managers had been aware of it, I think I would have heard about it in the office. I don't know if they knew about it. If they had known about it, I suspect that they would have done something about it.

c. If I had known about it, I would certainly have told more senior officers. I would have done this because of the compromise to the SDS, and the fact that having a sexual liaison whilst on duty would have been in breach of Police Regulations.

d. There was no understanding, or common knowledge, within the SDS that ⁴⁸ [REDACTED] HN21 [REDACTED] had had sexual relations with a woman whilst undercover.

⁴⁹ e. I was not aware of [REDACTED] HN21 [REDACTED] having had sexual activity with a woman whilst undercover, therefore it cannot have affected my thinking about the issue of sexual relationships during undercover deployments.

⁵⁰ 89. I am told that [REDACTED] HN21 states that, as a result of his time in the SDS, he developed significant medical issues [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] – none of which were reported to his managers. I am told that on leaving the SDS he was not offered advice or support, and have been asked questions in relation to this. I comment as follows:

- a. I was not aware of him experiencing any problems, which is consistent with him not sharing these problems (as I am told he has said in his statement to the Inquiry).
- b. I do not believe that any welfare measures were in place, beyond making sure that former UCOs avoided uniformed roles.
- c. Had I been aware of the issues, I would have obviously spoken to him, and I would have encouraged him to speak to more senior officers and to seek medical assistance specific to his particular needs. The MPS had a Chief Medical Officer who would, I am sure, have been able to provide appropriate help.

Questions about specific issues

90. To my knowledge, none of my contemporaries committed a criminal offence whilst undercover.

91. To my knowledge, none of my contemporaries provoked, encouraged or caused a third party to commit a criminal offence whilst undercover.

92. To my knowledge, none of my contemporaries engaged in sexual activity with others whilst in their undercover identity – including those who have been subject to specific questions earlier in this statement.

93. To my knowledge, none of my contemporaries were arrested, charged, tried or convicted in their undercover identity.

94. To my knowledge, none of my contemporaries were involved in incidents of public disorder, violence or other criminal activity in their undercover identity. I cannot speak for all incidents, but I know that those outside the MPS area where I travelled where there was a risk of public disorder did not, in fact, escalate to become incidents of public disorder.

95. To my knowledge, none of my SDS contemporaries reported legally privileged information. I have looked at UCPI0000015660 and I have no recollection of this. I am aware of what LPP is, and I am not sure that I would have categorised this as LPP. Even though Patricia Giambi's legal team were providing options as to what could be done for her – and I have assumed she is their client – they were doing so at what appears to be a political meeting.

96. To my knowledge, none of my SDS contemporaries reported on the activities of elected politicians. I have looked at UCPI0000015474 and my view is that the comment made about the fact that local MPs and Camden Council were sympathetic to the CND cause is not reporting on the activities of elected politicians. The group was trying to garner sympathy with MPs – on my

[REDACTED]

reading – and an MP was to speak at a future event alongside two members of the clergy. I do not view this as a report on the activities of a politician.

97. To my knowledge, none of my SDS contemporaries reported on the activities of Trade Unions. If Trade Unions featured in reports, I believe it was because of their presence at other group meetings – but I cannot recall a specific instance of this.

Use of deceased children's identities

98. The Inquiry has informed me that the overwhelming majority of officers deployed when I was part of the SDS adopted the identities of deceased children as part of their legend. As far as I am aware, this practice was in place when I joined. I did not, at any stage, question it or ask who it was who had begun this practice. I would have thought that it started in 1968 when the SDS came into being.

99. I did not authorise this practice, as I was the most junior rank in the SDS back office. I would imagine that this had been authorised by someone of at least Chief Superintendent rank – but I do not know if it was authorised, or who authorised it.

100. I am not aware of what consideration was given by SDS management, or whomever authorised this practice, to the impact on the surviving family of a deceased child in relation to the use of the dead child's name for police

[REDACTED]

purposes. With hindsight I can see that it may be distressing for surviving relatives if told, but then the expectation was that they would not be told. At the time, I must admit that I didn't give much thought to this. I was not, however, involved in this practice.

Reporting on Individuals

101. I have been asked why certain types of information was recorded in relation to certain persons. The SDS was a conduit that recorded information, and we did not filter the information as the SDS were not gathering it for our own purposes. We acted on behalf of other persons, with no oversight of the broader purpose of the information. Special Branch, the Security Service, another police department, or the Home Office would have been the requesting customer. I was not sufficiently senior during this period, or ever, to know why particular information was sought. I am unable to identify a named individual who could assist as the requests would not have come to me. I have tried to answer the queries to the best of my ability, and with the benefit of hindsight and the documents themselves, but the purpose of intelligence reports is known by the requesting individual rather than the entity acting as a conduit. I have been asked a series of questions on a selection of reports, and comment as follows:

50(i)

(a)UCPI0000014258 is a report on a person known to Special Branch, and must have a person of interest to the Security Service given it was sent to 'Box 500'. My instinct is that the associations of persons of interest may be relevant to a) their activities, b) vetting, and c) the presence of a person who was in the UK under false pretences. However, the Security Service or Special Branch would be better placed to answer questions on why this information was specifically of interest.

(b)UCPI0000015625 is a report on a teenager who has a Special Branch reference number, therefore she was a person already of interest to Special Branch. Known associates of this person had Special Branch references, so they were of interest.

The fact that the individual was young was probably not considered to be as relevant as their interest or involvement in the organisation (I cannot guess as to which of these was of interest to Special Branch). My recollection is that people who started in the organisations when they were young tended to stay in the groups, and the groups themselves would try to recruit and exploit young people. I cannot recall this individual.

(c)UCPI0000016128 is a report relating to attendance at a gathering. The fact that this gathering was described as a party is perhaps less relevant than the fact that it is a collection of individuals, who are mostly known to Special Branch. There is a Box 500 stamp showing the report went to the Security Service.

(d)UCPI0000015503 is a report which refers to teenagers. The fact that the parents have Special Branch references means the parents were of interest. The fact that the individuals were young was probably not considered to be as relevant as their interest or involvement in the CND organisation. If people have a family background of activism, and join organisations when young, they are more likely to remain in activist circles. I cannot comment on the specifics of the subjects of this report, though.

(e)UCPI0000017032 provides background and banking information on someone who Special Branch have previously not been able to identify and who shares a flat with two people who have RF references. All three are associated with the Revolutionary Communist Party. The description is likely to have been required for identification purposes, although I agree that some of the details may be a bit much. I am unable to speculate as to why the banking information may have been of interest, but it may have been because the transactions were considerable and unusual for a student moving in activist circles.

(f)UCPI0000014184 is a report on the separation of a couple. The document notes that the female has left him because of his pressure on her to join the SWP, and her reluctance to buckle to the pressure. This may have been relevant information for association or vetting purposes.

(g)UCPI0000015507 updates a file on a person known to Special Branch. A known person's death was relevant as it caused a person's activist activities to cease. I understand that when a person died, their file would be closed. I would imagine that is why this information was relevant.

(h)UCPI0000017041 is a report on a funeral. I am afraid that the photocopy is so poor it is difficult to comment meaningfully on the content. However, I can see that there is a long list of names below what would seem to be a summary of the funeral. There are two columns next to the names, one with RF references. These references indicated that a large number of those present were known to Special Branch. I cannot, at this distance of time, recall enough about the Progressive Cultural Association to know why they were of interest, but it seems that the funeral attendees were members of the Revolutionary Communist Party. Extreme Right/Left violence was an issue at the time, and I can only speculate this is why they were of interest.

(i)UCPI0000016729 is a report on a person of interest to Special Branch given their leading role in the CND. The report would have been to update his reference file given his recent change of address. The information in relation to his relationship status appears to be incidental, and I cannot say why it was included.

(j)UCPI0000016823 has references to two organisations of interest to the Security Service. The information on the man's mental health may have been important information in terms of deciding whether or not that individual was a risk to the public, or to himself, in the event of a public demonstration or disorder event concerning either (given his link to the Anarchists who were of interest to Special Branch and the Security Service). It is also likely to have been relevant to whether he may have been vulnerable to influence by others, by virtue of his mental state.

50(i)

(k)Some of the individuals in the reports commented on by HN308 had Security Service File references and so would have been of interest to the Security Service. The information in those reports may therefore have been of interest to the Security Service and is relevant to why the information was recorded by the SDS.

Reporting for Public Order Purposes

102. I believe I have already answered this question: ordinarily, reports would be written. If urgent, reporting could be made by telephone but there would generally have been an internal written record (such as the note at MPS-0730134-1).
103. From my time as the Special Branch liaison officer with A8, I am aware that information could be requested – and indeed was requested and relayed – orally. For more dynamic or ephemeral information, which needed to be actioned more quickly, reporting would inevitably be oral. In my experience, queries could be raised during meetings in the flats. If the information was urgent, then it would be relayed back to SDS's customer by phone. If it was less urgent, it would be processed and sent to the Special Branch typing pool in accordance with my recollection as set out at paragraph 23 above. As far as I was aware, liaison with uniformed units on public order information was a role held by a Detective Sergeant. I cannot recall specific events that I relayed intelligence on, but I believe that it was a pretty wide range.

Contribution to policing and counter-subversion

104. In terms of what the SDS achieved for the benefit of policing, I think that it obtained such intelligence on public order and national security as was requested. I would not have known what we were asked to get was later directed to, so it is hard for me to quantify the benefit. Personally, I felt that the SDS achieved the goals that we had been set for the benefit of policing; we were able to assist the uniformed branch by assisting with the management of large demonstrations, and preventing public disorder.

105. I believe that the SDS also achieved the goals that we had been set for the benefit of the Security Service for the same reasons as set out above.

Overtime Payments

106. I had no role in processing overtime payments, that would have been for persons senior to me to do. I believe that I was approximately the same rank as the UCOs.

107. As I was not involved, I do not know how significant a component of pay overtime was.

108. I did not get the impression that overtime pay may have influenced an officer to stay in the unit. I understood that they would serve a certain amount of time and that would complete their service. I think the period of time was

[REDACTED]

only a few years. Someone may have stayed in a few months in order to facilitate a smooth transition out from their undercover life, but it was usually a set period of service.

109. I do not think that any UCO painted an overly optimistic picture of their activity to remain in the field. I think we would have been able to tell if this was happening. I think that at the time the people in the back office had an overall impression of the men in the field and of what was happening in terms of activist activity, so irregularities would have been spotted if someone had tried to mislead us. In any event, the Detective Chief Inspector had the final say on the length of deployments.

110. As I was not aware of any welfare issues, and do not know how significant overtime pay was, I do not feel that I can comment on whether overtime influenced a UCO to stay in the field when to do so was not in his best interests from a welfare perspective.

Formal Policies and Procedures

111. There were no formal policies or procedures, bar the Police Regulations, whilst I was part of the SDS.

The Security Service

112. I do not remember having any contact or dealings with the Security Service. I believe I would have remembered if I had. I do not believe the

[REDACTED]

cover letter at UCPI0000031550 constitutes dealings or contact as it seems to me to be a purely administrative letter, which is consistent with the role I had in the SDS back-office.

113. I have been referred to UCPI0000029203. I was not present, am not noted as being present, and do not believe I attended any meetings of this kind with the Security Service.

114. I was not invited to meet with the Security Service when I joined the SDS.

115. I understood [51] [REDACTED] HN45 [REDACTED] replaced Paul Croyden. I would only be guessing if I was asked to say if the DS [52] [REDACTED] referred to was Martin Gray.

116. My best recollection is that 'Box' (the Security Service) used to ask for information on certain groups or persons (see e.g. UCPI0000015616-1). I understood this from my senior officers in the SDS, but I would not be able to provide you with any more specific information at this distance of time. I think that the Security Service was in touch with officers of Superintendent rank and above, but I do not know to what extent SDS tasking was affected by this. The Security Service and Special Branch had a good working relationship, as I understood it – over my years in Special Branch, I was aware that people from the Security Service were communicating with senior Special Branch officers. I cannot say whether or not the Security Service had a good working relationship with the SDS, but I imagine they did because of the type of

[REDACTED]

information that the SDS could obtain for them. In my time, the SDS provided this information and thereby fulfilled a useful and purposeful policing function.

117. The SDS provided a substantial amount of information on people the Security Service were interested in – I can draw this conclusion based on the amount of intelligence reports in my witness pack alone which carry the 'Box 500' stamp. I would guess that the relationship was not two-way, so I do not think that the Security Service did the same thing for Special Branch.

Oversight Bodies

118. I do not believe that any external body with any form of regulatory oversight visited the SDS during my time with the unit. I would have been surprised if anyone had attended given the strict 'need-to-know' policies which surrounded the unit.

Leaving the SDS

119. I left the SDS when I moved on to another Special Branch department (see paragraph 9 above). I think I had a fixed two-year posting within the SDS and I moved on when those two years came to an end.

Post SDS police career

120. My posting to the Anti-Terrorist Squad was allocated to me. I think I might have been asked if I was interested, but I did not apply. I cannot remember whether or not I had a say in going there, but I think I thought it would be a good move. I think I had a good career in Special Branch, and I do not think that my back-office role in the SDS had any influence on my later career. My view has always been that if you do the best job you can with the job you are given you will progress. Every job I was given I did to the best of my ability.

121. I did not seek SDS intelligence once I had moved on from the SDS. I obviously handled information in the liaison role with A8 immediately after my time in the SDS. Once I moved on from the SDS, and the liaison role, I do not believe I would have come in to contact with information from SDS UCOs. I would have been very busy with the Anti-Terrorism unit, and SDS officers were not reporting on organisations which would have directly assisted my work. Irish terrorism was wholly different to the organisations of interest to the SDS. The SDS were looking at subversive groups and those involved in demonstrations and protest, and Irish Republican terrorism was destructive.

Any other matters

122. I thought the work the SDS did was brilliant, and I was happy when I was there. There are things that have surfaced in the press, which took place after I left, which I find difficult to reconcile with what I saw as good and helpful work by diligent and dedicated officers. My view is that some conduct by a

[REDACTED]

small number of officers really let the side down as far as undercover policing is concerned, but I believe that all took place after I had left. The SDS was started for good reasons. Looking back, using details of deceased children was questionable, although I do not know what the alternative might have been. My hope, however, is that what the vast majority of the UCOs did was for a proper policing purpose, and good for the wellbeing of the country.

Request for documents

123. I have no documents or other information potentially relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

124. I have not had my memory refreshed by any document which is not in my Rule 9 witness pack.

Diversity information

125. My gender is male.

126. My ethnicity is white British.

I believe the content of this statement to be true.

53

Signed: ...

Christopher Skey

53A

Dated: ...

15th December 2020